

# The Voice

of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College

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*Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. — 2 Tim. 2:15.*

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### "What God Has Wrought"

In reflecting on the recent Mennonite World Conference, one cannot but marvel at what God has wrought. Of course, one has to have an eye for this. As so often in life, one finds what one looks for. Some conference visitors came to see friends and relatives from other lands. We hope they found them among the thousands of guests. Others came to see what binds the many Mennonite denominations together. They saw that—we are certain. Some came to see what divides us, and, I am sure, they saw the walls of separation. Others came to see what God in mercy and judgment had wrought in our world-wide brotherhood. The latter returned home deeply impressed by what God's grace has accomplished.

In order to see what God has wrought, particularly in non-Mennonite Brethren circles, one has to have a magnanimous attitude. It is painful to observe how spiritual pride can close our eyes to what God is doing in other denominations. This, of course, can lead only to impoverishment, for it closes our minds to the many lessons that we might well learn from our sister denominations. Let us not forget that God has no favorites. When Israel, His chosen people, failed to respond to God, he visited them in judgment. God deals in the same manner with denominations, may their beginning have been ever so promising. Every generation must respond anew to God's requirements, and therefore it is not wide of the mark to say, that every denomination is but one generation away from becoming completely moribund. When it does, God, has other channels through which he carries on His work. He has not tied himself, willy nilly, to any denomination. Therefore, we as Mennonite Brethren, must walk very humbly before our God, who is 'rich over all who call on him'.

Once we are willing to acknowledge this we can be delivered from denominational pride, and rejoice in what God is doing in other Christian communities. Then we will also have a mind to learn from others — and we do have so much to learn in the field of education, publications, missions, and, not the least, in Christian behaviour. Where we have a contribution to make, let us make it graciously, and not with a censorious, fault-finding, judging attitude. As we grow in Christian magnanimity we will become not a compromising, but a contributing church, strong in conviction, but, also, strong in charity. D. Ewert

## PRACTICAL

### Living in the World as Strangers

1 Peter 2:11-12; James 1:26-27 — "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself from the world."

The Bible has some strange paradoxes. "Dead yet living." "Sinners yet saints." "We are and yet we become." In the quoted portion from 1 Peter we have another very strange paradox, a seeming contradiction. We are in the world and yet we are not of the world.

Some have attempted to resolve this paradox by fleeing the world. They make their relation to the world one of complete abnegation. Unfortunately, this often rests on a misunderstanding of what "world" actually means. We had better accept God's definition of terms; He will not bow to our definitions.

What then constitutes the world in which we are to live as strangers? The word "kosmos" originally meant "orderly arrangement," and is the root of our word "cosmetics." The word is used with reference to the world of nature as an orderly unit of God's creation. There is also the "world of people" loved by God and for which He sent His Son. This is not the world which we are to renounce for this is the world into which Jesus was sent to witness and for which He died. To us He says: "So send I you." The world which we are not to love, according to

1 John, is the world of sinful human relations, the world as a system of ideas, a way of life, in which Jesus Christ is not the centre nor the frame of reference. This world "lieth in the wicked one." To this world system the Christian must always be a stranger. "World", then, is an ethical term.

The Christian's position in this world should be and is characterized by a three-fold relationship. He is a stranger because he presents the world with: A new relation, A new reaction, and A new religion.

#### I. A New Relation

Our relation to the world is that of a stranger and a pilgrim. The word stranger (paroikos) signifies someone who lives next to, alongside of the householder. The stranger does not really belong and is always quite conscious of his position in the world of relationships of which he cannot be a part. The early Christians realized that they had forfeited certain rights and privileges when they accepted Christ. According to Hebrews 11:13, the people of God have always "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

Bonhoeffer in his book, *The Cost of Discipleship*, speaks of the Christians as the "great disenfranchised on the earth." They have lost their "voting rights" since they have transferred their allegiance from one country to the next. They no longer reckon themselves as citizens of this world. Crucifixion with Christ has severed the former allegiance (Gal. 6:14).

"Paroikos" defines the legal status of the redeemed. They make no claim upon citizenship for their "citizenship is in heaven." If the world about them allows them certain "earthly privileges," these are accepted with gratitude to God and to benevolent rulers. How-

ever, Christians do not accept this as "natural," for strangers cannot lay claim to the same privileges as enjoyed by householders.

A pilgrim is one who has settled alongside (*parepidemos*) those who belong. Technically he is a squatter. The emphasis is on the transient element of his relationship to the world. He is not here to stay nor is his point of reference in the world. While in the world, he is not of the world. He is clearly distinguishable from those who belong. The pilgrim's point of orientation is in another land. I remember my own experience in Europe. Wherever I went I was seemingly recognized as a foreigner. The identity as an American just could not be hidden. It was also clear to me that I was viewing everything against my foreign background and interpreting all experiences in that light.

This new relation must affect our entire existence in the world. Some things we can appreciate and use in moderation. Paul writes to the Corinthians: "And they that use the world, as not abusing it (not using it up): for the fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Cor. 7:31).

A new system of values controls the choices and relationships of the stranger and pilgrim. Things are seen in the right perspective, for a new dimension, the dimension of eternity, has been introduced into our earthly relationships. Other things are rejected entirely because they conflict with prior interests. The "heavenly citizen" counts some things "as dung" because of higher interests. Again other things are abnegated because they cater to the flesh and the new relation "makes no room for the flesh." Some things must just be "cut off" or "plucked out."

This new relation also has a peculiar time schedule which brings the eschatological dimension into focus. Redeeming the time because the days are evil. "Little children, it is the last hour." Even legitimate ventures are evaluated once more under the demands of the eschatological tension. The time is short and we must work while it is day. The will of God abides forever;

all other things must eventually pass away.

## II. A New Reaction

We must react to our surrounding community. Isolation is not the answer. Unless we find a separation without isolation, we will have failed in our mission. It can be said of some people that they are not "of the world", but neither are they "in the world." They have no contact with the world in which they are to communicate the gospel.

Our reactions must be redemptive. Jesus reacted to the publicans and sinners by eating with them. His purpose was redemptive not merely social. His pharisaic contemporaries counselled complete withdrawal. "The ethic of withdrawal," however, could not accomplish the redemptive purpose of the Son of God who was sent "to seek and to save that which was lost." Since the world would not come to Him, He went to the world.

We once reacted to the world by accepting it and fashioning ourselves after its precepts and practices. The new relation demands a new reaction. Our mission to the world demands contact with the world, but the purpose and aim of the contact has been radically altered by our new allegiance to the Kingdom of God. As pilgrims and strangers, we have a new task in the world. People are some day to glorify God because of our reactions.

It is also worthy of note that our reactions must be in keeping with the message we proclaim. Loose living in the interest of evangelism can hardly be justified for it is as inappropriate as it is ineffective. We are to shine in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation and the light must be that of redeemed living. Adding more darkness to the already existing darkness does not help. In this case, two negatives do not make a positive.

In the Christian witness, means and end must be essentially the same, for unchristian and worldly means never lead to a godly end. Actually ungodly, worldly means have a way of changing

the end. The Christian who hopes to win his unsaved friends by accepting their standards "for sake of contact", soon finds that the original purpose disappears and negative adaptation sets in. To win the world for Christ demands methods in keeping with the Christian goal.

## III. A New Religion

The book of James has much to say about false and true religion. Religion is the expression of worship, the movement of the soul toward something considered higher. The stranger is to exemplify a new religion to a world steeped in modern idolatry and twentieth century paganism.

There is first of all the danger of profession without inner control. What is needed is not merely more talk. Modern evangelicalism has perhaps talked itself into an embarrassment. It is the embarrassment of spiritual and ethical inertia. The world is waiting for a demonstration of spiritual power not more religious fanfare. Let us beware of becoming professional testifiers who fail to demonstrate the truth of our words by consistent Christian living.

James seems to be sensitive to a religion which has its seat in the tongue.

## Statement on Material Values

(The following statement was prepared by several Wheaton College professors in response to concern about the disastrous effects of a materialistic world view on the Christian life. It is reprinted here, by kind permission, from the Bulletin of Wheaton College, November 1961. --Ed.)

The Christian, who is of necessity "in the world," but at the same time is "not of the world" (John 17:14-15), must cope with many problems which are peculiar to this unique position. Among these is the predicament posed by his inescapable involvement, in the very process of living, with material things. His difficulties in arriving at a Christ-honoring solution are increased when he lives in an affluent society

Our profession must have ethical consequences, which clearly set us apart from the "world system" which surrounds us. A Christian business man must do more than attend conventions, he must be Christian in business. A Christian teacher must possess more than a membership card to the Christian Teacher's Fellowship, he must possess a powerful witness among his students.

There must be expression with inner control. Faith expressing itself in love constitutes a true religion of discipleship. To visit and to do, and yet to keep oneself unspotted from the world, this is not an easy task. To walk about with mud on every side and not be splashed occasionally is a tall order. But let us not forget that our fellowship in the light depends on the blood of Jesus Christ continuously cleansing us from all unrighteousness.

Ours is a high and noble calling: to be in the world and not of the world. Each one is a missionary with a message to the world. To communicate will need contact; to convince will need power. God can provide both if we are willing to be involved as strangers in this world.

F. C. Peters

which continually tries to convince him, by its highly effective propaganda, that a man's life does consist in the abundance of things which he possesses.

The disciple of Christ must therefore be aware of the fact that he lives in a climate of materialism, an environment which promotes a preoccupation with things. Here is a potential convert to a way of thinking and a manner of living that operates according to standards which measure values in terms of wealth and its accumulation. Unless he exerts himself to resist the surrounding pressures, he too may adopt, even unwittingly, personal material well-being as a principal criterion for determining conduct.

Materialism, rightly understood, is

basically a matter of attitude. It does not depend so much on the possession of material wealth as it does on one's motivation for and management of his possessions. Frequently persons whose resources are quite limited find greater obsession with their meager means than do those people who are more richly endowed. Envy, greed, jealousy and covetousness may characterize even a poor man's outlook. This too is materialism.

In his effort to develop a proper attitude toward material possessions, the Christian will search the Scriptures, acknowledging them to be the supreme and final authority in faith and life. The divine dictum, as laid down in the Word of God, is as relevant to this problem as it is to all others which His children try to solve.

The initial and basic revelation of God concerning man's relation to material things was given at creation when God ordered Adam to "replenish the earth and subdue it" (Genesis 1:28). Provision for man's needs had been made by the hand of an all-loving, all-wise Creator. Sufficient resources were already available at the time man appeared upon the scene. Faithful and judicious use of these resources was commanded by God. Failure to use them effectively, therefore, is a sin. But they are to be used, not loved. They are to be the means to an end, not an end in themselves.

