

The Voice

of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College

Vol. XII

January - February, 1963

No. 1

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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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Editor: DAVID EWERT

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"So wir denn Zeit haben" (Gal. 6, 10)

Mit dieser Ausgabe des *The Voice* beginnen wir den 12. Jahrgang unseres Blattes. Unwillkürlich werden wir bei der Jahreswende an Gottes Gnadengabe — die Zeit — erinnert. Wenn Gott, der ja der Herr der Zeit ist, uns noch Zeit schenkt, zeugt dieses, einmal, von seiner großen *Geduld* mit einer Menschheit, die nicht erkennt, „in dieser deiner Zeit“, was zu ihrem Frieden dient. Auch spricht die Zeit von Gottes *Gnade*, durch welche er noch immer zur Buße ruft. „Heute ist die angenehme Zeit, heute ist der Tag des Heils.“ Als Gotteskinder werden wir durch die kostbare Gabe der Zeit an unsere *Gelegenheiten* erinnert — Gelegenheiten Gutes zu tun, Gottes Reich zu fördern, und uns dadurch „ein gutes Grundvermögen für die Zukunft anzulegen“ (1. Tim. 6, 19).

In der Schule haben wir ja dauernd ein Zeitgefühl. Der ganze Tag wird von der Uhr und Stundenplänen geregelt. Ende Januar kam unser erstes Semester zu Ende. Sieben Studenten sind zum 2. Semester hinzugekommen. Der Herr gab uns eine gesegnete Missionskonferenz. Auch sie stand stark unter dem Zeichen des Wortes: „So wir denn Zeit haben.“ Es wurden uns die unsäglich großen Gelegenheiten vor die Seele geführt. In einer Zeit zu leben, in der die Gelegenheiten, am Triumphzug des Gekreuzigten mitzumachen, fast unbegrenzt sind, gibt uns ein starkes Gefühl der Verantwortung. Niemand darf sich entschuldigen, denn wir sind umgeben von Gelegenheiten, und wir haben noch Zeit.

Augenblicklich haben wir viele lieben Brüder aus den Gemeinden unter uns. Sie sind zum jährlichen Predigerkursus gekommen. Wir wollen uns gegenseitig stärken, um erfolgreicher in dieser uns gegebenen Zeit das Werk des Herrn zu treiben.

Wir danken für das Einsenden des Lesegeldes. In nächster Zukunft möchten wir unsere jährlichen Erinnerungen aussenden. Wir hören recht gerne von unsern Lesern und empfehlen unser Blatt, wie auch das ganze Werk der Schule, eurer Fürbitte.

D. Ewert

DENOMINATIONAL

Mennonite Colleges in Canada

(Presented at the Seventh Mennonite World Conference, 1962)

The preservation of a distinctive spiritual heritage and the propagation of a distinctive missionary message imply and demand a distinctive educational program on the part of the church. While the church may leave the task of training nuclear scientists to the world, it must assume the responsibility of training God's servants. The Mennonites of Canada have endeavored to discharge this responsibility by establishing Bible schools, Christian high schools, and Bible colleges. The distinctive pattern of college education among the Mennonites of Canada cannot be properly appreciated without an understanding of the importance of the Bible schools in our whole constituency. The first of these schools was founded in Herbert, Sask., in 1913. In the twenties and thirties approximately 18 such schools were founded of which 12 are operating at the present time. Their significance in promoting a deeper spiritual life and stimulating a spirit of evangelism and missions in our entire brotherhood can hardly be over-estimated. The private high schools came into being in the late thirties and early forties to meet a growing need for a general education with a Christian emphasis. The Bible colleges, which were founded in 1944 and 1947 respectively, can be viewed as an extension of the programs offered by the Bible schools and high schools. The latter have also become the main "feeders" for our Bible colleges through the years.

The Mennonite Brethren Bible College, founded by the Conference of Mennonite Brethren in 1944, and the Canadian Mennonite Bible College, founded by the Conference of Mennonites in 1947, both in Winnipeg, were established to meet a growing demand for trained teachers in the above-mentioned schools,

as well as for better trained workers in our churches and mission fields.

I. The Role of the Bible Colleges in our Brotherhood.

In his recent book, *The Bible College Story: Education with Dimension*, Dr. S. A. Witmer defines a Bible college as "an educational institution whose principal purpose is to prepare students for church vocation or Christian ministries through a program of Biblical and practical education" (p. 26). It might be well to differentiate the Bible college in purpose and function from the Christian liberal arts college on the one hand, and from the theological seminary on the other. There are some similarities between the Bible college and the Christian liberal arts college. Both are committed to a Biblical philosophy of education with Christ as the integrating center. In both the need for broad general education is recognized. Beyond this point, however, Christian liberal arts colleges and Bible colleges follow divergent objectives. The primary objective in a liberal arts college is the preparation of students for the various professions and vocations. The emphasis is on liberal arts education. The primary objective of Bible colleges, on the other hand, is to prepare students for Christian ministries and church vocations. Majoring in Biblical studies is therefore at the heart of the Bible college curriculum.

The Bible college also differs from the seminary. Generally, Bible colleges serve the under-graduate area of theological education, whereas seminaries operate on the post-college or graduate level. A further and more significant distinction obtains in objectives: seminaries specialize in preparation for the pastoral ministry, while Bible colleges offer programs for numerous Christian ministries, both preparatory and terminal. We believe that the New Tes-

tament concept of the church and its ministry cannot be maintained if theological training is restricted to the preparation and training of ministers and pastors only. In our Anabaptist and evangelical tradition the emphasis has always been on the concept of the church as a brotherhood in which all members share in the responsibility of the work and witness of the kingdom of God. Such a concept of the church requires a training program which will provide opportunities of preparation for the various ministries and church vocations for both men and women. This New Testament and Anabaptist orientation with regard to the ministry and mission of the church has been a determining influence in the development of the philosophy of education in our Bible colleges and has largely determined the formulation of its specific objectives and the organization of curricula. Some of the specific aims may be stated as follows:

1) To equip the student with a knowledge of the Word of God and to give him the necessary tools for personal study of the Scriptures.

2) To lead the student to a richer knowledge of God as revealed through Jesus Christ, to a deeper fellowship with Him and to a practice of discipleship.

3) To lead the student to a personal sense of mission as expressed through evangelism, foreign and home service, and personal soul-winning.

4) To help the student achieve the basic skills of leadership and communication in order to be able to minister effectively.

5) To give the student an understanding of and an appreciation for our Anabaptist-Mennonite church principles and practices.

The success or failure of an institution must be measured in the light of its objectives. Where are the graduates and ex-students of our Bible colleges today? Practically all the missionaries that have been commissioned by our Canadian churches for service in foreign fields during the past fifteen years have received part or all of their training in these colleges. Many of our teachers in Bible schools and private high schools are also graduates of these schools. This

is also increasingly true of our ministers and pastors.

II. The Program of Studies of the Bible Colleges.

Our colleges offer courses in four areas: theology, Christian education, music, and liberal arts.

1) **The Theological Degree Course** (Th.B.) is based on second year university standing, and represents three years of theological study.

2) **The Christian Education Course** (B.R.E.) is based on first year university standing and also represents three years of study.

3) **The Sacred Music Course** is based on first year university standing and requires three years of study in religious subjects and music. The music studies prepare the student for examination by the Royal Conservatory of Music and for the A.R.C.T. diploma.

4) **Liberal Arts.** Since their inception, both colleges have offered a limited number of courses in general education (arts, languages, and social sciences) as a part of their Bible college program. Accreditation of such courses by the Department of Education in any province of Canada requires an affiliation or a special arrangement with a chartered university. The Canadian Mennonite Bible College has an arrangement with the University of Manitoba whereby students who have taken courses that are recognized by the University are given advanced standing. The Mennonite Brethren Bible College had an agreement for transfer of credit with Waterloo College from 1951-1961. When Waterloo College received a separate charter in 1961 as Waterloo Lutheran University, the Mennonite Brethren College of Arts became an affiliated college of that university by special action of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conference.

The integration of Liberal Arts courses into a theological program has certain advantages. The rather arbitrary distinction between so-called "sacred" and "secular" studies loses its significance when the student begins to realize that the God of Scripture is also the God of nature and of human history. Since, in many instances, the same instructors teach courses in liberal arts

and theology, the student finds it easier to develop a Christian philosophy of life (Weltanschauung). Such a program of instruction, however, also has its problems. It means that teachers must have done graduate work in both theology and arts in order to be qualified to teach in both fields. We are grateful to God for giving us teachers in our colleges who have a thorough training and at the same time are deeply rooted in the life and faith of our Mennonite brotherhood.

In addition to the regular instruction in the four areas indicated above, both colleges conduct evening classes as a special service to friends in the Winnipeg area. Close to 100 people attended these evening courses during the past year. Both colleges are annually conducting special two-week courses for ministers and Christian workers. These courses provide an opportunity for closer fellowship between churches and schools, and promote a greater spiritual unity in matters of faith and practice within the Brotherhood.

The M. B. Bible College has also conducted a "Summer Session of Biblical Studies" for the past 4 years.

III. Character and Classification of Students in our Colleges.

That the colleges serve the needs of their supporting constituencies is seen by the fact that the representation of students from the various provinces is proportional to the church membership in these provinces. In several ways the character and composition of the student body in our Bible colleges differs from that in a Christian liberal arts college. As a rule, only baptized church members who show an interest in Christian service apply for admission to our colleges. This fact obviously has a determining influence on the spiritual atmosphere in our institutions. During the 1961-62 school year, 20% of the students in our colleges were married. Approximately 25% had been engaged in the teaching profession before coming to college, and another 10% had been ministering to the sick as registered nurses. Somewhat less than 10% of our students farmed before entering college, and 10% were engaged in either clerical work or business. Less than

25% of the students in both schools come directly from high school to the Bible college. A relatively large number have attended Bible school. During the last few years the number of students who have university training has been steadily increasing. The average age of students attending our colleges last year was 23.5. There were 100 students enrolled at C.M.B.C. and 150 at M.B.B.C.

The wider background in academic and professional training which our students have gives them greater maturity and seriousness of purpose than is generally found among students in Christian liberal arts colleges. Hence, problems of discipline are virtually non-existent.

The willingness of so many of our young people to sacrifice professional advancement and material rewards in order to prepare for more effective Christian service in church, community, or mission field, is for us a constant source of inspiration and encouragement. We are also grateful to God for the many graduates who return to their chosen profession in order to make their vocation an avenue of a strong Christian witness. Graduates of the two colleges are found today in various ministries in many countries of the world.

IV. Growth and Prospects

Both colleges have experienced slow but steady growth and progress since their inception. This progress can be measured in terms of the expansion of the physical plant of the respective schools.

