The New Order in the Church

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BY

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TO ALL WHO WOULD HELP
TO MAKE THE CHURCH
WHAT GOD MEANS IT TO BE

Preface

We have been reminded in recent years with almost monotonous iteration how great is the responsibility which rests upon the Church to make its own distinctive contribution to postwar reconstruction. I yield to no one in my conviction of the magnitude of that responsibility. But I am equally convinced that no contribution which the Church may make to the political and economic reconstruction recognized on all hands as imperative will be comparable to a demonstration that the administrative and economic changes which its leaders recommend to others are practicable in the Church.

In this book I shall attempt to point out in some detail what changes in the present government and administration of the churches are needed if they are to play their part worthily in the postwar world.

In this attempt I shall draw heavily upon the lessons learned during the last third of a century in what we have grown accustomed to call the Ecumenical Movement. I believe that this movement, uniting as it does the representatives of churches of many communions and of many lands, Eastern Orthodox and Old Catholic as well as Protestant, justifies our hope that in the new world which is in the making the Church of Jesus Christ may have something significant to contribute.

I am planning in the near future to issue a companion volume which will tell the story of the Ecumenical Movement in some detail. To this book I would refer all who wish fuller information on the matters here briefly touched on.

Where obligations are so numerous it is impossible to specify names. There is not one of the many tried comrades with whom for the last third of a century I have been associated in the Ecumenical Movement from whom I have not learned much. A special word of gratitude is due to the Reverend Roswell Barnes, who in the midst of many and engrossing duties has found time to read the manuscript as a whole, and has made many helpful suggestions. Dr. Roy G. Ross, Dr. Paul Douglass, Dr. L. S. Albright, and Professor Henry P. Van Dusen have read parts of the manuscript and given me valued counsel on specific points. Dr. Mark Dawber has shared with me information on points discussed in Chapter V. To Dr. J. H. Oldham, who more clearly than many of his contemporaries has seen how far-reaching are the changes which are needed in the life of the Church, I am indebted for the phrase which I have used in my chapter on missions —"The New Frontier."

WILLIAM ADAMS BROWN

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PART ONE

THE CHURCH IN THE NEW ORDER

Chapter One

THE PLACE OF THE CHURCH IN THE POSTWAR ORDER

THE WORLD'S NEED OF A RIGHTLY ORDERED CHURCH

SOME months ago I attended a meeting of church leaders who had come together to consider the responsibility of the Church for helping to prepare the way for a just and durable peace. It was a highly representative gathering. Leaders of all the larger denominations were there, and every important section of the country was represented. In the course of the deliberations every aspect of the postwar situation was considered—political, economic, social, and religious. But there was one notable omission. Little was said about the new order in the Church.

When I called attention to this omission, I was told that to include the economic and administrative responsibilities of the Church among the topics to be considered would divert attention from the main purpose of the meeting. However important the subject of church unity and reform might be—and everyone admitted that it was important—it was irrelevant to the purpose which had brought us together.

This seemed to me a surprising position, and this for two reasons: in the first place because the Church—in its institutional form—as a group of self-governing corporations owning and administering property under the laws of the State, is and must of necessity be a part of the postwar

world for which we must plan; but also, and above all, because if those who are responsible for the conduct of the affairs of the Church do not show that they are competent and determined to deal courageously with that part of the postwar situation which is in their own control, it is futile to suppose that their words to others about their duties will be taken seriously.

I propose in the pages that follow to consider what changes must take place in the Church itself if it is to take its place worthily in the postwar world.

One reason why it is necessary to consider the place of the Church in the postwar world is because the Church in its institutional form, as a group of self-governing and ecclesiastically independent denominations, is itself a part of the present world system which must be changed if we are to have a just and durable peace.

There is a sense, to be sure, in which the Church not only is, but must be, apart from and above the world. As the society through which the revelation of the transcendent God is brought to finite and sinful men, it is essential that the Church should, so far as possible, hold aloof from all those transient matters which belong to the passing moment. Yet this is possible only in part. Those who must transmit the unchanging message are themselves finite and sinful. The wisest and best of them apprehend the revelation to which they witness only imperfectly. Even the Pope of Rome claims infallibility only on rare occasions, and under the most far-reaching limitations. For the rest, they have their treasure, in a very literal sense, "in earthen vessels."