The full and final disclosure of God's mind on this matter is to be found, of course, in the statements of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the writers of the New Testament. Therein we find numerous warnings and commandments which are related to the problem of materialism. Nowhere do we find material things represented as evil per se or the use of them set forth as necessarily sinful. Yet the very snares into which twentieth century Christians, living in a materialistically-minded society, can fall are anticipated, and appropriate instructions are given.

Greed is everywhere condemned in the teachings of our Lord and His apostles. Covetousness is sinful in that it manifests self-centeredness rather

than God-centeredness (Luke 12:21). The desire to have wealth for wealth's sake can even cause a man to wander from the faith (I Timothy 6:10). To a child of God such a possibility is a most serious one, and that which threatens to bring it to pass must be avoided.

This tendency to a materialistic outlook, is emphasized throughout the Scriptures. The Mosaic Law gave warning that in prosperity we beware of forgetting the Lord our God and our hearts become haughty because of self-sufficiency (Deuteronomy 8:10-17). "If riches increase, set not your heart thereon," exhorted the Psalmist (62:10). The Savior declared that the "cares and riches and pleasures of this life" choke the Word of God in our heart, so that life is fruitless and futile.

In addition, the very attempt to accumulate a surplus of things is accompanied by certain dangers, according to the Gospels and the Epistles. Although the possession of wealth is not condemned, the risks involved are clearly indicated. Among them is the possibility of attaching one's heart to transient earthly treasures rather than to permanent heavenly riches, a condition which will always lead to ultimate disappointment (Matthew 6:19-21). Another is the possibility of being deceived by wealth in view of man's tendency to find in it a false sense of security, a dependence upon things rather than upon God (Mark 4:19).

Also, anxiety over the supply of material things is said to be sinful by our Lord (Matthew 6:25). Undue concern over provision for our physical needs can scarcely be defensible in the light of God's guarantees to His children (Matthew 6:30). In contrast to the unregenerate, the Christian is to make it his primary business to further the interests of God's reign and righteousness rather than to major in these matters of lesser importance (Matthew 6:33).

Freedom from this spirit of apprehension, however, must never be allowed to degenerate into neglect of any God-given obligations. There are other persons—father, mother, husband or wife, children, neighbors—for whom the

Christian is, at times, given the responsibility of supplying some or all of their material needs (I Timothy 5:8). The faithful, diligent acquisition of a sufficient supply of worldly goods to meet these responsibilities is clearly required of the Christian by God.

On the positive side, the faithful and wise utilization of material resources is recommended by Christ. Whatever other lessons may be derived from the parables of the talents and of the pounds, it is obvious that our Lord approved the actions of those who had increased the value of that which had been entrusted to their stewardship.

Furthermore, the faithful use of temporal wealth proves a man's fitness for eternal wealth, according to the Savior's teaching (Luke 16:11). The disciple, in submission to God, is to use whatever he possesses to serve God. Such faithfulness in material riches holds out the promise of true and abiding wealth in heaven. Thus our management of material possessions is a test whereby our dependability is determined for the proper handling of spiritual possessions (Luke 16:9).

Finally, we learn from the New

Testament that the accumulation of material goods is always accompanied by increasing responsibilities. The believer in Christ who has been blessed with substantial material prosperity is not only to avoid the pitfalls of riches mentioned above, but he is also to be generous and good, abounding in noble deeds. A willingness to share his possessions liberally with others less fortunate is to characterize the Christian man-of-means (I Timothy 6:18).

In summary, the believer in Christ is to love God supremely and his fellow man as himself (Mark 12:29-31). He is to use material things, primarily to advance God's kingdom which includes meeting responsibilities and helping others. When these two attitudes are maintained, properly and in balance, the Christian will not be ensnared in materialism. Anything that would take the place of either God or man in his affections, or inhibit the free and full flow of his love to his heavenly Father or to his brother is to be avoided at all costs. End.

(We as Mennonite Brethren Church do well to give heed to the great dangers of materialism. —Ed.)

## THEOLOGICAL

### Gotteserkenntnis bei den Propheten

Eines der großen Themen der prophetischen Botschaft des Alten Testaments ist die 'Erkenntnis Gottes'. Vor allen Dingen gilt es das Wort 'erkennen' im hebräischen Sprachgebrauch zu verstehen. Wenn das Wort *yada'* (*da'ath* — Dingwort) auch für intellektuelle Funktionen gebraucht wird, so ist sein Gebrauch doch sehr viel umfangreicher, persönlicher und wärmer als unser Wort 'erkennen.' "Erkennen ist für den Hebräer keine theoretische Wirksamkeit, sondern eine praktische, existentielle Beziehung zu dem Erkannten. Etwas kennen, *yada'*, bedeutet für ihn, das Betreffende in seine Seele aufzu-

nehmen. Das ist kein abstraktes Erkennen oder eine (abgrenzende) Auffassung der Einzelheiten, sondern ein Sich-aneignen der Ganzheit, und vor allem des Zentrums desselben" (Sigmund Mowinckel, **Die Erkenntnis Gottes bei den Alttestamentlichen Profeten**, s. 5). Während im westlichen Denken eine Sache erkannt wird wenn man sie analysiert und erklärt, wird im semitischen Denken eine Sache 'erkannt' wenn man sie erlebt hat, oder mit ihr Umgang gehabt hat.

Einige Beispiele werden es uns klar zeigen, daß das 'Erkennen', im alttestamentlichen Sprachgebrauch, weit über

das rein Intellektuelle Moment hinausgeht. Man erkennt Krankheit (Jes. 53, 3: "Ein Mann der Schmerzen und einer der Krankheit kennt"); erkennt Kinderlosigkeit (Jes. 47, 8: "Ich kenne Kinderlosigkeit"); erkennt Gottes Kraft (Jer. 16, 21: "Sie sollen meine Hand und Gewalt erkennen"); erkennt Scham (Zeph. 3, 5: "Die bösen Leute kennen keine Scham"); erkennt Schuld (Jer. 3, 13: "Erkenne nur deine Schuld"). In diesen angeführten Stellen ist das Objekt des Erkennens immer unpersönlich, aber in keinem Fall ist das Erkennen eine rein intellektuelle Tätigkeit. Es gibt aber auch noch Stellen an welchen das Objekt persönlich ist. Am besten wird dieses durch die euphemistische Redewendung illustriert, die vom Erkennen des anderen Geschlechts spricht. "Adam erkannte sein Weib" (Gen. 4, 1, 25). Hier spricht das Erkennen von einem intimen Umgang mit einer andern Person. Dieser Sinn, nämlich des intimen Umgangs, ist auch oft da zu verstehen wo es garnicht um den geschlechtlichen Umgang geht. Einen andern zu erkennen heißt ihn zu schätzen, zu lieben, ihn in der Seele aufzunehmen. Es ist ein Erkennen welches das Fühlen und das Wollen in Beschlag nimmt, nicht nur das Denken. Dieses muß man in Betracht ziehen, wenn das Alte Testament von Gotteserkenntnis spricht.

Um den Begriff 'Gotteserkenntnis', im prophetischen Sprachgebrauch, etwas eingehender zu besprechen, wenden wir uns besonders den Büchern Hosea, Jeremia und Jesaja zu. In diesen prophetischen Büchern erscheint der Ausdruck sehr oft, und wir wollen uns nur auf einige Hauptstellen beschränken. Doch ehe wir von dem 'Gotteserkenntnis' sprechen, müßten wir einiges über Gottes Offenbarung sagen, denn Gott erkennt man nur weil er sich offenbart hat, und nur insoweit er sich offenbart hat. Gottes besondere Offenbarung war in alter Zeit in Israel, dem Offenbarungsvolk, zu finden.

#### I. Die Gotteserkenntnis ist in Israel zu finden.

a) Gott hat sich zu erkennen gegeben. Nach den Aussagen des Alten Testaments erkennt man Gott nicht

durch Reflektion, Spekulation und Meditation. Gott ergreift hier immer die Initiative. "Die Möglichkeit der Gotteserkenntnis liegt in einer Selbstbezeugung Gottes, der sich zuerst dem Menschen zu erkennen geben muß" (Otto Proksch, **Theologie des Alten Testaments**, s. 614). Gott, der sich seinem Volk offenbart, ist auch an keine einzige Offenbarungsmethode gebunden. Vornehmlich offenbart er sich in seinen großen Machttaten in der Geschichte. Es ist ein Vergehen von Seiten des Menschen, wenn er Gottes Selbstoffenbarung in der Geschichte nicht vernimmt. Jesaja klagt, "...und sehen nicht auf das Werk des Herrn und schauen nicht auf das Geschäft seiner Hände" (5, 12). Wiederholt betonen die Propheten, daß Israel Gottes 'Wege' und seinen Willen aus den Führungen Gottes in der Geschichte erkennen kann.

In ganz besonderer Weise hat Gott sich offenbart als er Israel aus Ägypten rettete. "Ich bin aber der Herr, dein Gott, aus Ägyptenland her; und du sollst keinen andern Gott kennen denn mich..." (Hos. 13, 4). "Zu der Zeit, da ich Israel erwählte, ...gab (ich) mich zu erkennen in Ägyptenland" (Hes. 20, 5). Es ist ein Zeichen des Abfalls wenn dem Volke Israel der Blick für diese Offenbarung Gottes verloren geht. "Da Israel jung war, hatte ich ihn lieb und rief ihn, meinen Sohn, aus Ägypten... aber sie **erkannten** nicht, daß ich ihnen half" (Hos. 13, 1f.).

Enge verbunden mit der Errettung, ist die Erwählung Israels. Israel kennt ihren Gott, weil Gott Israel erkannt hat (nie umgekehrt). "Aus allen Geschlechtern auf Erden habe ich allein euch **erkannt**" (Amos 3, 2). Gott kennt ja doch alle Völker; eine ganze Anzahl werden gerade bei Amos mit Namen genannt. Aber hier geht es um die Erwählung Israels; Gott kennt Israel in einer ganz besonderen Weise. "Ich war es, der euch in der Wüste **erkannte**" (Hos. 13, 5). So wird **yada'** (erkennen) ein Wort für die Erwählung Israels, für den Ruf Gottes an sein Volk. Nicht deshalb hat Gott Israel 'erkannt' weil sie ein besonderes Volk waren; sondern Israel ist ein besonderes Volk, ein Volk das Gott kennt, weil

Gott Israel erkannt hat.