The Mennonite Brethren Bible College began operation in 1944 with its present Administration Building and one small student residence. In 1946 a larger residence hall was built to accommodate married students as well as single ladies. In 1956, the new library building was erected, which also provides teachers' offices, music rooms, and an auditorium. Additional student residences have also been acquired through the years.

The Canadian Mennonite Bible College held its first classes in 1947 in the basement of the Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. In 1949 the school was moved to a large and beautiful

three-storey building on the banks of the Assiniboine River. By 1955, however, the facilities here were inadequate to meet the needs of the growing student body. In that year the college moved out to a spacious 20-acre campus in Tuxedo, a suburb of Winnipeg. In addition to the large administration building, a students' residence, which houses approximately 90 students, was built in 1958.

At present both colleges are planning to expand their physical plants to accommodate more students. Since both colleges are private, church-related institutions who receive no government subsidies, the operation and expansion of the schools calls for continued sacrificial support on the part of the churches. We are grateful for the growing interest and concern in our constituencies for a Christian training program as offered by our colleges. This growing appreciation has found practical expression in larger grants and donations by churches and conferences for operation as well as for capital investment. The future of these colleges depends largely on the vision, faith, and sacrifice of the churches of our Mennonite brotherhood. On the other hand, their future will be determined by the vision and Biblical orientation of their faculties and administration. Through the years Bible colleges everywhere have

derived their inspiration, their ideals, and their methods for the ministry from the Bible. Their continued usefulness will be determined by adherence to Biblical principles.

A new venture in college education among Mennonites in Canada is the establishment of a "Residence College" on the campus of Waterloo University by several Mennonite Conferences of Ontario. This College, named after Conrad Grebel, the founder of Anabaptism, is to provide a Christian atmosphere as well as instruction in Mennonite history for Mennonite students who are attending Waterloo University. By the time of the next World Conference this new-born child in the Mennonite educational world will have grown up sufficiently for historians to make some pertinent observations about its development and growth.

In conclusion we would like to remind ourselves that, in the final analysis, the existence of Christian colleges and the sacrifices made for their support can only be justified on the basis of their being related to the fulfilment of the Great Commission of Christ. It is our prayer that our Bible colleges may continue to play an increasingly important role in carrying out this missionary assignment under the Lordship of Christ.

J. A. Toews

Was ich im Süden gelernt habe

In dem vorigen Artikel schrieb ich etwas über das Schulwesen unserer Geschwister im Süden. Auch auf andern Gebieten kann man von ihnen lernen.

Wo immer sich die Brüder niedergelassen haben, da merkt man, daß sie sofort mit einer Missionsarbeit begonnen haben. Es gehört ja das Zeugen zum Wesen der Jüngerschaft. „Ihr werdet meine Zeugen sein“, sagt der Herr der Gemeinde. Es war dieses ein klarer Ausspruch über das, was kommen mußte, denn ohne vom Leben in Gott zu zeugen, mußte für die Gemeinde den Tod bedeuten.

Im Chaco fing man schon früh an, mit

den Indianern Kontakt zu suchen. Ich habe die erste Station gesehen, wo sich dann die ersten Geschwister niederließen. Heute ist Missionar Giesbrecht wohl der älteste Missionar, der auch am längsten in der Arbeit gestanden hat. Er hat mir manches über die Anfänge in den Pionierjahren erzählt. Einmal hatte man mit den Indianern keinen Kontakt, denn die Sprache fehlte. Jedes Wort mußte errungen werden. Es bestand keine Schrift, um die Kinder lehren zu können. Heute hat man schon Sprache und Schrift, wenigstens etwas davon.

Wenn man die Gemeinden der In-

dianer besucht und sie die Lieder von der Erlösung singen hört, wird es einem so anders ums Herz. Ein sichtbarer Beweis der Gnade Gottes so wie auch des Missionseifers der südlichen Brüder! Hier kann man sehen, wie Brüder vom Brot abgebrochen haben, um es andern zu geben.

Auch in Uruguay regt sich der Missionsgedanke. Man hat sich schon auf einen Bruder etwas geeinigt und denkt an eine Stadt, wo man vielleicht arbeiten könnte. Wir haben nur hundert Glieder in Uruguay. Wenn die es fertigbringen sollten einen Bruder zu unterstützen, trotz der allgemeinen Armut der Geschwister, dann nehme ich mir den Hut ab. Dann kann man doch von ihnen lernen.

Die Gemeinden in Brasilien haben auch Arbeit unternommen. Die Gemeinden um Curitiba arbeiten unter den Brasilianern in ihrer Nähe. Junge Brüder, die die Sprache beherrschen, predigen und halten Sonntagsschule ab. In Bage sind auch schon eine Anzahl gläubiger Brasilianer, die sich zu einer Gruppe zusammengeschlossen haben. Eine nette Anzahl ist schon getauft worden.

Was will dieses uns sagen? Unsere Geschwister im Süden haben den Missionsgedanken erfaßt und zeigen uns, daß man trotz wirtschaftlicher Schwierigkeiten, doch am ersten nach dem Reiche Gottes trachten kann. Ich glaube es ist für uns im Norden von Bedeutung, daß wir uns mit solchen Bestrebungen bekannt machen. Auch dürften sie in unser Gebetsprogramm eingeschlossen werden. Geschwister in der Arbeit im Süden müßten mehr von diesen Zweigen schreiben. Wenn man so in den Blättern schreibt, erwähnt man vielleicht zu oft die wirtschaftliche Lage im Süden und man bekommt unwillkürlich den Eindruck, daß dort über tausend Brüder leben, die sich nur mit der Existenzfrage beschäftigen. Ich bin dort eines andern belehrt worden. Ich weiß heute, daß man arm sein kann und doch unter den Landsleuten Mission treiben kann.

Oft haben die südamerikanischen Mennoniten bessern Zugang zu den Herzen der Landsleuten. Sie sind eben auch Südamerikaner. Wir sind und bleiben Nordamerikaner. Sie sollen nur mutig

weiter arbeiten, aber es soll auch ihre Arbeit lieb gewinnen und sie mit Energie und Hingabe betreiben.

Das Gemeindeleben des Südens war mir nicht befremdend. Man merkt sofort, daß wir einen gemeinsamen Anfang haben. Für unsere Väter würde diese Welt ja sehr heimisch sein, denn manches ähnelt sich wohl sehr mit dem Gemeinwesen, wie es in Rußland war. In der Kolonie Fernheim versammelt sich die Brüdergemeinde dann und wann in dem schönen Bethause in Filadelfia. Dann versammelt man sich noch in den Dörfern, wohl zusammen mit den Geschwistern aus andern Gemeinden. Die Ordnung in den Gottesdiensten ist einfach, man nimmt sich viel Zeit für die Predigt.

Im Allgemeinen spürt man im Süden einen Hunger nach Gottes Wort. Ich habe bis sechsmal am Tage gesprochen. Ich sprach eine volle Stunde und machte dann Pause. Wiederum lauschte man andächtig auf eine zweite Botschaft, die gewöhnlich auch eine Stunde nahm. Sonderbar, kein Gähnen! Immer wieder hörte man, daß es noch länger hätte sein können. Aber wie man persönlich nach sechs Ansprachen fühlt, muß erlebt werden. Einem ist so, als ob man alles gesagt hat, was man weiß.

Hier könnten wir viel lernen. Ob bei uns die Programme mit den vielen Abwechselungen die Botschaft verdrängen wollen? Um einmal wirklich vom Worte ergriffen zu werden, braucht man Zeit und Ruhe. Der Prediger dagegen muß sich verpflichten etwas zu bieten und nicht langweilig zu sein. Die zwei Botschaften am Sonntag Vormittag, wie wir sie heute fast überall haben, brauchen manchmal etwas mehr Zeit.

Die Sonntagsschule im Süden könnte noch ziemlich gehoben werden. Alte Traditionen sterben schwer aus, und der Weg, den wir in Rußland mit der Sonntagsschule gingen, wirkt sich in dieser Zeit nicht immer aufs Beste aus. Manchmal muß man einfach ein Neues pflügen, wie der Prophet sagt. Es fehlt im Süden an entsprechendem Material. Unser Material zu übersetzen ist oft sehr kostspielig und nicht immer angebracht. Der Lehrgang ist ein ganz anderer als der, den man in den Volksschulen geht.

Es müßten sich dort Brüder finden, die auf diesem Gebiet arbeiten würden, um selber Lektionen herzustellen. Ich glaube sie haben auch schon Männer, die es schaffen könnten.

Ich habe gelernt, daß man in der Sonntagsschule arbeiten kann, ohne besonders viel Ermutigung von der Seite zu empfangen. Die Brüder Willy Janz, Fernheim, und Abram Dueck, Curitiba, und andere tun auf diesem Gebiet gute Arbeit.

Über Gesang zu schreiben, wage ich mich kaum. Doch habe ich Freude am Singen, und der Gemeindegesang ist für alle da. Man braucht das Gesangbuch der Brüdergemeinde, und somit haben wir auf diesem Gebiet ein schönes Bindeglied. Die Chöre singen meistens nach Ziffern. Auch findet man in den meisten Bethäusern schon Instrumente, wenn die Spieler manchmal auch fehlen. Es ist klar, daß der Gesang im Süden nicht so gehoben worden ist, wie bei uns im Norden. Es fehlen dort Männer, die auf dieser Linie Anleitung geben könnten. In Brasilien arbeitet Bruder Gerhard Wall, ein Absolvent unseres Kolleges in Winnipeg.

Das Singen braucht auch nicht besonders kunstvoll zu sein. Wenn nur gesungen wird! Ich mußte feststellen, daß in etlichen Versammlungen, die ich bewohnte, nur sechzig Prozent der Anwesenden sangen. Die andern schwiegen. Dieses ist das Problem in manchen Gemeinden. Man zählt das Singen nicht zum wirklichen Gottesdienst. Zum Beten stehen alle auf, aber nicht ein jeder nimmt ein Buch und singt. Und der Gesang ist auch dementsprechend.

Mir fehlte im Süden die Anleitung für den allgemeinen Gesang. Nicht immer bin ich im Norden froh, wenn man uns zum Singen aufpeitscht: einmal stehen, dann sitzen; einmal singen die Frauen, und dann die Männer. Es kann auch zu bunt werden. Und doch muß ich bekennen, daß man bei uns im allgemeinen lebhafter und mit größerer Beteiligung singt.

Ich erlebte in Neuland ein schönes Sängerfest. Bruder Bruno Epp, von Kanada, hatte eine Kantate eingeübt, die mit Begeisterung vorgetragen wurde. Einzelne Chöre sangen und dann kam das Hauptstück vom Massenchor: „Der

Auszug aus Ägypten.“ Man sah, daß diese Chöre etwas leisten können, wenn sie Gelegenheit und Anleitung bekommen. Bruder Epp tut in Neuland gute Arbeit, die von den Siedlern geschätzt wird. Es müßte auch in Fernheim ein Bruder sein, der sich dieser Arbeit hingeben könnte. Die Brüder, die auf diesem Gebiet Verständnis haben, sind oft schwer mit andern Diensten beladen.

Ich habe gelernt, daß es sich in der Wortverkündigung schwer arbeitet, wenn die Zuhörer keine Bibeln zur Andacht mitbringen. Fast überall merkte ich dieses. Da ich meistens die exegetische Predigt gebrauchte, konnte ich oft nicht auf einzelne Verse aufmerksam machen. Wenn ich es tat, merkte ich sofort, daß nur wenige nachschauten, weil sie keine Bibeln mitgebracht hatten. Warum das so ist, weiß ich nicht.

Mit dem Hintersitzen haben die Geschwister dieselbe Plage wie wir sie bei uns haben. Es muß erfahren werden, wie ein Prediger sich fühlt, wenn er viele leere Bänke zwischen sich und der Versammlung hat. Ich glaube, mancher wäre leicht zu bewegen nach vorne zu kommen. Aber das Abtreten nach dem Gottesdienst ist im Süden geregelter als bei uns. Nach dem Segen setzen sich alle Geschwister. Dann treten hinten oder vorne die Frauen ab. Wenn die Frauen-seite leer ist, fangen die Männer an abzutreten. So etwas, daß alle zugleich aufstehen und auf die Tür drängen, wie bei uns, gibt es im Süden nicht. Das hat mir gefallen.

Ich habe auch in der Evangelisation manches gelernt. Unsere Methoden dürfte man dort nicht überall anwenden, noch sind sie immer die Besten. Mir wurde von einem Feldzug erzählt, den einer unserer Brüder durchgeführt hatte, und zwar mit Händeheben und nach vorne kommen. Nicht einer von den vielen Bekehrten ist heute zu finden. Die Gemeinde hat nicht um ein Glied zugenommen. Gewöhnlich bittet man solche, die sich bekehren möchten, zurückzubleiben. Dann wird mit ihnen persönlich gesprochen. Für Südamerika ist dieses der bessere Weg, denn die Aufforderung zum Händeheben usw. wirkt sich für sie befremdend aus.

Ich habe gelernt, daß man gerne gute Schriften liest, besonders solche die uns

miteinander verbinden. **Die Mennonitische Rundschau** und **Der Bote** werden sehr gelesen. Nur ist es schade, daß die Zusendung in vielen Fällen mit großer Verspätung ankommt. Man liest die Predigten und sonstige Aufsätze. Für viele ist dieses geistliche Speise, die sie genießen, deshalb sollten die Zeitschriften solches beibehalten. Auch werden die nordamerikanischen Neuigkeiten gelesen, und die Geschwister gewinnen ein Verständnis für unsere Lage. Sie werden mit den Gemeinden bekannt und wußten manchmal Einzelheiten, von denen ich nicht wußte. „Wo habt ihr das her?“ fragte ich erstaunt. „Aus der **Rundschau**“, kam die Antwort. Diese Zeitschriften sind gute Bindeglieder. Ich habe ihre Mission schätzen gelernt und will versuchen zu Hause ein gutes Wort für sie einzulegen.

Ich möchte noch ein Wort über den Wandel der Geschwister im Süden sagen. Sie leben immer von einer Kultur umgeben, die oft mit ‚Welt‘ bezeichnet wird. Insofern wie die Kultur aus der Christuserntung herausgeboren ist, spiegelt sie das Denken einer Menschheit ohne Christus wieder. Der Begriff ‚Welt‘ in der heiligen Schrift ist auch ein ethischer Begriff und stellt die Lebensweise einer nichtchristlichen Gesellschaft dar. Aber man darf Sitten und Gebräuche, die uns fremd sind, nicht sofort unter ein moralisches Licht stellen. Die Auswirkungen müßten einmal in Betracht gezogen werden, d.h. wie wirken sich solche Sitten und Gebräuche auf die Menschen aus. Sünde ist immer persönlich und mit dem Menschen verbunden. Sie liegt nicht in dem toten Stoff oder im Ding an sich. Wenn sich etwas zur inneren Entfernung von Gott auswirkt, ist es Sünde, wie sehr der Mensch es auch verteidigen möchte. Was nicht aus dem Glauben kommt ist Sünde. Glauben heißt Annäherung und Hingabe an Gott durch Christus.

Mit vielem, das uns im Norden zum Problem geworden ist, haben die Geschwister dort nicht zu kämpfen. Sie leben vielfach in geschlossenen Siedlungen und sind vielen Einflüssen nicht ausgesetzt. Noch kann man den Unterschied zwischen Christ und Welt sehen. Wenn die Beziehungen mit der Außen-

welt häufiger kommen werden, wird sich sofort auch manches Problem einfinden. In der Stadt zeigen sich schon etliche Probleme. Schade, daß unsere Geschwister vom Norden dort manchmal Unarten wie Lippenfärben und anderes hineinbringen. Wir sollten dieses aus Respekt vor der Ordnung und den Überzeugungen der Geschwister im Süden nicht tun. Wir sollten es auch zu Hause nicht tun. Manche Besucher und MCC-Arbeiter und andere mehr geben zu wenig acht auf diese „kleinen“ Dinge, wie man sie oft zu nennen pflegt.

Noch eines habe ich gesehen. Ich merkte, daß man in etlichen Gemeinden eine Serie von Versammlungen abhalten konnte ohne ein Opfer für den Herrn zu heben. Das war mir fremd. Ich spreche von keiner großen Summe, aber müßte das Geben nicht ein wesentlicher Teil des Gottesdienstes sein? Wie werden Menschen so zum Geben erzogen? Wenn man bei dem Wenigen nicht gibt, wird man auch beim Vielen schwer zum Geben kommen. Wir müßten doch zu allen Zeiten dem Herrn etwas als Gabe darlegen. In etlichen Gemeinden merkte man sofort, daß die Erziehung zum Geben nicht ausgeblieben war.

Höchstwahrscheinlich habe nicht alle Lektionen ganz richtig aufgenommen. Manches aber habe ich gelernt. Die Geschwister des Südens sind mir zum Segen gewesen und ich habe sie herzlich liebgewonnen. Gerne wäre ich noch länger in ihrer Mitte geblieben. Zusammen wollen wir die Arbeit, die Gott uns als Gemeinden aufgelegt hat, tun und somit den Herrn verherrlichen bis er kommt.

F. C. Peters

Christianity can get on with any sort of astronomy, geology, biology, physics. But it cannot get on with a purposeless and meaningless universe. If the scheme of things is purposeless and meaningless, then the life of man is purposeless and meaningless too. Only Christ gives meaning, purpose, and direction to our existence.

MISSIONS

Church or 'Mission', Which?

In the expansion program of the church, the procedure has often called, first, for the establishment of a mission station which eventually was to grow into a church. This transition from 'mission' to church has, as a rule, been a very difficult one. Many problems have been encountered herein. First, who determines when a mission is ready to become a church? Should it be the body that sponsors the founding of the mission, or should it be those who become members of the group within the mission? Next, when should such a transition take place? How long, or up to what point, should the new work remain a mission, and what are some of the symptoms whereby one can recognize its readiness to become a church. Furthermore, what type of a church should it become? Should the sponsoring agency determine this without consultation with the members of the group, or should the group rule on this question, without considering the sponsoring agency? In some instances the problem has been so involved, and the solution has become so difficult, that a mission has remained a mission much longer than was originally intended. The above problems, and others, encountered in the process of transition have led many to ask: Is it Scriptural procedure to start with a mission which is eventually to become a church or should one start with a church right away?

Many have thought of a mission as a probation period during which the group of believers is prepared to become a church. Such a period of maturation is often thought of as a requirement of new converts before they can become baptized and received into the church. In thinking through this problem, we trust you will find the answers below of some value.

1) What does Scripture say with re-

gard to such a probation period? As one turns to God's Word it is difficult to find any support for such a practice. There is no scripture which advocates or implies by practice that such a probation period was intended to be part of God's program. In the case of individual converts we read: "Then they that gladly received His Word were baptized and the same day there were added unto them about 3,000 souls" (Acts 2:41). Philip the deacon met the Ethiopian eunuch for the first time and as soon as the eunuch had come to believe in Jesus Christ, "He commanded the chariot to stand still and they went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him" (Acts 8:38). As soon as the house of Cornelius had come to believe, we read: "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10:47-48). The Philippian jailor experienced a tremendous transformation the night he met with Paul and Silas. "And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes and was baptized, he and all his straightway" (Acts 16:33). The same sequence of events can be recognized in the case of Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened (Acts 16:40-50). Thus, we see that the probation period for individual converts may be difficult to justify from the Scriptural point of view.

Scriptural support for the idea that a group ought to be a mission before becoming a church is equally difficult to find. Jesus just had one name for a group of believers. He calls it, "my church." Neither does Paul speak of a mission anywhere. On his missionary journeys he established, in a few years, small groups of believers in several cities, and on his return trip he "or-

dained them elders in every church" (Acts 14:23). Later, "he went through Syria and Cilicia confirming the church" (Acts 15:41). He knew of churches which we have reasons to believe were small groups of believers. He greets the church in the house of Priscilla and Aquilla (Romans 16:3-5); in the house of Nympha (Col. 4:15); in the house of Philemon (Phil. 1-2). In his epistles, too, Paul thinks of local churches each with an organizational structure and the needed officers, but nowhere do we find a body of believers which is described as a mission, and which were under the direction of 'imported' officers with delegated authority from a parent church in some faraway land. The N.T. knows nothing of such 'missions,' as churches often do today and on which they spend much time and effort, and which they find so hard to change from mission to church.

2) **Where does this concept of missions come from?** Here we must take the historical perspective. The modern missionary movement had its beginning outside of the church. The established churches had lost their missionary vision. Then the Lord moved upon individuals. William Carey, Hudson Taylor, C. T. Studd, and others moved out of England without church support. The Church Missionary Society encountered opposition in the church, particularly when they asked for the ordination of their missionary candidates. Private missionary societies came into being in Germany, Holland, Switzerland and other countries, because the church was reluctant to share their vision of world-wide extension. In America God blessed the Haystack Prayer Meeting and called forth young men like Adoniram Judson, while the church as a whole remained aloof from the great burden of carrying the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth. The question of ordaining missionary candidates became acute when the church, whose duty it was to perform such functions, refused to do so. Mission societies were not only occupied with the support of missionaries but they began to perform a function which rightfully belonged to the church, i.e., selecting and ordaining candidates who were to be sent out.