Von Gottes Seiten bedeutet solch ein Erkennen, daß er für sein Volk sorgt. "Der Herr ist gütig und eine Feste zur Zeit der Not und **kennt** die, so auf ihn trauen" (Nah. 1, 7). Andererseits kann es für Israel auch Gericht bedeuten. "Ich kenne Ephraim wohl, und Israel ist vor mir nicht verborgen, daß Ephraim nun eine Hure und Israel unrein ist" (Hos. 5, 3). Von Seiten Israels bedeutet dieses Erkantsein von Gott, daß es keine anderen Götter kennt. "Und du solltest ja keinen andern Gott kennen denn mich und keinen Heiland als allein mich" (Hos. 13, 4b). Andere Götter haben sich Israel nicht offenbart, daher muß Israel auf die Frage, "Ist auch ein Gott außer mir?", die Antwort geben, "Es ist kein Hort, ich **kenne** ja keinen" (Jes. 44:8). Also, Gott hat sich Israel zu erkennen gegeben.

b) Gott kann man nicht völlig erkennen. Dieses trifft besonders bei den Völkern zu die außer dem Kreis der göttlichen Offenbarung liegen. Die Nationen "erkennen dich nicht", sagt Jeremia (10, 25). So häufig wird dieses von den Heidenvölkern im Alten Testament ausgesagt, daß man es noch im Neuen Testament wiederhollen hört (z.B. 1. Thess. 4, 5: "wie die Heiden, die Gott nicht kennen"). Aber gerade durch seine Offenbarung an Israel sollen die Völker auch Gott erkennen. Es ist die Hoffnung der Propheten, daß Gott auch eines Tages unter den Heiden bekannt sein wird. Dieses ist in besonderer Weise die Bürde des Propheten im zweiten Teil des Jesaja, aber auch andere Propheten drücken diese Hoffnung aus. "Also will ich denn herrlich, heilig und bekannt werden vor vielen Heiden, daß sie erfahren sollen, daß ich der Herr bin" (Hes. 38, 23).

Aber auch in Israel kann Gott nicht völlig erkannt werden. "Fürwahr du bist ein verborgener Gott, du Gott Israels, der Heiland" (Jes. 45, 15). Er ist eben Gott und nicht Mensch. Auch da wo man in intimster Gemeinschaft mit Gott lebt; wo man von Gott erkannt worden ist (z.B. "Ich kannte dich, ehe denn ich dich im Mutterleibe bereitete" (Jer. 1, 5), kann man Gott

nicht immer verstehen: "Herr, wenn ich gleich mit dir rechten wollte, so behältst du doch recht; dennoch muß ich vom Recht mit dir reden. Warum geht's doch den Gottlosen so wohl; und die Verächter haben alles in Fülle" (Jer. 12, 1)). Doch darf man mit Gott nicht hadern, auch wenn man seine Wege nicht versteht, denn "sein Verstand ist unausforschlich" (Jes. 40, 28). Und doch soll Gott erkannt werden.

c) Gott soll erkannt werden. "Das dem Volk gesagte ... 'du sollst erkennen' gründet in dem zuvor erfahrenen ... 'Ich habe dich erkannt'" (Walther Eichrodt, **Theologie des Alten Testaments**, III, s. 31). So hält man es für selbstverständlich, daß alle Glieder des Bundesvolks Gott erkennen. Jeremia sucht in Jerusalem nach denen, die Gott kennen, und er erwartet solche in allen Ständen der Gesellschaft zu finden (Jer. 5, 1f.). Wo man mit einem andern im Bunde steht, weiß ja man auch was die Bundesforderungen sind. "Es ist dir gesagt, Mensch, was gut ist und was der Herr von dir fordert..." (Micha 6, 8).

Wenn auch alle Söhne Israels Gott kennen, so ist die Gotteserkenntnis im besonderen Masse bei den geistlichen Führern zu finden. Hosea schilt besonders die Priester, daß sie dem Volk die Gotteserkenntnis vorenthalten haben (Hos. 4, 6). "Denn des Priesters Lippen sollen die 'Erkenntnis' bewahren, daß man aus seinem Munde das Gesetz suche..." (Mal. 2, 7). Die Könige sollen auch in besonderer Weise Gott kennen. Jeremia rügt es dem Jjakim, daß er nicht wie sein Vater, Josiah, Gott erkannt hat (Jer. 22, 16). Als Jeremia unter dem gemeinen Volk keine Erkenntnis Gottes fand, entschloß er sich zu den 'Gewaltigen' zu gehen, "Die werden des Herrn Weg und ihres Gottes Recht kennen" (Jer. 5, 5). In besonderer Weise kennen die Propheten den Herrn. Sie haben im Rat des Herrn gestanden (Jer. 23, 18f.), und haben daher besondere Einblicke, besondere Erkenntnisse. Amos kann sagen, "Der Herr tut nichts, er offenbare denn sein Geheimnis den Propheten, seinen Knechten" (Amos 3, 7). Die großen Gottesoffenbarungen in der

Geschichte müssen von Gottes Knechten erklärt werden, denn ihnen hat Gott besondere Erkenntnis verliehen.

Die Gerichtspropheten kommen aber zu der erschütternden Erkenntnis, daß die Erkenntnis Gottes in Israel fehlt. Das was doch so selbstverständlich unter Gottes Offenbarungsvolk zu finden sein sollte, nämlich die Gotteseerkenntnis, scheint Israel abhanden gekommen zu sein. Aus dieser schmerzlichen Erfahrung erklären sie dem Bundesvolk was wahre Gottes Erkenntnis eigentlich ist. Beachten wir aber zuvor was sie über den Verlust der Gotteseerkenntnis zu sagen haben.

## II. Die Gotteseerkenntnis geht in Israel verloren.

a) Das Vokabular für den Verlust. Oft wird der Verlust der Gotteseerkenntnis einfach dadurch ausgedrückt, daß man dem Wort *yada'* ein *lo'* (nicht) beifügt S. Jes. 1, 13; 44, 8; Jer. 2, 8; 4, 22; 9, 2, 5; Hos. 4, 1; 4, 6; 5, 4 — um auch nur einige Beispiele zu geben. Aber man drückt den Mangel an Gotteseerkenntnis auch noch anders aus: Durch Untreue (Hes. 39, 23); das Verlassen des Herrn (Jes. 1, 4); das Nichtachten auf den Herrn (Jer. 3, 20); das Abfallen vom Herrn (Jer. 15, 6); das brechen der Ehe (Hos. 5, 4) und viele andere Bilder noch dazu. Aus diesem wird ersichtlich, daß sich Gotteseerkenntnis immer in Taten offenbart, nicht in einem Festhalten an gewissen Lehrsätzen, oder in einem Festsitzen auf einem Haufen von Wissen über Gott. Wo man nicht recht wandelt, da kennt man Gott eben nicht. Das soll noch mehr betont werden.

b) Die Merkmale für den Verlust. Ein Zeichen dafür, daß man Gott nicht mehr kennt, ist das Blindsein für Gottes Walten in der Geschichte. Das Volk, daß den Niedergang des israelitischen Staates erleben mußte, stand in großer Gefahr den Blick für das Wirken Gottes in der Geschichte zu verlieren. Dagegen warnt in besonderer Weise der Prophet Jesaja (S. 41, 20; 43, 10; 45, 6). "Höret, ihr Tauben, und schauet her, ihr Blinden, daß ihr **seh**et!" (Jes. 42, 18). Das Gott-nichterkennen ist schuld-

haft, weil Gott sich in der Natur und in der Geschichte offenbart hat" (W. Reiss, 'Gott nicht Kennen' im Alten Testament, ZATW, XVII, s. 78)

Wer keinen Blick hat für Gottes Güte, kennt Gott nicht. Nach einer langen Geschichte, in welcher Gottes Barmherzigkeit seinem Volk reichlich zuteil geworden war, muß der Prophet Jesaja klagen: "Ein Ochse kennt seinen Herrn und ein Esel die Krippe seines Herrn; aber Israel **kennt's** nicht, und mein Volk vernimmt's nicht" (1, 3). Gotteseerkenntnis ist also nur denkbar im Gewissen eines feinfühlenden Herzens. Wo man Gott dankt, ihn liebt und schätzt, da ist Gotteseerkenntnis. Jeremia reiht die vielen Segnungen auf die Israel aus der Hand Gottes empfangen hatte, aber anstatt ihm dafür Wertschätzung und Treue zu zeigen, zeigt Gottes Volk seinem Herrn nur Untreue. Nicht einmal die Priester 'kennen' (d.h. anerkennen) den Herrn (Jer. 2, 1-8).

Wer nicht in Gottes Wegen geht, hat keine Gotteseerkenntnis. Hosea klagt: "Es ist keine Treue, keine Liebe, keine **Erkenntnis Gottes** im Lande" (Hos. 4,1). Und woran erkennt er dieses? "Sondern Gotteslästern, Lügen, Morden, Stehlen und Ehebrechen hat überhandgenommen, und eine Blutschuld kommt nach der andern" (Hos. 4, 2). Solche ethischen Vergehungen sind die Folge von dem Verlieren der Gotteseerkenntnis. Ähnlich drückt Jeremia sich aus: "Weise sind sie genug, Übles zu tun; aber Wohl zu tun kennen sie nicht"; "Sie schießen mit ihren Zungen eitel Lüge und keine Wahrheit und treiben's mit Gewalt im Lande und gehen von einer Bosheit zur andern und **kennen** mich nicht, spricht der Herr" (Jer. 4, 22; 9, 3). Weil Judah Gott nicht kennt, hat der Prophet einen großen Lasterkatalog zu verzeichnen (Jer. 9, 1-6). Für ein dem Herrn gefälliges Leben ist Gotteseerkenntnis die Grundlage; wo sie fehlt, da sind die Grenzen zwischen Recht und Unrecht verwischt.

Wie kam es aber, daß Gottes Volk, welches von Gott 'erkannt' worden war, und welches Gott 'kannte', die Gotteseerkenntnis verlor?

c) Die Ursachen für den Verlust. Einmal, werden die geistlichen Führer

für diesen Verlust verantwortlich gehalten. "Mein Volk ist dahin, darum, daß es mich nicht kennt. Denn du verwirfst Gottes Wort; darum will ich dich auch werfen, daß du nicht mein Priester sein sollst. Du vergisdest das Gesetz deines Gottes; darum will ich auch deine Kinder vergessen" (Hos. 4, 6). Nicht, daß die Priester ihre kultischen Pflichten versäumten, aber weil sie unordentlich wandelten, waren sie nicht im Stande Gotteseerkenntnis mitzuteilen. Hosea hebt die Sünden der Priester hervor, und klagt dann: Das Volk ist wie die Priester (Hos. 4, 9).