Many thought it very improper for a missionary society to ordain people for the ministry. This was the prerogative of the church, they held. So, mission societies had to find a new designation, and they called their ordained men missionaries, "thus creating an ecclesiastical office and function hitherto unknown in the church."¹ But the missionary had to orient himself with regard to his own position. He was not a servant of the church but of a society. In the Bible there was no provision for such a position.

The next problem was: Were such men authorized to start new churches? How would they designate the fruits of their labors. What would they call the groups of believers that should come into being? So the term "mission" came into prominence as the designation for a Christian institution. The responsibility for such a designation may be found more in the lack of vision on the part of the home church than in the intentions of the missionaries themselves. Nevertheless, such a situation contributed to the establishment of 'mission stations,' rather than churches.

3) **What is the implied connotation of the word 'mission' in the above sense?** Because of this development, the church at home attached certain qualities of inferiority to a mission and such a connotation still accompanies this term. A mission is often thought of as being heavily indebted to the parent body for all its investments. This intensifies the feeling of inferiority on the part of the new group and strengthens the dominating position of the parental agency. Such thoughts brought with them feelings of dependence of the new group to the sending agency and made it difficult for the new national believers to reach the psychological attitude needed for indigenization. The parent group too often dwelt on the weakness of the new group. Human mistakes and limitations were often viewed as signs of immaturity and intensified the attitude of paternalism in the older group. It was not difficult, then, to anticipate reasoning that a new group of believers was not qualified to become a church immediately.

So often the parent body waits for this new group in the foreign land not

only to become a church according to the Biblical pattern, but also in terms of its western culture. As the parent church continues to support the 'mission' in terms of money, as well as in administration, a body of believers which should long have become an autonomous, self-supporting and self-propagating church in the biblical sense, is retarded in its process of indigenization.

4) When and how should new churches begin? On this point Mr. Stephen Neil simply says, "It is my profoundest conviction that the moment a group of Christians land on the shores of an island on which the gospel has never been preached their first business is to meet together and solemnly say, 'We are the church of X,' or if they prefer it, 'We are the church of Jesus Christ in X.' There may not be a single national in the group. That makes no difference. Those who have come have taken possession of the whole land in the name of Jesus Christ. When any of the nationals believe, they already find a living church in existence in their own land—a living part of the great world-wide church of Christ into which they can be admitted." 2

This sounds rather simple, but we are not convinced that it solves all the problems. A church so begun will no doubt be a church patterned according to the cultural background from which the missionaries have come. A national believer would possibly think more of joining the missionary's church, than a church that he would call his own. No matter what method is employed, it will be difficult to divorce the cultural background of the missionaries from the newly-created church entirely. However, maybe this could be kept at

Man and Time

"The time of man is radically different from the time of things. A thing exists without regard to its beginning or its end. A river flows without a memory of its beginning in the past or a thought of its end in the future. It flows on for a year, or a thousand years without concern about the span of its existence.

a minimum if the missionary would concentrate more specifically on teaching the new converts the biblical principles with regard to church life, and urge the national believers, as soon as there are any to take the initiative, to form a church themselves without following the organizational pattern of a mission. The missionary's duty, according to the Great Commission, is limited more to teaching in two areas: 1) a teaching ministry which is related to the salvation experience and leads to baptism, and 2) a teaching that leads to an observing of "all things whatsoever I have commanded you." This matter also includes teaching nationals how to form a church. Under the stimulation of such a teaching ministry the nationals could then take the initiative and call into being a church that they will consider to be their own church, and this with a minimum of infiltration of foreign cultural elements. Such a church will carry the responsibility of its own administration, support, and propagation. The missionary stands by and watches jealously only one aspect: that the principles of Scripture are observed by the nationals.

Although the above questions and answers do not solve the entire problem of distinguishing between mission and church, we trust that they will be helpful to bring us closer to the biblical pattern of church expansion. Any reaction of readers relative to the problems discussed above will be sincerely appreciated.

1) Stephen Neill, *Creative Tension* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1959), p. 85.

2) *Ibid.*, p. 91.

J. J. Toews

A tree may have ten, a hundred, or a thousand years to live, but it stands oblivious of its life-time, marking only the times of its life. An animal, so to speak, "struggles for its existence." It may resist its predatory neighbor and fight for its survival, but it does not live in its lifetime. The beginning and the

end of its life are apart from the succession of events in its daily existence. At one time it eats; at another it plays; at another it sleeps; at still another it mates. But these different instances of its life have no relation to its birth or its death. There is no living bond, not even an objective, clock-time bond, which binds them together in relation to its life-time. An animal doubtless has memory. It also anticipates the immediate future. But the span of its awareness does not coincide with its life-time. Unaware of its life-time, the animal may resist death at any time, but death does not qualify moments of its life.

This mountain will last a million years as against this flower which will fade away tonight. But the mountain sees no advantage in its longevity and the flower is unmoved by the brevity of its day. The flower does not say, "I live but a day. But the mountain also will one day fall down and cease to be forever." It is only man who contrasts a day with many years, and finds them both a vanity. It is only man who contrasts a day and many years alike with

endless time, and finds them both as the twinkling of an eye. Man alone has a life-time, a time circumscribed by his beginning and his end; a time in which a being confronts non-being, and recognizes the absolute difference between being alive and not being alive.

"The time of a thing is irrelevant to the times of its existence. It exists as though it did not begin and as though it were not going to end. It exists through a period of time. But being indifferent to its beginning and its end, it is related to one moment as it is related to any other. It does not bind the times together into a time in which one moment differs from another by virtue of its unique relation to the beginning and the end of its existence. Thus a thing is essentially non-temporal; it does not exist in the present as over against its past and its future. It exists timelessly, and therefore it is a thing and not a person. It has a succession of states but no history.

"The fact that man has had a beginning and will have an end conditions and qualifies his total existence."

(From "Lust for Power," by Joseph Haroutunian, pp. 48-50)

THEOLOGICAL

The Biblical Doctrine of Sanctification

(Continued from last issue)

V. Freedom from the Bondage of the World

The "world," as frequently used by Paul and John, is the ordered sphere of human existence separated and alienated from God. It includes attitudes, a type of wisdom, and a pattern of life of man in rebellion against God and subject to the god of this age. This much we discovered in Scripture in the last issue. From such a world and its power the Christian has been redeemed. A few relevant passages are the following:

"For whatsoever is begotten of God

overcometh the world: and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4).

"But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me and I unto the world" (Gal. 6:14).

The above Scriptures point to a definite event in the life experience of the believer, which radically changed his relationship to the world. John writing in the present tense (overcometh the world) indicates that a child of God is engaged in an ever-continuing struggle against the world, a struggle which is

characterized by constant overcoming. But this ever-present conquest of the world is based upon a once-for-all victory through faith. The words "hath overcome the world," indicate a completed victory: the victory had been won the moment he believed. It is, therefore, the definitive victory given to the Christian through his faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, which enables him in his daily experience to overcome the opposing power of the world.

Paul, in the above-cited passage, speaks of an event in his own experience when he writes that "the world hath been crucified unto me and I unto the world." His statements are directed against the Judaizers in Galatia, who, in their erroneous doctrines, would lead the church of Galatia to apostasy. They sought to gain a good report among the Jews by insisting on circumcision for the Gentile Christians. By such devious means they hoped to escape the enmity of the Jews. At the same time they had perverted the gospel of grace in Jesus Christ; this syncretistic mixture of law and gospel veiled the cross and its salvation. Therefore circumcision and the glorying of the Judaizers in the flesh of circumcised Gentiles belonged to the sphere of the world. It is in this context that Paul states emphatically that the world has been crucified to him and he to the world; consequently he would have none of the worldly and godless glorying of the Judaizers or of any glory which belonged to the world and not to the cross of Christ. The words, "the world hath been crucified to me" point to an event in Paul's life when this crucifixion took place; the effect of that event endured to the present. The crucifixion had both its objective and subjective aspects. On the one hand, the power and the influence of the world on Paul were dead; on the other hand, Paul's own receptivity of the world was crucified.

The definitive sanctification, claimed here by Paul as actual in his life, took place in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and through Paul's union with him. It is not, therefore, a merit unique to Paul; but is a gift bestowed upon and imparted to every believer who is so unit-

ed to the cross of Christ. The believer may therefore speak with Paul, "the world has been crucified to me."

Scripture also speaks of this crucifixion as a deliverance; the believer has been delivered from the powers of this evil age (Gal. 1:4). This is not an eschatological deliverance but a here and now deliverance. He has been delivered out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of the son of His love (Col. 1:13). He has been chosen out of the world and given to the Son (John 15:19; 17:6). Henceforth he belongs to His kingdom. All this grace is to him in virtue of Christ's redemption; He overcame the world (John 6:33), "having despoiled the principalities and the powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them" (Col. 2:15).

This decisive and staggering redemption from the powers of the world, from the things of the world and from the spirit and life which is the pattern of this world is comprehended in the definitive sanctification betowed upon and imparted to every believer in the initial stages of his Christian life. The believer has been made free: free from the dominion of sin, free from the rulership of Satan, free from the bondage of the world. He is now in the position, under the Lordship of Christ, to serve God, to put sin out of his life and to present his body as a living sacrifice to God.

VI. Freedom from the Old Man

The Bible **does not speak** of the believer as being both the old man and the new man; rather, the Bible speaks of the believer as being a new man in Christ. The old man has been crucified once-for-all; he has been put off. The believer is a new man with a new ethical direction and dynamic. It is incorrect from a Biblical point of view to speak of the sins of the Christian as originating from the old man; nor is it correct to speak of the tension in the Christian as the tension of the old and the new man in him. The Bible speaks of the crucifixion of the old man with a sense of finality:

"Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should

no longer be in bondage to sin" (Rom. 6:6).

"... seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings and have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col. 3:9,10)..

In Paul's usage, the terms "old" and "new" are in sharp opposition to one another; they are injected with concepts of evil and good respectively. When Paul speaks of the old leaven of malice and wickedness and the new lump or unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, he seeks to express the contradiction between the former life in sin and the new life in Christ. Even sharper is the contradiction when Paul speaks of the "old man" and the "new man."

The old man is the old self in the process of corruption, being ruled by evil desires and passions. The old man is the unregenerate man who is ignorant of God's truth and hardened of heart (Eph. 4:18); he is darkened in understanding and alienated from life in God; his life is abandoned to sin (Eph. 4:17,18). The old man has never learned to know Christ and has not entered into vital union with him. In Col. 3:5-9, Paul lists the sinful deeds which are common to the old man, such as fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desires, covetousness, anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking, and lying. This description confirms that the designation 'old man' is applied to one who is unregenerate, and who is under the dominion and control of sin. He is the very opposite of the 'new man,' who has been regenerated and "after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth" (Eph. 4:24). That which is determinative of the new man is his intimate union with Christ. It is this union with Christ which forms the watershed between the old and the new man. "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creation" (II Cor. 5:17). The 'old man' is, therefore, the former self of the Christian, before he was created anew in Christ.

What then has happened to the old man when he came into union with Christ? According to Paul he died; he was crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:6). The word "was crucified" indicates a

decisive crucifixion. Because it is a crucifixion with Christ it partakes of the same finality; just as Christ's crucifixion was a once-for-all crucifixion, so the believer's crucifixion has been once-for-all. The old man is dead. This is also the marvelous truth which Paul sets forth in his letter to the Colossians. He reminds them that they "have put off the old man with his doings and have put on the new man" (Col. 3:9, 10). Again we find the indication that the stripping off of the old man and the putting on of the new man are completed acts. The new man is not put over the old man. Rather, Paul's figure is that the old man has been put off completely, and the new man has been put on completely. To speak of the justified believer as being both the old man and the new man, or to say that the old man is still in the new man in a subordinate way, is not only a distortion of the figure Paul uses, but also a modification of the important truth he wants to teach. (The only passage which would appear to oppose the above interpretation is Eph. 4:22-24. Grammatically this passage can be interpreted, either as an exhortation to put off the old man, or as an indicative statement of the fact that this has already been accomplished. From the point of view of exegetical considerations and the clear teaching of parallel passages, I consider the latter interpretation to be correct.)

The crucifixion of the old man and the putting on of the new man has revolutionary ethical effects on the believer. The sinful desires and passions which formerly determined his life no longer **rule** over him. That which is most characteristic of his life is a holy and righteous life. By these words Paul points out what a profound and complete break with sin has occurred in the life of the believer. He has been redeemed from bondage; in every sphere of his personality the **rule** of sin has been decisively overthrown. He is a new creature in Christ, endowed with new powers of life from God, which enables him to fight against sin in his life and in the world, and which enables him to yield the members of his body as instruments of righteousness to God.

VII. The New Lordship

We have observed that union with Christ through faith effected a radical change in the believer; through a sanctifying act of God he was made free. He was freed from the dominion of sin, Satan and the world; the old man was crucified. But such a momentous overthrow of his former masters, who gave character and direction to his life, did not create a power vacuum in the believer's life. Rather, it was a new Lordship established in his life which ousted his former masters. It is this new lordship, consisting of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, which now transforms the believer and gives direction to his life. This fact permits Paul to sound the note of triumphant freedom in the words: "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law but under grace" (Rom. 6:14). The strength of this assertion rests upon the fact that the believer is under a new mastery; grace now reigns. To be "under grace" must mean to be subject to its effectual power and influence. Its potency is contrasted to the impotency of the law; its might is more powerful than the power of sin; the reign of grace excludes the reign of sin!

In the first epistle of John, the new lordship is expressed in terms of the keeping power of Jesus Christ. John's words are: "We know that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not; but he that was begotten of God keepeth himself (him), and the evil one toucheth him not" (5:18). We have in a previous issue explained the meaning of "sinneth not" as it applies to the believer. What is of significance here is the second statement which gives the reason for the new life of the Christian. The evil one cannot bring the believer into his earlier servitude because "the begotten of God" keeps him. The "begotten of God" in the latter statement undoubtedly refers to Jesus Christ, the eternally begotten one. (This is quite apparent in the best readings of the Greek text.) John is comforting the believer who is engaged in a struggle against sin, pointing out to him that Jesus Christ by his superior might and power keeps the Chris-

tian from the evil one. The thought that Christ keeps the believer is not strange in Scripture. In John 17:12 Christ prays for those who had been given to him of the Father making reference to his own keeping power. A similar thought is expressed in John 10:28,29, where Christ emphasizes the security of the believer in His hand and in the Father's hand. Here the keeping power of Christ and the Father are coordinated. All this indicates that the evil one, strong as he may be in the world, cannot lay a **ruling** hand upon the believer because Christ is exercising the controlling influence upon his heart and life.

The new lordship in the life of the believer is brought to bear upon him through the impartation of life. Death to sin was a pre-condition to a "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). The "life" is the new directing element in the believer's walk. The believer has become "alive unto God in Christ Jesus." The new life given to him is Christ himself: He is the eternal life, the bread of life; His words are spirit and life; He came to give life. As the resurrected and exalted Lord, Christ is the source of a constant emanation of power, life and grace which are continuously operative in those to whom He is united. Paul could, therefore, testify: "I have been crucified with Christ: and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20).

The life in Christ is closely related to the Holy Spirit. The richness and fullness of the Holy Spirit's work in the believer may be expressed in the comprehensive concept of "life"; he is the Spirit of life (Rom. 8:2); He gives life (II Cor. 3:6). The Holy Spirit is particularly active in communicating Christ to the believer. So closely are the two related that to be "in Christ" also means to be "in the Spirit" (I Cor. 1:30; Rom. 8:9). The walk of the Christian is described as a walk in the Spirit or according to the Spirit. Paul characterizes the believer as one who is led by the Spirit of God (Rom. 8:14); this is pre-eminently the mark of the sons of God. The new lordship in the life of the believer must, therefore, include the powerful force of the Holy Spirit.

We must not exclude the activity of the Father in the new lordship which has taken possession of the believer. His relationship to the Son and the Holy Spirit in the activity of conveying life to the believer is very intimate. The Father as well as the Son sends the Holy Spirit (John 14:16,17; 15:26; 16:7). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God. In other

words, the dynamic new lordship of the believer consists of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. It is supremely the Holy Spirit who, through His indwelling of the believer, is the leading and directing agent in his life. It is this fact which enables and encourages the Christian in his struggle for righteousness.

Victor Adrian

Die Wertschätzung des Alten Testaments

Während des zweiten Jahrhunderts nach Christo gründete Markion von Pontus 'markionische' Gemeinden. Trotzdem daß die römische Gemeinde ihm nicht ihren Segen gab, breiteten sich Markions Gemeinden rasch aus. Um das Jahr 150 n. Chr. waren im ganzen römischen Reich markionische Gemeinden zu finden. Nun entspann sich ein harter Kampf zwischen der 'apostolischen' Gemeinde und der markionischen. Markion war als Irrlehrer gestempelt worden, und seine Irrlehren wurden in griechischen, lateinischen und syrischen Schriften bekämpft. Schon in der Mitte des zweiten Jahrhunderts haben wir eine getrennte Kirche.

Was war es denn eigentlich, das die Kirche trennte? Im Grunde genommen ging es um die Frage des Alten Testaments. Nach Markions Ansicht, war die Gemeinde eine Neuschöpfung Gottes, im Gegensatz zum Judentum. Aus dem Grunde verwarf er das Alte Testament gänzlich. Er konnte den Gott des A.T. nicht mit dem des Neuen veröhnen. Sein Ideal war der Apostel Paulus, und weil der neutestamentliche Kanon noch flüssig war, schuf Markion eine Neues Testament, bestehend aus 10 paulinischen Briefen und dem Lukas Evangelium. Indirekterweise wurde Markion der 'apostolischen' Kirche dadurch zum Segen, denn sie mußte nun auch ein Wort über die Sammlung der Bücher des Neuen Testaments sagen.

Dadurch daß die 'apostolische' Gemeinde Markions Ansichten verurteilte, hatte sie sich zum Alten Testament bekannt. Sie war sich auch des 'Neuen',

das Gott am Pfingsttage getan hatte, bewußt, aber sie wollte das Christentum nicht von seinen geschichtlichen Wurzeln trennen. Die geschichtlichen Wurzeln der Gemeinde waren tief im Alten Testament verankert. Dadurch, daß die 'apostolische' Gemeinde sich weigerte, das Alte Testament aufzugeben, war sie nun gezwungen die Bedeutung des Alten Testaments für die neutestamentliche Gemeinde zu beweisen. Das war nicht so einfach. Bis auf den heutigen Tag werden immer wieder Versuche gemacht neues Licht auf das Verhältnis des Neuen Testaments und der neutestamentlichen Gemeinde zum Alten Testament zu werfen. Noch in diesem Jahrhundert erlaubte sich der Gelehrte, Adolf von Harnack, ein Urteil über das Alte Testament, welches dem des Markion sehr ähnlich war. Ihm tat es leid, daß dasselbe Urteil, das Martin Luther über die Apokryphen gefällt hatte, nämlich, „gut zu lesen, aber nicht der Heiligen Schrift gleichzustellen“, nicht auch über die alttestamentlichen Bücher verhängt worden war.

Solch ein Urteil berührt uns peinlich, und wir würden es nicht nachsprechen wollen. Und doch urteilen manche Bibelleser im Innern gerade so. Die Gemeinde Jesu Christi hat das Alte Testament durch viele Jahrhunderte festgehalten. Nicht immer hat sie es recht eingeschätzt. Auch unsere anabaptistische Vorfahren standen in Gefahr das Alte Testament in den Hintergrund zu schieben. Zum Teil lag bei ihnen ein geschichtlicher Grund vor. Die Reformatoren fanden nämlich im Alten Testa-

ment wertvolle Anhaltspunkte für den Kirchen-Staat. Die Anabaptisten rangen um ein neutestamentliches Gemeindeideal.

Es tut not, einmal etwas über die Wertschätzung des Alten Testaments zu sagen. Wir wollen dieses versuchen zu tun indem wir die Methoden examinieren, die man angewandt hat, um das Alte Testament zu einem ‚christlichen‘ Buch zu machen, und um die bleibenden Werte des Alten Testaments für die neutestamentliche Gemeinde zu finden.

I. Die christologische Erklärung des Alten Testaments.

Die ersten Christen kamen aus den Juden. Sie hatten dasselbe Bibelbuch als die Juden: das Alte Testament. Aber sie hatten nicht denselben Glauben. Dieselbe Bibel, aber einen andern Glauben! Dafür mußten die Christen eine Erklärung geben. Sie mußten beweisen können, daß sie den rechten Glauben hatten. Das konnten sie nur durch die Heilige Schrift tun. Die Folge davon war, daß das Alte Testament neu erklärt wurde. Die Predigten in der Apostelgeschichte, die Briefe der Apostel und auch die Evangelien zeugen von der christologischen Auslegung des Alten Testaments in der apostolischen Zeit. „Es steht geschrieben“; „Damit erfüllt würde was durch den Propheten gesagt wurde“; „Wie geschrieben steht im Gesetz, den Propheten und den Psalmen“ — so tönt es durchs ganze Neue Testament. Während die Messias Hoffnung der Juden, auf das Alte Testament gegründet, noch Zukunftserwartung war, war diese Hoffnung der Christen, wiederum auf das Alte Testament gegründet, durch das Kommen Jesu erfüllt worden. „Ihr suchet in der Schrift . . . und sie ist's die von mir zeuget“ (Joh. 5, 39-44).