Jeremia hat dieselbe Klage. "Die Priester gedachten nicht: Wo ist der Herr? und die das Gesetz treiben **kann**ten mich nicht, und die Hirten führten die Leute von mir, und die Propheten weissagten durch Baal und hingen an den unnützen Götzen (Jer. 2, 8). Nicht Mangel an Erkenntnis im intellektuellen Sinn rügt der Prophet, sondern Mangel an Gehorsam, an Frömmigkeit. Das heißt den Herrn zu kennen.

Aber der Mangel an Gotteseerkenntnis bei den geistlichen Führern entschuldigt das Volk nicht. Sie wußten den Weg des Herrn, aber, wie Jeremia es ausdrückt, "Sie weigern sich mich zu erkennen" (9, 6). Nicht Unwissenheit, sondern Rebellion war die Ursache für den Verlust des Gotteseerkenntnis. Sie haben einen Geist der Hurerei in sich, sagt Hosea, und **er**kennen Gott nicht (Hos. 5, 4). Gott zu kennen bedeutet ihm die Treue zu wahren, aber Israel geht mit den Götzen in intimer Weise um; bricht Yahweh die Ehe; kennt ihn nicht mehr. Als Gott sie aus der Knechtschaft durch die Wüste ins Land brachte kannten sie ihn, aber als sie satt wurden und sich ihr Herz erhob vergassen sie seiner (Hos. 13, 4-7). Der Glanz der Kultur, politischer Größenwahn, wirtschaftlicher Fortschritt hat ihr Denken so in Beschlag genommen, daß ihnen die Gotteseerkenntnis verloren gegangen war.

d) Die Folgen des Verlusts. Da wo die Gotteseerkenntnis verloren geht, da muß das Land darunter leiden. Hosea klagt über den Verlust der Gotteseerkenntnis, und fügt dann hinzu: "Darum

trauert das Land, und allen Einwohnern geht's übel; auch die Tiere auf dem Felde und die Vögel unter dem Himmel und die Fische im Meer werden weggerafft" (Hos. 4, 3). Hier wäre zu beachten was Artur Weiser sagt: "Ihn interessiert nicht die Außenwelt der Dinge, sondern ihre inneren Zusammenhänge: Die Verderbtheit der Menschen zieht weiteste Kreise; das Land, seine Bewohner, ja die gesamte Natur wird in den Untergang mit hineingezogen" (Weiser, **Das Buch der zwölf kleinen Propheten**, ATD, s. 30) Die enge Verbindung zwischen der Sünde des Menschen und das Leiden der Natur ist dem israelitischen Glauben wohlbekannt. Da wo die Hoffnung gehegt wird, daß Israel wieder Gott erkennen wird, da wird diese durch die Fruchtbarkeit der Natur ausgedrückt (Hos. 2, 20-21). Jeremia klagt über den Mangel an Gotteseerkenntnis, und sieht das Land an und "siehe, das war wüst und öde, und den Himmel, und er war finster" (Jer. 4, 22-23f.). Wenn erst die Erkenntnis des Herrn die Erde wieder füllt, dann wird sie fruchtbar (Jes. 11).

Wo die Gotteseerkenntnis fehlt, da folgt Gericht. "Mein Volk ist dahin, darum weil es nicht Gotteseerkenntnis hat" (Hos. 4, 6). Sie wollen den Herrn nicht kennen, sagt Jeremia, "Darum will ich sie schmelzen und prüfen. Denn was soll ich sonst tun, wenn ich ansehe die Tochter meines Volkes?" (Jer. 9, 6f.). Mangel an Gotteseerkenntnis führte Israel in die Gefangenschaft (Jes. 5, 13).

Aber Gott liebt sein Volk; er hat Wächter auf den Mauern. Die Propheten fühlen sich durch den Mangel an Gotteseerkenntnis in Israel, gedrungen ihrem Volk die Augen zu öffnen, für den wahren Sinn der Gotteseerkenntnis. Darüber müssen wir in der nächsten Nummer etwas sagen.

(Fortsetzung folgt)  
D. Ewert

Thou art the Way. Hadst Thou been nothing but the goal I cannot say if Thou hadst ever met my soul.

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### Needs and Curriculum in Adult Christian Education

Although the education of adults is as old as civilization, the term "adult education" has come into common usage only recently. Lifelong learning was the ideal of many of the ancients and is becoming increasingly imperative for the modern. Through the centuries great teachers have addressed their words to mature minds. The pressures of responsibility and leadership have driven many to seek opportunities of self-education in order to do justice to their assignments.

It is true that for many years the immature child, pliable, and in the formative years was in the lime light, educationally. This was due largely to the emphasis of Comenius, Pestalozzi, and Froebel on individual difference, the learning process, and the psychology of the child. With the increase in juvenile delinquency, much research was done on the age group known as adolescents. Since Thorndike's experiment with adult learning, a new view has been taken toward adult education. With more industrialization, mechanization, and automation, interest in adult education has increased tremendously the last ten years.

In the Church the philosophy of Christian Education has changed with the trends in the secular world, although somewhat more slowly. For years and decades the view was taken that religious education is primarily for children and young people. The statement, "If we get the lambs, we will also get the sheep" was considered axiomatic. Today, from a number of sources the statement is heard, "if we don't get the fathers and mothers (sheep), how can we keep the children" (lambs)? Many of our churches have come to realize that the group called "adults" constitutes the greatest field for enlargement. Leaders are convinced that they can build strong

churches only as they win and develop the adult potential.

Because an individual is an adult, over the age of 21 or 25, does not say that he does not need Christian nurture, or that he is necessarily a mature and growing Christian. While we may carry the same name throughout life, we do not remain the same person. Man is a developing organism and has constantly changing needs. The adult has reached the level where he must make contributions, where he can serve, and where he shoulders tremendous responsibilities. For this reason, Churches which are alert to his needs and potentialities, will provide adequate place and emphasis in the church and its program for adult education. However, we must caution against swinging into the complete opposite extreme and neglect the young, and dwarf that work into insignificance. We cannot afford to neglect or overlook any age group.

#### I. Adult Needs

Because of the complexity of life and the many interpersonal relations, the adult needs are many and varied. A thorough study of adult human nature, needs, motives, interests, etc. is a most valuable equipment for the leader of adults as well as for the adult himself. If we should look at the adult needs, or at the motivating forces which set up the tensions that cause people to do certain things, engage in certain activities, choose certain paths, join clubs etc., we would find that they are many. There are the physical, psychological, emotional, social, economic, vocational, political, and many, many other needs. People want to be, to do, to gain, to save, to go, to count. The adult goes through physical changes, sensory changes, vocational changes, leadership changes, etc., which must be taken into

consideration. It probably is not necessary to dwell in detail on these various, and many needs; however, it would be well to single out a few basic, far-reaching needs and elaborate briefly.

1. Adults have the responsibility of teaching the young. The sociologist Nimkoff in seeking to determine the source of moral and religious views of young people, states that 0.545, or over half, of the moral views, convictions, and principles come from their parents. The rest has its source in friends, clubs, teachers, environment, etc. Adults set the moral and religious tone for the home and the Community. Because parents have neglected the teaching program in the home, there has been inadequate training causing delinquency to increase. This need for a stepped-up training program in the home is a tremendous pressure on the adult. The adult is almost exclusively responsible for the teaching program in the home, school, and church.

2. Adults are susceptible to many temptations. The younger people surmise that sainthood comes with age. This is not so; many are the temptations of the middle-aged and even the aged and feeble. Satan has stepped up his program of temptations for the adult as well as the young person. Many older people have grown away from the church and are seeking their satisfactions elsewhere. How often the remarks are heard: "Yes, when I was younger we used to..." or, "I was brought up to..." or "We should take more interest in..." We used to view such matters as wanting pleasure, seeking thrills, experimenting with various sinful practices, and submitting to passions and lusts, as youthful maladies, but that is no longer so. Adults are drawn into this net more and more.

3. Adults have more time. The work-week has decreased from a 60-hour week to a 40-hour week, and is still decreasing. The prediction is that the 5-day week will soon be a 4-day working week. With more leisure on their hands, adults need to learn not only how to use their spare time adequately, but also how to put Christ first in their professions or vocations; how to wit-

ness in their places of work; and how to extend the church outreach. Adults must learn how to live more successfully and usefully, and not give themselves to all kinds of "hurtful lusts and pleasures." Leisure must be used creatively and not to the submerging of oneself completely in commercialized entertainment. Even our Church members do not have unassailable records in the use of leisure.

4. Adults are growing away from the Church. Although church membership has increased appreciably in the last 20 years, the vast majority of these members, even in our churches, have no close tie to the church. We have come to the point where we must promote our church program not only to the indifferent community around us, but to the indifferent church member within. It has been estimated that for every child under 12 years enrolled in Sunday School, one is not; for every five between the ages of 12-17 enrolled, 7 are not, for every 4 young people enrolled 5 are not; but, for every adult enrolled in Sunday School, 11 are not. This tells the appalling story that adults are not only not taking the leadership in religion as they should, but that they are grossly indifferent to their own spiritual welfare and growth.

5. Adults are growing in number. This may not constitute a personal need to the individual, but it does pose a need and a problem to those who work with adults, particularly to the church. With the increase in life's expectancy from 40 years in 1850 to about 70 years in 1960, adults now form about  $\frac{2}{3}$  of our population, by 1980 it is expected that about 3 out of 4 of our population will be adults. This means that if we confine our Christian education to those ages 4-17, we are reaching actually a very small percentage of our population. However, there is another dimension which makes adult education even more imperative. With the progressive rise in life expectancy,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of life will be lived in adulthood. We cannot do justice to the individual's spiritual life if we teach him a few short years and then assume that now he is "on the track" for the rest of his life -- at least

not with the many needs which confront adults these days.

That adults have multiplied needs and interests is generally admitted; but the question is, why do so few, supposedly mature adults, sense a need for stepping up their interests in spiritual things? The words of the Apostle writing to the Hebrews are so true of our time also, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you what are the first principles of the oracles of God" (Heb. 5:12). One aspect of our philosophy of Christian education is that our Christian tradition and culture and view is to be passed on to the younger generation by mature, adult individuals. If this is so, they must be trained to do this work, or else the job will never be done; or, where done, only very inadequately. Adult Christian education cannot be considered a luxury or an amenity, but as a spiritual and social necessity.

Adults today are facing increased tensions, fears, and responsibilities; they are driven by the thousands and millions to take a new view on learning. Many are going back to school, other are engaged in programs of self-education in order to cope with the new economic, vocational, political, and social problems. They must also become better prepared to face the spiritual and moral issues of life. The only answer is that somehow adults be motivated to recognize these needs as **felt needs**; for only the needs are internalized will the individual do something about them.