Für das spätere Christentum ist es nun immer eine Frage gewesen, inwiefern man den neutestamentlichen Schreibern in der messianischen Erklärung des Alten Testaments folgen darf. Darf man nur soweit gehen wie sie gegangen sind, oder darf man noch weiter gehen? Manche Bibelleser sind in der christologischen Erklärung des Alten Testaments zu weit gegangen. Sie sehen Christus überall: in jeder Farbe der

Stiftshütte, in jedem Psalm, in jeder Weissagung, in jeder Geschichte. Das führt aber zu keinem erbaulichen Lesen des Alten Testaments.

Aber wenn wir die Psalme lesen, sollten wir nach der Botschaft der Psalme für unsere Zeit fragen. Wenn wir die Propheten lesen, fragen wir nach der Botschaft der Propheten für uns als Christen heute. Und so auch die Geschichtsbücher! Die Schreiber des Neuen Testaments haben zur Genüge bewiesen, daß das Alte Testament ein ‚christliches‘ Buch ist, und wir brauchen keine weiteren Beweise geben, indem wir in allen Kapiteln Weissagungen auf Christus suchen — und finden. Das Alte Testament ‚christologisch‘ zu lesen, bedeutet, daß wir, die wir Christus als den Vollender der alttestamentlichen Offenbarung erkannt haben, die göttliche Botschaft des Alten Testaments — die in einem ganz anderen geschichtlichen Rahmen gegeben wurde — lernen richtig auf unser Leben in der heutigen Zeit anzuwenden.

II. Die allegorische Erklärung des Alten Testaments.

Bei dem Versuch überall im Alten Testament Christus zu finden, liefern christliche Leser Gefahr, das Alte Testament allegorisch auszulegen. Ein Beispiel aus dem Barnabas-Brief (der nicht zum neutestamentlichen Kanon gehört, trotzdem er in alten Bibel-Handschriften zu finden ist) dürfte illustrieren was hier gemeint ist. Der Schreiber fragt sich beim Lesen von Genesis 14, was es wohl bedeute, daß Abraham den fremden Königen mit 318 Knechten nachjagte und Lot befreite. Die griechischen Buchstaben für die Zahl 318 sind I-H-T (I, 8; H, 10; T, 300). IH sind die ersten zwei Buchstaben im Namen ‚Jesus‘ (im Griechischen) und das ‚T‘ sieht aus wie ein Kreuz. Also hat jene Geschichte einen tiefen Sinn, sie redet von dem Gekreuzigten. Ein frommer Versuch die ‚tiefere‘ Bedeutung des Alten Testaments zu erkennen, aber lauter Unsinn.

Klemenz von Alexandrien, berühmter Lehrer des 2. Jahrhunderts, konnte manche Geschichten des Alten Testaments schwer verstehen. Sie schienen ihm vul-

gar und grotesk zu sein. Er sah nur einen Ausweg: die allegorische Erklärung des Alten Testaments. Seine Methode, die von andern weiter entwickelt wurde, hat das ‚erbauliche‘ Lesen des Alten Testaments bis auf den heutigen Tag beeinflusst.

Markion verwarf die allegorische Auslegung gänzlich. Er vertrat die buchstäbliche Auslegung des Alten Testaments. Weil er das Alte Testament rein geschichtlich verstand, konnte er es auch nicht zu einem ‚christlichen‘ Buch machen und verwarf daher das ganze Alte Testament. Er hatte die Wahl, das Alte Testament durch Allegorie zu einem ‚christlichen‘ Buch zu machen, oder es buchstäblich zu verstehen und somit als ‚nicht-christlich‘ zu verwerfen. Ein Beispiel! Der Prophet Nathan verheißt dem König David (2. Sam. 7, 12), „Wenn nun deine Zeit hin ist, daß du mit deinen Vätern schlafen liegst, will ich deinen Samen nach dir erwecken, der von deinem Leibe kommen soll; dem will ich sein Reich bestätigen.“ Für Markion bedeutete diese Verheißung, daß David einen Sohn (Salomo) haben würde. Die ersten Christen sahen in dieser Verheißung mehr als eine Verheißung auf Salomo. Für sie war dieses eine Verheißung auf Christus, dem größeren Sohn Davids. Damit verwarfen sie aber die buchstäbliche Bedeutung nicht. Markion hatte mit der allegorischen Auslegung des Alten Testaments zugleich die legitime christologische verworfen.

Jedoch, wenn wir uns die allegorische Auslegung der Schrift ansehen und merken was für Unfug damit schon im 2. Jahrhundert getrieben wurde, können wir Markions Protest besser verstehen. Im Grunde genommen war die allegorische Auslegung von den Griechen übernommen worden, die hinter dem ‚offenbaren‘ Sinn ihrer Literatur einen ‚tieferen‘ zu finden versuchten. Diese Methode der ‚Schrifterklärung‘ wurde von den alexandrinischen Juden auf das Alte Testament angewandt und auf die Spitze getrieben. Nach der platonischen Lehre von dem dreifachen Wesen des Menschen war die buchstäbliche Erklärung (der Leib) die elementarste, die moralische (die Seele) etwas höher, und die allegorische (der Geist) die höchste. Sie meinten es gut. Sie

wollten das Alte Testament zu einem christlichen Buch machen. Aber sie verwechselten Typologie, Christologie und Allegorie. Dadurch wurde der geschichtliche Sinn und die geschichtliche Botschaft des Alten Testaments verdunkelt. Anstatt in der Geschichte der Heirat Isaaks die geschichtliche Bedeutung und praktische Anwendungen fürs Leben zu finden, phantasierte man darüber was wohl Isaak bedeute (Christus); Rebekka (die Gemeinde); Elieser (der Heilige Geist). Und wer weiß, was die Kamele und die Ringe bedeuten mögen? Desto reicher die Phantasie, desto ‚tiefer‘ die Erklärung. Kein Wunder, daß Markion von solch einem Gebrauch des Alten Testaments nichts wissen wollte! Wir brauchen auch nicht diesen Weg einzuschlagen, um das Alte Testament zu einem ‚christlichen‘ Buch zu machen.

III. Die typologische Erklärung des Alten Testaments.

Bei der christologischen Erklärung des Alten Testaments gehen wir in den Fußspuren der Apostel, nur müssen wir aufpassen, daß wir ihre Spuren nicht zu breit treten. Die allegorische Methode wird vom Neuen Testament zurückgewiesen. Paulus benutzt sie einmal, in Gal. 4, 24, aber in dem Fall sagt er ganz frei: dieses ist Allegorie. Bei der typologischen Erklärung haben wir im Neuen Testament wieder starke Anhaltspunkte. Die Apostel sahen im Alten Testament nicht nur prophetische Weissagungen, sondern auch prophetische Bilder, wie z.B. Melchisedek.

Für das Christentum war die Typologie ein sehr geeigneter Weg das Alte Testament ‚christlich‘ zu machen. Nur stand diese Methode immer in Gefahr der Allegorie zum Opfer zu fallen. Wenn die Arrangierung der Möbelstücke in der Stiftshütte das Kreuz Christi darstellen; wenn die rote Farbe irgend eines Tuches vom Blut Christi spricht; wenn das Holz des Altars Jesu Menschheit und das Gold seine Gottheit Vorbildern — wo fängt Typologie an und wo hört sie auf? Sie hört da auf, wo der Leser aufhört neutestamentliche Gedanken in alttestamentliche Bilder hineinzutragen. Desto reicher die Vorstellungswelt, desto ‚tiefer‘ die Einsicht.

Solche Erklärung führt gewöhnlich mehr zur Bewunderung des Auslegers als zur Erbauung der Gemeinde.

Also muß für diese Art von Auslegung ernstlich nach einer Norm gesucht werden. Für einige ist die Norm das Neue Testament. Sie erlauben sich nur die alttestamentlichen Bilder als typologisch zu betrachten, die im Neuen Testament so betrachtet werden, wie z.B. das Opferwesen, der Bundesschluß, die Stiftshütte, Moses, Melchisedek, die eherne Schlange, usw. Es ist immer gefährlich, wenn man in der Typologie über den neutestamentlichen Rahmen hinaus will. Nicht nur kann man auf dem Wege dem Alten Testament zuweilen einen ganz fremden Sinn beilegen, sondern man verdeckt auch die Botschaft dieses Buches.

Während die allegorische Auslegung unberechtigt ist, weil sie ihren Weg unabhängig vom buchstäblichen Sinn der alttestamentlichen Schriften geht, ist die typologische Erklärung berechtigt, weil sie den buchstäblichen Sinn stehen läßt und die Einheit der göttlichen Offenbarung vom Neuen Testament aus illustriert. Jedoch es gilt mit dieser Methode sehr sauber umzugehen. Auch muß man immer ihren beschränkten Wert erkennen, denn was man aus

dem Neuen Testament ins Alte Testament zurückliest, ist ja auch im Neuen Testament zu finden. Zum Beispiel, man predigt über die Rettung von der Flut durch die Arche und schildert an Hand dieser Geschichte wie Christus uns vor den Fluten des göttlichen Gerichts beschützt. Aber diese Wahrheit kann man aus vielen Texten des Neuen Testaments herausnehmen. Warum darf diese alttestamentliche Geschichte nicht in ihrem geschichtlichen Rahmen stehen bleiben? Hat sie nicht eine Botschaft von der göttlichen Geduld und Gnade, von seiner Gerechtigkeit und seinem Zorn? Mahnt uns diese Geschichte nicht wacker zu sein in einer Zeit wo das Übel solche Ausmassen erreicht? Solche Betonung kann erbaulich sein. Dagegen, wenn man nur eine typologische Studie aus der Geschichte macht, wird sie akademisch interessant, aber spricht nicht in unser tägliches Leben hinein.

Wir müssen uns noch eingehender mit der ganzen Frage des Gebrauchs des Alten Testaments beschäftigen. Es müssen noch andere Wege gefunden werden, die uns als neutestamentliche Gläubigen zu einer größeren Wertschätzung des Alten Testaments führen. Darüber ein anderes mal.

D. Ewert

MUSIC

Toward Better Congregational Singing

Holy Scriptures teach, among other lessons, an extremely important doctrine, namely, the priesthood of all believers. This teaching, although practiced by the early church, lost its place under the ever-increasing influence and power of the Roman Church, which dominated the Christian scene during the middle ages. It took a Martin Luther to ignite the fires of reform in 1512, and to bring into focus once more the individual's responsibility in spiritual matters. The Reformation restor-

ed the Bible and the hymnbook to the people, thus making it possible for them to receive divine communication through the reading of God's Word. Furthermore, they could now worship God and testify to their faith by the singing of hymns. To the individual was granted once again the privilege and the responsibility of approaching God directly through prayer and hymn.

Over the past four centuries the Protestant Church has considered the hymn to be at the very heart of her existence.