The new frontier in Christian Education is the adult world. We should encourage our Sunday Schools to take another look at their adult departments. Teachers must be helped to do a better job of teaching this important age group. Adults, too, learn by doing and not by sitting still and listening while the teacher instills. There is too much lecturing in our adult departments, and that by poor lecturers. In most instances adult classes need to be regarded and relocated for a better teaching situation. But above all, more promotion needs to be done in order to get

every adult into a class. Our children's attendance in Sunday school approximates 100%, but what about the adults? This is the way to fortify adults against temptations and train them for the Christian way of life so that they will be able to "teach others also" (II Tim. 2:2). Adults too must be growing persons, and we must stimulate them to grow and increase in the things of the Lord as long as they live.

## II. Adult Curriculum

Curriculum consists of the contents and activities which the school employs for the purpose of teaching and training the pupils. Briefly stated it is the subject matter or program of studies which is being pursued. A curriculum is much more than an arrangement of courses; however, it is concerned with the matter of its development, sequence of courses, and the interrelationship of the subjects taught.

The purpose of the curriculum is that by means of it we achieve the aims or goals which we have set for ourselves. It has been said, "What you would have in the life of a people you must first put into its schools." Our Church School Adult classes have been brought into being for the purpose of promoting evangelism, Christian living and growth, and Christian leadership. Of more recent years another dimension has been added and that is the implementation of a program of outreach. Consciously or unconsciously the curriculum is developed to meet some of these aims.

Someone has pointed out that the curriculum is 90% the teacher. There is probably more truth in this than we would concede; however, we can never escape the responsibility of evaluating and selecting subject matter, even if we may not have too great responsibility in actual curriculum building. Understanding curriculum is a weakness with most of us, still it is desirable for all who are using and adapting materials.

As an M.B. Conference we have been too small to undertake in any measure the matter of developing our own cur-

riculum. It is true that about 20 years ago Dr. Unruh and others wrote German lessons according to the pattern of the psychological steps. Furthermore, in the last few years we have had the responsibility of editing or scrutinizing and evaluating the material of several Children's departments. We readily admit that we got involved more deeply than we had anticipated; and certainly we will agree that we were not ready for such a step, nor did we have the trained personnel to even evaluate intelligently the magnitude of this venture.

Neither are we the only ones who have become involved in this matter of curriculum building. Until 100 years ago the curriculum consisted of catechism, Bible stories, and Bible studies. It was not until 1872 that a course of Bible lessons was outlined for a series of years which, as far as possible, embraced a study of the whole Bible, alternating between the Old and New Testaments semi-annually or quarterly.

Two different theories, or points of view prevail in connection with the church school curriculum of the present day. The first is the subject matter point of view and the second is the experience or conduct-response point of view. The theory of propounding the subject matter point of view is concerned primarily with teaching so much of facts or truth. The function of the teacher is fulfilled when so much of the Bible or Catechism is lodged in the mind of the individual. It is assumed that if we know the facts we will live accordingly. The lessons are taught from the content-centered point of view. The main purpose is to teach the Bible. Many teachers in our S.S. would put this down as the principle aim of their teaching.

This second point of view is the conduct-character centered curriculum. This theory holds that the learner and not the curriculum is in the center of the teaching situation. Even the curriculum consisting of Bible teaching is a means to an end. The materials, no matter what their source, are not an end in themselves. Attention is to be centered on the person taught as the

objective and not the subject matter. Jesus came not to give us a Bible but to give us life and to transform our lives more and more into his image.

The structuring of curriculum can be along various lines: Chronological, logical, topical, psychological, or cyclic. Generally, the material is arranged in study units or quarters and lessons units. Whatever the structure and framework, the curriculum is implemented to meet the needs of those studying it.

The selection of curriculum or published materials should be based on sound principles. Although denominational loyalty is important, the choice of material should be made on the basis of wide acquaintance with what is available. Many factors are involved in the selection of lesson materials. The needs of the pupils, the capacities of the teachers, the space and equipment, the content, the contact with the parent, methods employed, etc. are most significant factors.

Randolph Grump Miller in **Education for Christian Living** (p. 351-355) suggests a three-fold test: is the material sound, adequate, and relevant? This test then is applied to six areas:

1. Is it theologically sound?
2. Is it historically and factually accurate?
3. Does it take the psychology of the learner into account?
4. Are the methods recommended experience-centered?
5. Is the true nature of the Church taken into consideration?
6. Is it suited to the personnel teaching it?

ETTA in **S.S. Success** (p. 69-70) suggests four criteria:

1. Criteria related to lesson content.
2. Related to literacy and mechanical features.
3. Educational helps for pupils.
4. Helps for the teacher.

Generally speaking, curriculum is not selected by the individual class teacher nor by a single church. It has been deemed advisable to have some type of unified teaching program for a given denomination. We must aspire to a "unity of the faith" (Eph. 4:13) in our teaching program. This means not



only teaching from one Bible, but also from one curriculum.

We are attempting to meet the needs of our adults by an adequate curriculum. What we use in our Sunday School sessions is by no means perfect or complete so that it is beyond criticism. If our curriculum were looked at from the strictly academic point of

view, certainly it would be found wanting in many areas. However, it must be conceded that Scripture is being "rightly divided" with current applications. We, of course, look to other agencies for supply where our uniform lessons are found deficient.

H. R. Baerg

## MISSIONS

### Christliche Liebestätigkeit

Dienende Liebe gehört zum Wesen des Christentums und umfaßt das ganze Leben der Gemeinde auf Erden. In manchen evangelischen Kreisen findet man eine Abneigung gegen christliche Liebestätigkeit, weil man eine einseitige und unbiblische Auffassung hat von der Aufgabe der Gläubigen. Eine biblische und geschichtliche Orientierung auf dieser Linie könnte Anregung geben zu einem tieferen Verständnis und einer größeren Wertschätzung der christlichen Liebestätigkeit.

Durch dienende Liebe erfüllt die Gemeinde ihren Zweck auf Erden. Im 13. Kapitel des Römerbriefes zeigt uns der Apostel Paulus, daß die ganze christliche Ethik in einem Wort zusammengefaßt wird: "Du sollst deinen Nächsten lieben wie dich selbst." Dann fügt er hinzu: "Die Liebe tut dem Nächsten nichts Böses. So ist nun die Liebe des Gesetzes Erfüllung." Wahre Liebe zum Herrn findet ihren Ausdruck in der Liebe zu den Brüdern und in der Liebe zu einer ungeretteten Welt. Wie einst dem Petrus, so stellt der Herr auch heute seiner Gemeinde die Frage: "Hast du mich lieb?" Eine positive Antwort findet ihren Ausdruck immer wieder im Weiden der Lämmer und Schafe. Die Kirche Christi hat ihren Einfluß auf die breiten Volksmassen zum größten Teil deshalb verloren, weil letztere im Christentum vornehmlich ein Dogma fanden und nur selten die dienende Liebe. Wenn wir den ge-

schichtlichen Anfang unserer Gemeinschaft im 16. Jahrhundert näher ins Auge fassen, — ob wir nun das Täuferium in der Schweiz, in Mähren, oder in den Niederlanden nehmen — so werden wir finden, daß die christliche Liebestätigkeit von Anfang an stark betont wurde. Es war das praktische Christentum dieser aufgesinnten Gemeinden ein wesentlicher Faktor in der raschen Ausbreitung der täuferischen Bewegung. Als die geistlichen Nachkommen und Nachfolger dieser Gemeinschaft ist es für uns bedeutungsvoll, wenn wir unser Gemeindeleben auch von diesem Gesichtspunkt aus einmal untersuchen, und zwar im Lichte der Heiligen Schrift, dann aber auch im Lichte jenes Anfangs. Ich möchte an das Thema: "Dienende Liebe" von drei Seiten hinantreten. Einmal beschäftigt uns die Frage:

#### 1. Worin wurzelt christliche Liebestätigkeit?

Christliche Liebestätigkeit, ja die Liebe selbst, ist eine Frucht. Wenn wir diese Frucht begehren und eine größere Entfaltung und Vermehrung derselben wünschen, dann müssen wir uns darüber ganz klar sein, auf welchem Boden diese Frucht wächst. Wo erst die rechte biblische Grundlage für die dienende Liebe fehlt, da kommt es früher oder später zu einem vollständigen Versagen in der christlichen Lie-

bestätigkeit. In der Welt gibt es manche Bestrebungen der Wohltätigkeit, die nicht auf biblisch-evangelischem Boden sich gründen, sondern auf einer humanistischen, sozialistischen oder politischen Basis aufgebaut sind. Da liegt die Gefahr nahe, daß die Gemeinde Christi den Blick verliert für den wesentlichen Unterschied zwischen christlicher Liebestätigkeit und weltlicher Philanthropie. Echte Liebe ist etwas Göttliches, sie erwächst ausschließlich aus der Liebe Gottes; und diese hat sich aufgetan im Sohne Gottes. Deshalb finden wir diese Frucht auch auf keinem Baum irgend einer heidnischen Religion. Wir sagen daher, daß

#### a) die christliche Liebestätigkeit in der Heilsoffenbarung Gottes wurzelt.

Nach Eucken (Wahrheitsgestalt der Religion) stammt "alles Vermögen menschlicher Liebe" aus jener "unendlichen Liebe, welche auch den Menschen der Liebe fähig macht, indem sie ihn an sich zieht." Die dienende Liebe des Christentums hat ihren Urgrund und Bewegung in der aufopfernden Liebe Gottes, die im Kreuz von Golgatha ihren höchsten Ausdruck fand. Wir möchten diese Wahrheit hier stark unterstreichen, da es heute manche liberale, modernistische Strömungen in der Christenheit gibt, die nicht in dem Opfertode Jesu, sondern im Leben und in der Lehre Jesus die Grundlage finden für die dienende Liebe. Es ist wahr, Christus ist für uns das vollkommene Vorbild in unserem Liebesdienst. Er kam nicht, um sich dienen zu lassen, sondern um zu dienen. Er hat uns ein Vorbild gelassen, daß wir sollen nachfolgen seinen Fußstapfen. Es ist auch wahr, daß wir in seiner Lehre die klaren Grundsätze niedergelegt finden für die ganze christliche Liebestätigkeit. Dieses vollkommene Vorbild und diese herrliche Lehre können jedoch nur dann in unserem Leben Anwendung und Verwirklichung finden, wenn wir in Christus den Gekreuzigten und Auferstandenen, den Erlöser von der Sünde erkennen und erleben. Christus kam, nicht um uns das ideale Leben zu zeigen, sondern um uns das wahre göttliche Leben zu geben. Durch seinen Versöhnungstod schuf Christus die Mög-

lichkeit eines neuen Verhältnisses zwischen Mensch und Gott sowie auch zwischen Mensch und Mensch. In dieser Heilstat Gottes wurzelt die dienende Liebe des Christen. Ohne sie wäre dieser Liebesdienst unmöglich. Weiter möchten wir darauf hinweisen, daß

#### b) die christliche Liebestätigkeit in der Heilserfahrung des Menschen wurzelt.

Dienende Liebe entspringt einem lebendigen Glauben an Christum. Glaube und Liebe dürfen nie voneinander getrennt werden. Die Liebe mag die höchste Stelle einnehmen; der Glaube nimmt aber die erste Stelle ein. Der Apostel Paulus gibt uns die rechte Ordnung und Verbindung von Glaube und Liebe in Gal. 5, 6: "Denn in Christo gilt weder Beschneidung noch Unbeschneidensein etwas, sondern der Glaube, der durch die Liebe tätig ist." Liebe ist die Frucht des Geistes, die aus der Glaubensverbindung mit dem lebendigen Christus geboren wird. Nur diejenigen, welche eine persönliche Heilserfahrung gemacht, welche eine Wiedergeburt erlebt, welche teilhaftig geworden der göttlichen Natur, sind innerlich befähigt zu einem Leben der selbstverleugnenden, dienenden Liebe. Nur da, wo die Liebe Gottes ins Herz ausgegossen ist durch den Heiligen Geist, ist es möglich, den Nächsten zu lieben, ja noch mehr, sogar den Feind zu lieben. Feindesliebe, wie sie auch im Prinzip der Wehrlosigkeit zum Ausdruck kommt, ist eine Frucht des neuen Lebens. Wo man die Lehre von der Wiedergeburt in der Gemeinde fallen läßt, wird man auch die Lehre von der Wehrlosigkeit nicht festhalten können. Ein Prinzip, das auf dem Glaubensboden einer Gemeinschaft entstanden ist, kann auch nur auf dieser Grundlage zur richtigen Entfaltung kommen, und nicht auf einem allgemeinen Volksboden.

Die christliche Liebestätigkeit der apostolischen Gemeinde wurzelt in dieser persönlichen Heilserfahrung, im Glauben an Christum. In Apostelgeschichte 4, 32 lesen wir: "Die Menge aber der Gläubigen war ein Herz und eine Seele." Die Liebesgemeinschaft und Liebestätigkeit der ersten Christen war begründet in ihrem Glauben. Das-

selbe kann auch gesagt werden von den Taufgesinnten des 16. Jahrhunderts. Es war der persönliche Glaube an Christus als den Erlöser von der Sünde — nicht nur den Folgen der Sünde, sondern auch von der Herrschaft der Sünde — verbunden mit einem neuen Verständnis des christlichen Lebens als **Nachfolge** und einer neuen Auffassung der Gemeinde, als einer **Bruderschaft**, der die Täufer befähigte zu einem praktischen Christentum, das eine große Anziehungskraft auf die Massen ausübte.

Wir haben als Mennonitengemeinschaft in der Gegenwart ein ausgedehntes Missions- und Hilfswerk. Sind die Beweggründe unseres Dienstes an der Welt sowie an des Glaubens Genossen immer von der rechten Art? Ist es der Glaube, der durch die Liebe tätig ist? Ist es die Liebe Christi zu uns und in uns, die uns dringt zum aufopfernden Dienst? Es ist möglich, daß auch christliche Liebestätigkeit gesetzlich motiviert sein kann. Die Folge wird eine Neigung zur Werkgerechtigkeit sein. Unsere Wohltätigkeit kann sogar politisch motiviert sein. Wenn wir die Hilfsaktionen des MCC und den Freiwilligendienst (Voluntary Service) unterstützen, nur um dadurch bei der Regierung einen gewissen Kredit zu erwerben, und um sie zu bewegen, uns besondere Vorrechte zu gewähren in Verbindung mit unserer Sonderstellung — dann sind die Motive schon nicht ganz lauter. Möge der Herr uns Gnade geben zur aufrichtigen Selbstprüfung auf dieser Linie. In Verbindung mit unserem Thema beschäftigt uns jedoch eine weitere Frage:

## 2. Wie weit erstreckt sich die christliche Liebestätigkeit?

Welches ist das Gebiet, das besondere Feld der dienenden Liebe? Etliche Antworten auf diese Frage:

### a) Einmal erstreckt sich dieser Dienst auf alle Menschen.

Der Apostel Paulus bringt dieses Prinzip klar zum Ausdruck in Galater 6, 10: "Als wir denn nun Zeit haben, so lasset uns Gutes tun an **jedermann**, **allermeist** aber an des Glaubens Genossen." Gott will, daß **allen Menschen**

geholfen werde, und sie zur Erkenntnis der Wahrheit kommen (Vgl. 1. Tim. 2, 4). Dieser Gotteswille soll auch durch die Liebestätigkeit der Gemeinde zum Ausdruck kommen. Bei den Gläubigen soll die christl. Bruderliebe zur allgemeinen Menschenliebe sich erweitern (Vgl. 2. Petr. 1, 7). In seinem Buch "Christliche Ethik" weist Ludwig Lemme darauf hin, daß die christl. Liebesgesinnung sich unmöglich auf die Nachfolger Christi beschränken kann, da die Stellung der Gotteskindschaft allein der Gnade verdankt wird, und das göttliche Gnadenwirken sich auch auf die ganze Menschheit erstreckt. Gott liebte die Welt und gab seinen Sohn zur Erlösung der Welt. Während seines Erdenlebens hat Christus in seiner dienenden Liebe kein Ansehen der Person gemacht. Wenn wir nun die Gesinnung Jesu Christi haben, werden wir willig sein zum Gutes tun an jedermann. Dieses Prinzip hat seinen besonderen Ausdruck gefunden in unserer Äußeren Mission, aber auch in dem großen Hilfswerk, vom MCC geleitet, haben die Brüder versucht, dieses Prinzip zu beachten. Wir müssen hier jedoch auch aufmerksam machen auf den **engeren** Rahmen des Dienstes, der in der Heiligen Schrift klar berücksichtigt wird und den der Apostel bezeichnet mit den Worten: "Allermeist aber an des Glaubens Genossen." Hier ist die besondere Sphäre für die Kundgebung der christlichen Bruderliebe. Der Apostel Paulus sammelt eine Steuer in den heidenchristlichen Gemeinden (vgl. 2. Kor. 7 und 8) für die armen "Heiligen" in Judäa. Also war es eine spezielle Hilfe für die Glaubensgenossen. Als in den Anfangsjahren des Christentums Palästina von einer Teuerung heimgesucht wurde, beschlossen die Jünger in Antiochien, den "Brüdern", die in Judäa wohnten, eine Handreichung zu senden. Diese besondere Berücksichtigung der Glaubensgenossen ist vollkommen berechtigt. Wir finden auch in unserer Geschichte, daß sich dieses Prinzip immer wieder segenreich ausgewirkt hat. Diese besondere Liebe innerhalb der Glaubensgemeinschaft ist und bleibt ein Kennzeichen der Jünger Jesu. "Dabei wird jedermann erkennen, daß ihr meine

Jünger seid, so ihr Liebe **untereinander** habt" (Joh. 13, 35). Es ist höchst notwendig, daß wir in dieser Beziehung das Gleichgewicht behalten in unserer christlichen Wohltätigkeit. Die Beschränkung unserer Liebesgesinnung auf die Glaubensgenossen führt zurück

zu einem jüdisch gefärbten Partikularismus; andererseits wird die Überbetonung der allgemeinen Menschenliebe dahin führen, daß unsere Liebe ihren spezifisch christlichen Charakter verliert. (Fortsetzung folgt)  
J. A. Toews

## Missionary Acculturation

### III. Methods of Missionary Acculturation

(Concluded from the May-June issue)

Here too we must be guided by scriptural principles, of which we will discuss only three.

**1. Scriptural authority in the process of acculturation.** The nationals will, in their curiosity, inquire as to the "why" for the difference in the missionary's behavior, as well as for any change he seeks to effect in them. It is not sufficient for the missionary to have his own reasons for such action. The nationals must not only recognize the nature of the change, but understand the reason for the change as well. It will never do for a missionary to say: "This is the way we do it in America," or only give his personal preferences. The nationals must soon learn that the missionary is under divine authority and that his reasons are absolute, coming out of the book which is a revelation of the true God. Any differentiation from native culture must in the last analysis be based on what the Scriptures say. This way the issue will never be between the native and the missionary, but always between the native and God's Book. The missionary will spare himself endless grief if he knows how to project the authority of the Word rather than merely his personal convictions. The national must recognize that he is dealing with God when he considers the suggested change, not with a foreigner whom he may view as an intruder.

**2. Not by dictatorial methods.** Peter's words are applicable here: "Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (I Peter 5:3). The missionary may enjoy a paternal relationship with the nationals,

but he should beware of patriarchal authority. Because of more knowledge and added light, the danger of manifesting an attitude of superiority must be guarded against. This may often be unconscious. The nationals too will be inclined to look upon the missionary as being superior, but they will be resentful when he uses his advantageous position to force changes in their manner of life. Neither will it be too wise for the missionary to press for favorable legislation. Nationals are sensitive at this point and generate inner animosity. Neither boards at home, nor missionary field councils, nor the national church under the leadership of a strong missionary personality can deal with acculturation most effectively. The preferable way is when such develops upon the initiative of the nationals themselves. It is granted that this may not be the quickest way of accomplishing the goal, but it will be the most effective way. But how do we produce such native initiative?

**3. By a strong teaching ministry.** The mandate of the risen Lord reads: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19-20). Here is a positive program in which the missionary finds his greatest challenge: placing what Jesus has commanded clearly before the nationals, over against his conduct. This places the issue between the national and the word and calls for his own initiative. A thorough Bible study with the national on any subject requiring change is a prerequisite of all missionary acculturation. One of the major problems facing the missionary, for instance, is polygamy. It carries with it

all the "intricate system of responsibilities and obligations that have developed in a polygamous society. A frontal attack alone upon polygamy increasingly is seen to be insufficient."<sup>9</sup> Scripture does not condone it. Yet do we not notice an attitude of toleration in the Bible? Why did Paul find it necessary to include in the qualifications of a bishop that he must be "the husband of one wife" (I Tim. 3:2). Could it not be that not all were husbands of only one wife? Did Moses not for the hardness of the hearts of the Hebrews tolerate undesirable divorce procedures? (Matt. 19:7-8). There may also be room for toleration here, even though we do not sanction it. To rectify such a situation by dictatorial and legislative methods promises untold misunderstandings and emotional resentment. However, a thorough study of the matter in Scripture, together with the national, promises results. In this way he is led to take the initiative and, with the missionary's guidance, he himself takes steps to bring his culture within the scriptural framework. Patient, clear, and uncompromising teaching of "all things whatsoever I have commanded you" is the missionary's responsibility and method.