Great spiritual movements of the past have invariably been accompanied by periods of revitalized congregational singing. At the same time we must admit that there have always been periods when congregational singing has been somewhat lethargic. It seems to me that exactly in times such as these, when hymn singing has become somewhat anemic, the church has accepted certain crutches to assist in coping with the problem without checking some of the Biblical imperatives regarding congregational singing in order to assist her in gaining new incentive.

Exactly in the area of congregational singing many of our churches are facing a problem at this very moment. The fact that one is frequently asked for suggestions on how to improve congregational participation in the singing of hymns brings out this point very clearly. To be sure, some have found a partial solution in securing the assistance of a song leader. Others have forsaken the piano with preference for the organ, hoping thereby to improve the general tone of congregational singing. I am willing to concede that here are good solutions, and I hope, in some later issue, to treat the responsibilities of the song leader and of the organist. However, these are only partial solutions and can never be substituted for a deep understanding of the Christian's responsibility in congregational singing.

In the first place, then, we should realize that a Christian MUST participate in congregational singing. The Psalms are full of passages like, "Sing praise to God, sing praise," and again, "Let the nations be glad and sing for joy." The New Testament, too, speaks to this point. Paul admonishes us in Col. 3:16, "to sing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." The writer of Hebrews points out in Hebrews 13:15: "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." In the hymn we can offer this "sacrifice of praise" together as a congregation. We notice that singing is a biblical imperative. Once a congregation realizes that participation is not a matter of whether or not one feels like it, but that it is a command, the pro-

blem of half-hearted participation will disappear. Paul seems to place prayer and singing on the same level when he writes, in I Cor. 14:15, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." Some members of the congregation may feel that singing involves work, but so does prayer. To these people John Wesley would say: "Sing all. If it be a cross to you, take it up and it will prove a blessing." In fact, John Wesley was so convinced of the importance of meaningful hymn singing that he listed several practical rules which help to improve the singing in any church, as follows:

1) Learn these tunes before you learn any others; afterwards learn as many as you please.

2) Sing them exactly as they are printed here, without altering or mending them; otherwise, unlearn it as soon as you can.

3) Sing all. See that you join with the congregation as frequently as you can! Let not a slight degree of weakness or weariness hinder you. If it is a cross to you, take it up and you will find it a blessing.

4) Sing lustily and with good courage. Beware of singing as if you are half dead or half asleep; but lift up your voice with strength. Be no more afraid of your voice now, nor more ashamed of its being heard, then when you sing the songs of Satan.

5) Sing modestly. Do not bawl, so as to be heard above and distinct from the rest of the congregation—that you may not destroy the harmony—but strive to unite your voices together so as to make one clear melodious sound.

6) Sing in time. Whatever time is sung, be sure to keep with it. Do not run before nor stay behind it; but attend close to the leading voices, and move therewith as exactly as you can; and take care not to sing too slow. This drawling way naturally steals on us all who are lazy; and it is high time to drive it out from among us, and sing all our tunes just as quick as we did at first.

7) Above all, sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing Him more than yourself, or any other creature. In order

to do this, attend strictly to the sense of what you sing, and see that your heart is not carried away with the sound, but offered to God continually; so shall your singing be such as the Lord will approve here, and reward you when He cometh in the clouds of heaven.

In the second place, the congregation must THINK when she sings. Referring again to I Cor. 14:15, Paul says, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." Psalm 47:8 reads as follows: "For God is king of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding." We must never fall into the error of thinking that congregational singing is successful if we achieve merely physical participation. Mental and spiritual participation is of greater and longer lasting significance; everyone should know why, what, and to whom he is singing.

Paul admonishes the Corinthian Christians to pray so that the brother can hear and be edified. We can safely carry this principal into congregational singing as well. We are to sing so that our neighbors can hear us and in turn can become inspired to join in praise to God. There is absolutely no place in the church for the person who refuses to become involved physically, mentally and spiritually.

PREACHING

Illustrating the Sermon (X)

To be generally aware of the specific functions and possible sources of illustrations for the sermon is something; to consistently use them to best advantage in actual preaching is more! The first requires (mainly) knowledge, of a kind; the second requires several other things beside, such as: mental and spiritual discernment, homiletical skill and psychological tact. Illustrations, though suggestive in themselves, have nevertheless, been known (as E. P. Clowney once reminded read-

In the third place, we must be prepared to permit the Spirit to speak to us when we sing. We read in II Chronicles 5:13-14: "It came to pass, as the trumpets and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praise and thanking the Lord; that then the house was filled with a cloud even the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord." Even so God is willing, through the Holy Spirit, to speak to us if we sing with the spirit and with the understanding. We can and we must expect God to bless us as we sing. Let us not, however, mistake what is really just a "thrill" or physical stimulation, for a blessing. As Urang points out, "There is no blessing in a thing unless God is in it; there is no blessing but that which He bestows."

This, then, is the charge to the congregation. Lest we blame the song leader, the organist or, for that matter, any outward circumstances, for the poor state of affairs in our singing, let us first look at ourselves. May we remind ourselves that according to God's Word the Christian MUST offer up to God the sacrifice of praise.

Victor Martens

ers of *Christianity Today*) to actually weaken the central structure of a sermon (because there were too many of them sprawled across the whole), or to transport hearers to the "wrong fairway" (because the illustrations, as introduced, were only "red herrings" and not "pointers to essential truth"), or else to lose bemused hearers altogether (because the illustrations were so awkwardly managed throughout). But if good illustrations are to serve the purposes outlined earlier in this series—

and serve them well—they must, like the proverbial race horse, "be **harnessed, be lean and fresh, and move fast on the inside track.**"

This allusion to "horse racing" possibly suggests three simple principles to be kept in mind for the best use of illustrations **with respect to a given point or truth within the sermon.** (Later, we propose to say something, also, about the best use of illustrations **with respect to the sermon, and its hearers, in general.**) These three principles may be formulated in the following manner:

1. **The illustration ought to illumine a particular truth as directly and precisely as possible.** This principle seems obvious and elementary enough, and yet it is frequently ignored or ineptly applied. The successful application of it to preaching requires, very often, a perceptive understanding of both the point to be illustrated and the object, phenomenon, or situation to be used to illumine that point, as well as of the main likeness or analogy between them. C. H. Spurgeon, we know, realized that this was not so simple a matter and therefore provided for special exercises in the recognition and application of analogies while instructing his homiletical students. E. P. Clowney (in *Preaching and Biblical Theology*) speaks of this matter in connection with the proper interpretation of symbols and parables in the Bible, but his remarks apply equally well here: "The approach . . . is to examine all similarities and correspondence, no matter how remote they may seem at first, to determine where a **genuine identity of principle** exists. Then there must follow an equally careful process of distinction. Some similarities are **not significant**; they are **not occasioned by any common organic element.**"

L. R. Jenkins, in his introduction to *450 Stories from Life*, in reference to this same principle, asserts that the analogy must be "so obvious that it can be **instantly seen and felt.** For if the analogy is not obvious, one's mind rejects the comparison as false, as, for instance, in the statement: . . . a winding road is like a long chain. Or, to illustrate analogy in another way: if the pulse of the theme and the heart

of the story beat in **unison, there is true analogy**; but if this **close relationship is not apparent . . . the story and the theme are not analogous, and the comparison is false.**"

This may mean, in actual practise, that some stories or situations, as they first appear or are received, will not be entirely suitable, but will need to be adroitly adapted to the requirements of a particular truth or idea. Indeed, one preacher has contended that it is a "question whether or not **any ready-made story, without expert cutting and fitting, will adequately illustrate a particular theme.**" It may also mean that some **good** illustrations, which are not, however, entirely apt, will need to be salted down in one's notebook or filing folder **until** they can be readily adapted and effectively used!

It was the conscious and consistent observance of this principle (mainly) that made it possible for a contemporary preacher, Leonard Small, to so preach that a demanding reviewer of his printed messages could write: "As we turn the pages, we are attracted by a crispness, a singular **aptness of illustration** and comment, a happy knack of **hitting the nail on the head.**" And it is a diligent application of this same principle that will make it possible for us, too—ordinary folk that we are—so to preach!

2. **The illustration ought, also, to illumine a particular truth as freshly and imaginatively as possible.** We are told by John Baillie that a man once said to D. L. Moody, "I do not see that I cannot be just as good a Christian outside the church as within it!" Moody said nothing in reply but stepped over to the brightly burning fire, and, picking up a blazing coal with the tongs, allowed it to burn by itself. In silence the two men watched the glowing coal smolder and die. "I see," said the other, and next Sunday he went to church. Here was a fresh and lively illustration that (being, first of all, entirely relevant and fitting!) came home to a man with dramatic force and finality. It is neither possible nor appropriate for preachers to frequently enact illustrations in such concrete terms, but something of the imaginative inventiveness

and vitality involved in such dramatic action ought, if at all possible, to characterize illustrations within their sermons.

F. B. Meyer, that blessed saint and widely-used preacher of an earlier day, used to advise that "there ought to be a **dash of colour** in every sermon. The children will listen for it and recognize the happy moment; and people with vagrant fancies will find these winging their way back when the preacher turns off the moorlands into the gardens gay with bloom and filled with the hum of bees." And Meyer's sermons, we know, testify to the fact that he took his own counsel seriously.

This does not mean, of course, that the preacher is to seek out the strangest and most striking illustrations possible, for such may merely startle or amaze but do nothing whatever to clarify the truth being illustrated or to enforce its claims upon the hearers. L. R. Jenkins retells, in this connection, a story that some years ago threatened to become a "pulpit classic." A pilot, so the story ran, was flying through the sky when he heard a rat gnawing furiously at the vitals of the plane. At any moment the rat's sharp teeth might sent the plane down . . . It was a tense moment. What should the helpless pilot do? He knew what he must do. He piloted the plane upward, some thirty feet or more. The rat, of course, died without a struggle! The moral: bad habits will die off if one lives on higher spiritual levels. It is embarrassingly obvious that such a story, though striking enough, illustrates neither accurately, fittingly, nor convincingly!

Such a story, moreover, is so remote from the **common experiences of man** that it taxes the hearer's credulity unduly. And John Oman is probably right when he suggests that the most persuasive illustrations are those which deal "with experiences which belong to all men, but which present them in forms that are original." Concerning Jesus' precious parable of the "prodigal son," Oman significantly adds that "though there is not a person or incident in it we could not, most of us, parallel, what **depths** both in man's heart and in God's it **searches** just as a story

. . . and how **fresh** it is every time it is read."