The decision must largely be left to the working of the Holy Spirit and the volition of the national.

#### Conclusion

The above is indeed an inadequate treatment of missionary acculturation. More source material and time for research are required to do justice to it. Nevertheless, it is my first attempt to think through the problem with the help of such resources as are available. For me his paper will be a stimulation to study further into the problem and find a fuller answer to the issue involved.

1. C. Kluckhohn, *Mirror for Man*, Whittlesey House, McGraw-Hill, N.Y., 1949, p. 17.

2. E. A. Nida, *Customs and Cultures*, Harper & Brothers, N.Y., 1954, p. 236.

3. Eph. 6: 12 (King James Version)

4. J. M. Davis, *New Buildings on Old Foundations*, International Missionary Council, N.Y., 1945, p. 48.

5. E. E. Wallis, *The Dayuma Story*, Marper Bros., N.Y., 1960.

6. Nida, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 195.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 247.

9. Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

J. J. Toews

## PREACHING

### Illustrating the Sermon VIII

(Continued from last issue)

The theologian A. H. Strong comes to mind here as one who made frequent and pertinent reference to incidents from **general history** in both his preaching and teaching. In his time honored **Systematic Theology**, in the midst of a discussion of the providence of God, he declares that "nature is linked to history; the breeze warps the course of the bullet; the worm perforates the plank of the ship. **God must care for the least, or He cannot care for the greatest,**" and cites a goodly number of historical incidents that seem to bear

this out. Among these incidents are, for example, the following: "the storm that dispersed the Spanish Armada and saved England from the Papacy, and the storm that dispersed the French fleet gathered for the conquest of New England — the latter on a day of fasting and prayer appointed by the Puritans to avert the calamity; the settling of New England by the Puritans, rather than by French Jesuits; the order of Council restraining Cromwell and his friends from sailing to America; Major Andre's lack of self-possession in presence of his captors, which led him to ask an improper question instead of

showing his passport, and which saved the American cause; the unusually early commencement of cold weather, which frustrated the plans of Napoleon and destroyed his army in Russia; the fatal shot at Fort Sumter, which precipitated the war of secession and resulted in the abolition of American slavery."

But the right reading of general history and the adroit application of its lessons to preaching, it must be confessed, are difficult in the nature of the case, and probably reserved for the few who, by specific training and special interest, are especially fitted for it. There is another kind of history that affords much readier access to a storehouse of illustrative material for the ordinary preacher, and that is **religious history**, with its components, **church and missions history**.

The real and continuing significance of this segment of history has often been overlooked, wittingly or unwittingly, by serious historians. But in recent years there has become evident a greater readiness on their part to acknowledge its real worth, so that a historian like H. Butterfield, for example, is able to write thus, "The ordinary historian, when he comes, shall we say, to the year 1800 does not think to point out to his readers that in this year, still, as in so many previous years, thousands and thousands of priests and ministers were preaching the Gospel week in and week out, constantly reminding the farmer and the shopkeeper of charity and humility persuading them to think for a moment about the great issues of life, and inducing them to confess their sins. Yet this was a phenomenon calculated greatly to alter the quality of life and the very texture of human history; and it has been the standing work of the Church throughout the ages — even under the worst of popes here was a light that never went out. And in another respect the Church never failed; for, amongst all peoples, whether lettered or unlettered, there have always been those who reached the lightest peaks of the spiritual life... As it only needs a comparatively small number of these kinds of Christians to operate as a leaven that

leavens the whole lump. It is impossible to measure the vast difference that ordinary Christian piety has made to the last two thousand years of European history; but we shall have some inkling of that difference if the world continues in its present drift towards paganism. Here is a fact which blots out and supersedes everything that can be said against the churches in European history."

Genuinely Christian preachers have, of course, been convinced of this all along, and ought, **for that reason**, to have no difficulty in appreciating religious history, and ought to be eager in exploring its rich contents in the search for illustrative material.

As the preacher traverses, first of all, the vast realm of **church history**, he ought certainly to peer into such celebrated works as, for example, F. F. Bruce's *The Spreading Flame* (for the first seven centuries), W. Walker's *History of the Christian Church* (for the next twelve centuries, especially) and K. S. Latourette's *Christianity in a Revolutionary Age* (for the 19th and 20th centuries). And here, if he is alert, he will come upon numerous events that can be effectively worked into sermons — events like the following one from Bruce's study, concerning Patrick of Ireland:

"Another trait which impressed his contemporaries was his steadfastness. This is illustrated by the story of his dealings with Daire, the prince from whom he obtained the land on which he built his monastery at Armagh. At first Daire would not give Patrick the hill for which he asked, but offered him a site on the level land below. About the same time he sent a servant to Patrick with a bronze cauldron as a gift. Patrick accepted it gravely with the Latin words *Gratias agamus* — 'Let us give thank' (that is, to God). 'What did he say?' asked Daire when his servant came back. 'He said *Gratzacham*,' said the servant. Daire, who had expected some more demonstrative expression, of gratitude from Patrick, was annoyed and sent the servant to take the cauldron back. Patrick returned it with the same words, *Gra-*

tias agamus. 'What did he say this time?' asked Daire. He said Gratzacham again,' said the servant. 'Gratzacham when he received it,' said the prince, 'and Gratzacham when it was taken from him? It is a good word, this Gratzacham? And he himself took the cauldron back to Patrick. 'Here is your cauldron,' he said. 'You are a steadfast and unchangeable man.' And he gave him in addition the hill that he had previously asked for, the hill of Armagh, on which he built his cathedral."

And as he lays siege to the adjoining area of **missions history**, the preacher will want to come to close quarters with such fine studies as for instance, K. S. Latourette's **The Unquenchable Light** (for general missions history), P. Varg's **Missionaries, Chinese and Diplomats** (for a special area study), or E. E. Wallis and M. A. Bennett's **Two Thousand Tongues to Go** (for Bible translation history as related to missions). And the promising material that awaits him here may be suggested by the following excerpt from Varg's survey:

"Olin Stockwell, Methodist missionary at Chengtu, saw the old regime collapse and then spent two years in a Communist prison. This tall, angular, and almost Lincolnesque character combined a rollicking humor with a penchant for perceiving the weak spots in everyone's armor. He accepted people about him at their true worth, loved them, and still managed to laugh at himself after two years in solitary confinement. The Y.M.C.A., he said, could quite properly have changed its title to fit its political point of view without changing its initials. He was amused by the naivete of some young missionaries who thought they would be able to work with the Communists but who, when they later found that they had to choose between Marxian dialectic and Christian love, discovered how fully committed they were to the latter, whereupon they scurried off to the nearest consul for a passport. Stockwell had no illusions about the Communists but their utter devotion and zeal struck a kindred spirit in him

and he never underestimated them."

And if his spirit is still doughty and dauntless after such extensive excursions and he ventures forth to explore the more neglected hinterland of **revivalism history**, he ought by all means to examine such stimulating surveys as W. G. McLoughlin's **Morden Revivalism: Charles Grandison Finney to Billy Graham** (for a more general account) and T. L. Smith's **Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-nineteenth-century America** or A. S. Wood's **The Inextinguishable Blaze** (for accounts of specific revival movements). And here, once again, he will uncover many episodes that beckon him — beckon to be used to illustrate truth in sermons — episodes such as the following one from Wood's study:

"The experience itself was not long delayed. But it came to Charles first. Like Jacob, he claimed his birthright before his brother. Another of the Moravians, William Holland, came upon Luther's commentary on Galatians and took it to Charles Wesley, who was lying ill at the house of John Bray in Little Britain. He himself recorded in his Journal for 17th May, 'Today I first saw Luther on the Galatians, which Mr. Holland had accidentally lit upon. We began, and found him nobly full of faith.' Later in the day, he added, 'I spent some hours this evening in private with Martin Luther, who was greatly blessed to me, especially his conclusion of the second chapter. I laboured, waited, and prayed to feel 'Who loved me and gave Himself for me.' It was Luther himself who once said that the whole of religion could be expressed in terms of personal pronouns. Here in his comment on the second chapter of Galatians he urged his readers to 'put a great emphasis on those words 'me' and 'for me.' 'Not Peter and Paul, but me' — and so the Reformation was born. And so first Charles Wesley and then John was enabled in the same way to say 'Not Peter and Paul, but me' — and so the Evangelical Revival was born."

(To be continued)

H. Giesbrecht.

## MUSIC

### The Challenge of School Music

The primary goal of present day advertising is to establish an image for the advertised product. This image may represent power, speed, endurance or any other one of a large number of possible qualities. It may appeal to a broad cross-section of society or it may restrict itself to a very small select group. Whatever the case may be, the point still remains, that the demand for a specific product is determined by the public's image of the product.

We too, as a Mennonite people, have been creating images through the years of our existence. Upon coming to Canada over half a century ago we settled in somewhat isolated communities. Our contact with other cultures and societies was limited. Still, right from the beginning, we were creating certain images. I believe the first image to emerge was that of a devoutly religious people. The name Mennonite was synonymous with genuine religion. A second image which paralleled this first image was one that we may call agrarian. The Mennonites were pious, God fearing farmers. During the past decade, especially with our rapid urbanization, many images have emerged. I believe it would be an extremely interesting experiment for some psychology student to test the various images that non-Mennonites have of us.

By now I am sure some of my readers are beginning to wonder about the place of music in this maze of images. Have we then not always been a singing people? Most emphatically, yes! We have always enjoyed singing. Our churches have fostered very aggressive music programs, but it is only during the past decade that we have made our influence felt to any extent outside of our own confines. Today we are creating a musical image. Personally, I am

very concerned that this image be pure, for it is my strong conviction that this newly created image can become a major thrust in reinforcing our first image — Christian faith.

Let us think together, for a moment, on the challenge of music in our elementary high school curricula.

During the past five years school boards are becoming increasingly more concerned about adequately qualified music teachers. In their dilemma some of them are turning to Mennonite teachers, for they seem most likely to be able to fill the bill. This to my way of thinking seems to suggest a tremendous challenge for the Christian teacher.

Teaching music in a school suggests a number of possibilities. As a first factor one could mention the less restricted curriculums. Although there is a standard material that must be covered in a school music program, there still remains a considerable amount of flexibility and individual freedom to choose material. This can have far reaching effects in influencing the youngsters. Secondly, it could be noted that music tends to break down the rigidity of teacher-student relationship. Music tends to break down barriers and open the way for spontaneous communications. I believe the Christian music teacher has a unique opportunity to show more of his Christian personality in the music period than in any other subject.

One does not want to become known for wild dreams, but permit me to suggest a program which might be implemented in one of our suburban school districts as an experiment. One will not be able to implement such a program in one year, but with long range planning it should be possible. The plan which I am proposing calls for a Christian music teacher to be placed in each one of the schools in a

particular district. Naturally these teachers cannot all apply in one year, but as positions open teachers should be alert and ready to accept these positions.

Apart from the possibilities of the teacher during class periods, I feel there are great opportunities for extra-curricular musical activities. Now I realize that not all children will be attracted by music to the extent that they will be willing to sacrifice extra time for musical activities, but a good number will, and these are the ones we are interested in. Because of the attraction of music for many students one could envision Glee Clubs being formed in each one of the schools. If they are extra-curricular, so much the better, for the teacher can now select his own music. This gives the music teachers a tremendous opportunity to influence their special groups. The very nature of choir work calls for close co-operation, team work, continuous striving for perfection, generally speaking, a fertile situation for Christian witnessing. If the teachers have dynamic personalities and are genuinely excited about their music and keenly interested in their students, they can expect students to accept their invitation to form a junior community choir. This choir will be conducted by one of the teachers of this district, but all the other teachers will be present with their respective choirs making possible a large joint program. This will stim-

ulate great interest and excitement. Assuming that all the music teachers are accompanying their respective choirs, there need be no feeling of apprehension on the part of the students. Two or three times during the year this choir performs at a public concert, to which the parents are invited. Obviously the parents will be extremely proud of their children, and one has every right to assume, equally thankful, for the extra attention given them. This is the beginning of what could become a chain reaction. These children might want to sing in the junior church choir since they are now familiar with choir singing and have had some religious music in this special choir program.

I realize that the program I have suggested is highly hypothetical yet it seems to contain a measure of possibilities if properly administered. We need to look for new ways of extending our Christian influences. I believe the new image we are creating in music will open positions for us which in turn will make possible for us to use music in a unique way to conquer new spiritual frontiers.

Here lies the challenge for the prospective teacher. Prepare academically, and if you have any musical possibilities, prepare musically as well. It will open opportunities otherwise unobtainable.

V. Martens.

#### DANGERS IN THE WORSHIP AND THE PROGRAMS OF THE CHURCH

Abraham Heschel describes the worship of a normal Jewish congregation in the following words. Might there not be some pointers in his complaint also for our churches?

Services are conducted with dignity and precision. The rendition of the liturgy is smooth. Everything is present: decorum, voice, ceremony. But one thing is missing: Life. One knows in advance what will ensue. There will be no surprise, no adventure of the soul: there will be no sudden outburst of devotion. Nothing is going to happen to the soul. Nothing unpredictable must happen to the person who prays. He will attain no new insight into the words he reads; he will attain no new perspective for the life he lives. Our motto is monotony. The first has gone out of our worship. It is cold, stiff and dead. True, things are happening: of course, not within prayer, but within the administration of the temple.

## YOUR QUESTION

Ein Bruder schreibt: "Da ich sehe, daß man auch Fragen einsenden darf, möchte ich eine Frage stellen. Es wird heute manches über das ethische Leben nach der Schrift gepredigt, aber niemals scharfe Grenzen gezeigt, z.B. über Kleidung, Badeorte, Sport, Television u.s.w. Als einmal die M.B.G. entstand, gab man Regeln über Rauchen, Trinken u.s.w. Ist es heute nicht mehr möglich, Regeln zu geben? Ganze Gemeinden, so wie einzelne in dem Gemeindefeld gehen sich in manchen Sachen auseinander."

Ohne Zweifel ist es dem Bruder hoch anzurechnen, daß er obige Besorgnisse heutzutage und zum Ausdruck bringt. Bei der Besprechung wären m. E. drei Punkte hervorzuheben.

1. Die Einstellung zum Rauchen und Trinken. Erfreulicherweise hat die Brüdergemeinde es fertig gebracht, durch Gottes Gnade, an dem Grundsatz festzuhalten, und eine Gemeinde von Nichtrauchern und Nichttrinkern zu bleiben. Bestimmt wird uns das von anderen Gemeinschaften hoch angerechnet. Hoffentlich gelingt es, auch in den Missionsgemeinden das Prinzip festzulegen. Daß wir dabei geblieben sind, ist jedoch kaum allein dem Umstand zuzuschreiben, daß eine Regel da war, sondern der Tatsache, daß diese Gewohnheiten allgemein als Untugenden gestempelt werden. Mancher Raucher, mancher Trinker wünscht, er hätte nie damit angefangen. Es wäre nur zu wünschen, daß die übeln Gewohnheiten nirgends unter unseren Geschwistern Eingang fänden.

2. Das Festlegen scharfer Grenzen. Es fragt sich, ob die Predigt denn wirklich ihren Zweck erfüllt, wenn sie über das Festlegen von Grundsätzen hinausgeht. Manche haben von der Kanzel aus schwere Geschütze abgefeuert. Das Resultat ist in der Regel enttäuschend, da man es dabei bewenden läßt, daß der Redner für den Mut, den er aufbrachte, gelobt wird. Wie sollte man

von der Kanzel aus mehr in Bezug auf Kleidung tun, als Grundsätze festlegen, da das Thema zum weit größten Teil die Schwestern angeht. Zudem müßte man dann auch ganz spezifisch werden und namentlich herausheben, worauf man Bezug hat. Wer könnte es wohl verhindern, sich selbst und andere in peinliche Lagen zu bringen.

Um gegen Sport, Badeorte, Television predigen zu können, muß man weitgehende Bekanntschaft damit haben, und der Umstand weckt Verdacht, daß man sich die Finger daran verbrannt hat, oder daß man nur von Hörensagen spricht und also nicht als kompetenter Zeuge stehen kann.

Zudem ist die Kanzel auch ungünstiger Platz für schwere Angriffe auf einzelne Personen oder Gruppen. Es darf nicht zur Verteidigung kommen; denn das wäre Entweihung der Andachtsstunde. So muß der Zuhörer alles über sich ergehen lassen, ohne sich melden zu dürfen. Das bewirkt niemals ein gutes Verhältnis zwischen Redner und Hörer. Zudem wird die Ermahnung des einzelnen Predigers als persönliche Ansicht gestempelt und damit der Autorität beraubt.

Die Anwendung der Grundsätze auf den einzelnen Fall kommt bei der gegenseitigen Wahrnehmung zur Geltung. Da darf man mit dem Einzelnen die Einzelheiten besprechen und sich gegenseitig über das Für und Wider unterhalten. So kommt es dann zur Anwendung des biblischen Grundsatzes. Dann kann es sich herausstellen, ob der eine zu engherzig, der andere zu weitherzig ist, ob es dem einen an Einsicht dem anderen an Gehorsam fehlt. Wollten wir uns füreinander verantwortlich halten, brauchte der Wunsch nie aufsteigen, daß von der Kanzel mehr getan werde, als die ethischen Grundsätze festzulegen und sie der Gemeinde einzuschärfen.

3. Das Aufstellen von Regeln. Regeln sind Auslegungen oder Deutungen

oder praktische Ausführungen der Grundsätze. Gemeinden und einzelne Glieder einer Gemeinde gehen sich in ihrer Deutung der Grundsätze auseinander. Da gilt es bis zu einem Punkte Nachsicht zu üben, jedoch nur da, wo es an Kenntnis und Erkenntnis mangelt, doch nicht am Gehorsam.

Eine Regel hat nur dann Wert, wenn die Betreffenden den festen Vorsatz haben, diese zu beachten und jeden zur Verantwortung zu ziehen, der dagegen verstößt. Um diese Autorität zu haben, muß die Regel von einer Gruppe gleichdenkender Glieder aufgestellt werden. Je nüchterner der Blick dieser Glieder, je gesünder die Durchsprachen, je sachlicher die Formulierung der Regel, desto besser wird sie als Deutung eines biblischen Prinzips stehen und Beachtung finden. Fanatismus, übereiltes Ver- oder Gebot haben keinen Platz. Sie sind nicht stichhaltig. Ich halte es für möglich, daß wir ganz befriedigende Lösungen finden würden, wenn wir uns Zeit nehmen wollten, die göttlichen Grundsätze bezüglich der christlichen Kleidung, des Besuches von Badeorten, des Sportes und des Fernsehapparates zu besprechen und als Regeln zu formulieren. Allerdings wäre dann auch das Beachten des Übereinkommens verpflichtend, wollte man als

Glied der Gemeinde oder Gruppe bleiben. Wie sich das Nichtrauchen und Nichttrinken in unseren Gemeinden verwurzelt hat, so könnte auch manch anderer Zweig christlichen Betrages tiefe Wurzeln schlagen. Wir werden aber nur dann Resultate erzeugen, wenn wir miteinander sprechen. Von der Kanzel her darf es nicht erwartet werden.

C. Wall.

**WARNING**

The following excerpt comes from one of professor Thieleke's books. Professor Thieleke preaches to large audiences in Hamburg, Germany.

"I believe that the simple fact of the radio, the movies, and other factors in our modern life have had far more influence upon the decision against God than anti-Christian ideologies and misguided philosophies. Not because they . . . set people against God, but because they take up so much of our lives that we no longer have opportunity to ask the question of eternity or listen to its question to us."

**WELCOME!**

- WELCOME! returning faculty members from summer services and summer schools.
- WELCOME! new faculty members into our fellowship of labor.
- WELCOME! returning students for another year of profitable study.
- WELCOME! new students into our college family.
- WELCOME! all brothers and sisters who have a burden for Christian education into our prayer fellowship.

**Orientation and Registration September 24, 25**

## Meditation in Autumn

Autumn walked across our hills last night, and left behind her a trail of glory. Her midnight hand seared the tall grasses and crimsoned the maple leaves. Now, with the rising of the sun, her gold, bronze, and vermilion re-echo down the glades, a riot of soundless beauty. No wind stirs the trees, no voice breaks the stillness . . . only a thoughtful silence reigns where once picnickers laughed in gay delight.

Autumn walked across our hills last night, bringing with her a blaze of color. But in the stillness we can hear again the faint sad echo of a warm, butterfly-filled summer, alive with the drone of bees and the hum of crickets. And there is a certain sadness, that so much of life, too, must pass on its way . . . never to return and fill our hearts with the wonder of a first love.

Autumn walked across our hills last night, and brought a certain maturity to our lives . . . made us realize that we, too, pass this way but once, walking from the spring and summer of our lives into the autumn, ablaze with the garnered fruits of a life-time. And it is in the autumn of our lives that we see, perhaps for the first time, the reason for our being, the reason for all our striving.

M .M. Brown.