The truth of the matter is that the secret here lies not only in the **kind** of illustration used, but also (and often more so) in the **manner** and spirit in which it is told. But if the manner is to be enlivening and compelling, the illustration must itself have become dear to the heart of the preacher. One preacher, upon being asked how he managed to change plain, everyday incidents into magical substance that riveted attention, replied, "A story about life cannot be picked up and used at once—effectively. Before it is employed to illustrate an idea, it must be taken into one's mind and kept there until it is **warmed by the heart**. That's the way to change certain facts about life into experiences of one's own."

3. The illustration ought, finally, to illumine a particular truth as thoughtfully—even provocatively—as possible. H. G. Davis has set a high but not unobtainable ideal before us in his **Design for Preaching**. He asserts that a natural illustration, one that does not claim attention for its own sake, **one that seems a part of the thought itself**, is the most valuable of all." The ideally-handled illustration casts a clear light on the truth under discussion but then **itself fades out, leaving its light focussed on the truth alone**. The illustration ought itself to be remembered **only as a humble servant** that helped bear the potent and precious truth to its hearers.

The power (in a preacher), therefore, to evoke with the telling of a story fine sentiments or to induce gushing sorrow is not enough; the power to provoke clear and serious thought—even disturbing and anguished thought—must be his as well! This means that the **central and controlling interest** of the preacher must ever lie in the fundamental theme or truth to be elucidated, and not in either the aptness or originality of the illustration or in the possible reactions of his hearers to the latter. The discerning preacher realizes, after all, that the clear comprehension of any important idea always **precedes** the genuine awakening of profound feelings about it, or the genuine rousing of

the will to deliberate action because of it.

This ideal is undoubtedly more easily achieved by preachers with a studiousness of mind and steadiness of temperament than by certain other kinds. Nevertheless, it is an ideal that all preachers ought to consider seriously and seek to realize in their own preaching insofar as possible.

We may now return to the other aspect (alluded to earlier) of the proper use of illustrations in the sermon, that namely, which relates to their use **with respect to the sermon, or its hearers, in general**. Here we may subsume our discussion under two heads, formulated, once again, as simple principles to be observed by the preacher:

1. Illustrations should be introduced into the sermon (a) at points, or stages, where they serve the whole to best advantage and (b) in as effective a manner as possible, generally. With regard to the first part of this rule, we may say, at the outset, that it will not do to count and space illustrations out rather methodically, as for instance one for each main head and sub-head. It is true that some books on the preparation of sermons suggest that a useful rule-of-thumb for beginning preachers is: one illustration for each point of the sermon, and that other works make much of the opening and the conclusion of the sermon as especially appropriate points for the introduction of illustrations. There is some merit in these suggestions, of course, but a too mechanical application of them tends to produce sermons that are altogether too strait-laced, stereotyped, or torpid. Such application may also tend to the rather illogical result that simple or secondary thoughts are illustrated **equally** with difficult or significant ones.

But preachers who need to take this first part of our rule to heart especially are those who indulge in illustrations excessively: they are a tribe of preachers who, as Spurgeon describes them, "seem never to have enough of metaphors; each one of their sentences must be a flower. They compass sea and land to find a fresh piece of coloured glass for their windows . . ." And Spurgeon's wise and witty comment on such

indulgences deserves another hearing at this point: "Flowers upon the table at a banquet are well enough, but as nobody can live on banquets, they will become objects of contempt if they are set before us in lieu of substantial viands."

If such mechanical or indulgent use is to be avoided, illustrations must be worked, carefully and organically, into the sermon wherever legitimate needs arise for them. (It is helpful to remember, at this stage, that the illustration proper constitutes only **one of several means** whereby a thought or truth may be developed, exemplified, or emphasized.) The illustrations must be attached to the basic structure of the sermon so closely and integrally that they are in effect of one piece with the fabric of the whole. B. P. Browne, in a new book (**Let There Be Light: The Art of Sermon Illustration**), puts the matter thus: "They must open like vistas in the landscape when on climbs a hill, or like a valley which gleams around a curve in the road. They must be a natural part of the sermonic country, an inevitable outlook from the point of vantage." Ideally, therefore, they ought not to be remembered and the truths exemplified by them quickly forgotten! Rather, what was once said of the great preacher, Lancelot Andrewes' sermons in general, ought to be true of every preacher's use of illustrations as well: "They are too well built to be readily quotable; they stick too closely to the point to be entertaining."

D. C. Bryan, in chapter 8 of **The Art of Illustrating Sermons**, and I. T. Jones, in chapter 8 of **Principles and Practice of Preaching**, both suggest concrete ways in which illustrations may themselves be introduced into the sermon (see part two of our rule) at the appropriate points. Much can be learned, in this respect, from a close study of the actual sermons of master preachers. Such a study reveals, among other things, that illustrations are generally more effective if introduced **directly and quickly**, without much prefatory or explanatory comment, and if introduced by **varying** "formulas." Such "formulas" are numerous. A few instances follow: "You may remember that . . ."; "Mr. Jones testifies confidently that . . .";

"As one of our contemporary leaders has remarked . . ."; "Perhaps you have read in . . ."; "We have in modern times a forceful illustration of this fact . . ."; "We may liken this fact to . . ."; "It was recently reported in Ottawa that"; "During a troubled and dangerous era . . ."; "A few days ago I saw a man who . . ." Such variety ought to be striven for, also, in the management of stated applications of illustrations to the hearers.

Moreover, illustrations (especially stories) ought to be presented in swift and sure strokes, and matters brought to a brisk issue at the climax or end. There should be no dawdling over unimportant details, and dialogue or brogue should be reported with due restraint.

2. Illustrations should be selected and used, finally, with a view to the particular audience to be addressed, and/or the particular occasion at which the sermon is to be preached. Ian Macpherson contends that "in illustrating their sermons, many inexperienced preachers fail altogether to land a catch because, as George Eliot whimsically put it, they do not sufficiently 'study the subjectivity of the fish'." This means that some illustrations, although entirely relevant and suggestive as such, cannot be used with certain congregations because of their unfamiliar setting or context. "The Commuter's Sermon" and pertinent illustrations therein drawn from the life of large cities (once suggested by H. Luccock), for example, would mean little to a congregation of coastal fishermen or of rural miners, but it would arouse immediate interest from the "host of present-day commuters who daily ply between city and suburban home."

The validity and fitness of this principle may be strikingly confirmed by a comprehensive comparison of the sermons of a successful urban or university preacher, like Clarence E. Macartney, and those of a successful itinerant evangelist or mission worker, like General William Booth. The illustrations of Macartney (as is evident from a compilation of them such as **Macartney's Illustrations**), whose ministry was mainly in large city churches (Arch Street

Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia and First Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, for instance), are frequently drawn from history or classical literature and as a rule appeal more definitely to cultured hearers. Again, the type and temper of Booth's illustrations are very different, and may be gathered from A. Gammie's comments (in **Preachers I Have Heard**) about his preaching: "He could be dramatically sensational in order to startle and even shock people out of their indifference. Some of the things he did can never be forgotten. He would picture Lot going out to warn his sons-in-law on the last night in Sodom, and would turn up his coat-collar, and seize somebody's hat to suggest a man going out on a disagreeable but imperious errand, and the whole audience would be given the feeling of the dark night, the knocking at the door, the coming doom, and then the hollow laughter of the young men."

This means, too, that some illustrations may be in taste in some preaching situations but quite out of place in other situations or with other congregations. Humorous or satiric anecdotes obviously fall into this category, and their use requires special discernment and tact. L. R. Jenkins' warning to his readers is warning for us too: ". . . if a speaker is so unwise as to attempt a light story at the wrong time and place, his reward will be frowns of disapproval on many faces in his audience. The laugh from others will be a doubtful pay-off. A lack of good taste or sense of fitness is not cheerfully excused."

This means, finally, that the specificity and intimacy of the illustrations must, generally, vary directly with the spiritual (or psychological) maturity of the congregation and also with the degree of intimacy that already, and legitimately, exists in the relationship between the preacher and his hearers. An intimate and highly specific illustration, we know, can be very moving and effectual in the right situation, but it can also be very dangerous if used in the wrong place and if not controlled with perfect mastery.

(To be continued)

H. Giesbrecht

YOUR QUESTION

Question: Is it ethically correct for a Christian to attempt to chisel on the retail prices of articles he desires to purchase?

Answer: In answering this question I would like to proceed on the assumption that the retail prices under consideration are in line with prices in general and are not already marked up in anticipation of a request to sell for less.

I like to consider a legitimate business not merely as a money-making affair, but as a service rendered by one party to another. One man sells what another needs. It should be clear that a business concern is not a charitable institution. Services thus rendered must be paid for. The price for this service is included in the retail price of the respective article. The commission for such service must be adequate to enable a man to operate his business successfully and to make a living. It must be understood that a reduction of the retail price is essentially not a reduction of the price of the article itself, but of the service rendered.

As a Christian I must bear these facts in mind and act in accordance with the Scriptural teaching, "Look not every man on his own things but every man also on the things of others" (Phil. 2: 4). I cannot be governed by purely selfish motives and seek to buy at prices which will cut the margin of the next man's profit to a dangerous low. Nei-

their must I look upon myself as deserving special favors which cannot be given to all. This, too, would border on selfishness, which is unchristian in essence.

Now if the prices on the tags are out of line with prices as quoted elsewhere, or with my pocketbook, or else the article is not worth that much to me, I can do one of several things. I can go to where I can buy at a lower price. I may not wish to buy at all and leave the article for some one who is willing to pay that price. I can also postpone the purchase until such a time when I can afford to buy at current prices. Should a businessman be willing to offer the goods at reduced prices in the interest of a sale or to accommodate you in your special circumstances, that would be his privilege. The purchaser would then accept the offer with gratitude. However, no one should be made to feel that the Christian customer demands special privileges without respecting the rights and feelings of others.

As a Christian I must strive to be a good steward of entrusted funds and spend every dollar wisely, but I must not seek my own financial welfare at the expense of another, nor of my own dignity. Generally speaking, I cannot consider it good ethical practice for a Christian to chisel on regular retail prices.

J. H. Quiring

Dawn of a New Year

Shine bright, O Love, in this just dawning year,
Born with faint hope surviving last one's fear.
Guide men to God and to a liberty,
Rid of all sham and veiled hypocrisy,
Of pretense false and glib diplomacy
With promises wrapped up in armament
And words of peace with war as the intent.

Thou Greater Force than any other power,
Lead mankind onward in its darkest hour.
To souls give faith, wisdom to leadership,
And truth to them who move men with their lip,
So that no fatal word may from it slip.
O Thou Who hast great mercy, with Thy broom
Sweep clear the path that leads to peace from doom.

Remember, men and women the world o'er
That this year counts, not that just gone before,
That each hour calls for courage, will and trust,
That every seed we sow contains a "must"
— The harvest, good or evil, will be just.
If life shall triumph, love must conquer first;
If hate explodes, death's bell will toll its burst.

—Victor Stanwell