The dual nature of the Church appears in every phase of its earthly ministry. Spirit, however far it may tran-

scend the limitations imposed by its physical environment, can never ignore them. So the Church in its concrete contemporary form meets us not only as a group of persons, with physical bodies and all the limitations which go with the body, but as a group of corporations which are the trustees of property owned and operated under the laws of the State. The men who administer these corporations are trustees of property, themselves subject to civil law, and are liable to legal accountability for any violation of their trust. Every local congregation, by its dual organization, as a spiritual society and as a civil corporation, is a living witness to the closeness of the ties which bind Church and State. And what is true of each local congregation is true of the denomination of which it is a part. Each denomination is itself a corporation,[1] organized under the laws of the State and as such a part of the present world system which must be changed if we are to have a just and durable peace.

So intimate, indeed, is the connection between Church and State that it is only in comparatively recent times—measured by the chronology of history—that the idea of a free Church in a free State has been conceived even as a possibility. Over the greater part of the Church's history it has been taken for granted that Church and State were two expressions of the life of a single society, and the only

[1] For historical reasons into which it is not necessary to go here this is not the case in Virginia and West Virginia. Here "the struggle for emancipation from the Anglican establishment left behind a persistent distrust of ecclesiastical corporations. . . . . The ultimate result was a clause in the nineteenth century constitution of Virginia which is still in force today forbidding the legislature to incorporate any church or religious denomination but authorizing it to secure the title to church property to an extent to be limited by law."—E. B. Greene, *Religion and the State,* New York University Press, 1941, p. 146.

question at issue has been which of the two members of the partnership should have the controlling voice.

Even in the United States—where until recently the doctrine of the separation of Church and State has been carried farthest—separation is far from complete. We have seen in what ways the Church as a civil corporation is dependent upon the State. It is no less true that as a spiritual society, based upon belief in the rights and responsibilities of persons living as free men under laws of their own making, the democratic State recognizes its religious character as responsible to God, the Creator and Ruler of mankind. This it does in many ways: as, for example, by setting apart a day of national Thanksgiving, by opening the sessions of Congress with prayer, and by providing chaplains for its armed forces, paid by Government funds.

Even those decisions of the Supreme Court which go furthest in affirming the right of the Government to unqualified obedience do so on the ground that such obedience "is not inconsistent with the will of God." Thus Mr. Justice Sutherland, in his majority opinion in the Macintosh case,[1] the most uncompromising of all Supreme Court decisions in its requirement of "submission to the laws of the land," stated explicitly: "We are a Christian people, acknowledging with reverence the duty of obedience to the law of God."

This close connection between Church and State, recognized by our founders and implicit in our history, rests upon the conviction of the essential spiritual unity of mankind. The notion that the Church is a religious and the State a purely secular institution is a radical perversion not only of our accepted political, but of our traditional

[1] United States v. Macintosh, 283 U.S. Reports 605-37.

Christian, philosophy. Church and State, like the family on which both alike are based, are spiritual societies, functioning through weak and fallible men, and so liable to corruption and in need of reform. This is as true of the Church as of the State, as is proved by the very existence of churches which call themselves Protestant—that is, Reformed.

Yet while Church and State alike are soul as well as body, experience shows that each fulfills its function best in relative independence of the other. The Church needs the State to maintain order, to administer law, and to promote justice, that so the Church may be free for its distinctive work of preaching, teaching, and spiritual ministry. The State needs the Church to remind it of its responsibility to God, to criticize it when it goes astray, and to hold up to all its citizens the divine ideal without which State and Church alike fail of their mission.

If this spiritual ministry is to be effective, it must take the form of example as well as precept. It follows that the reform of the Church itself is an essential factor in postwar reconstruction. It is such a factor because, if leaders of the Church expect their words to statesmen to be taken seriously, they must prove the sincerity of these words by their deeds, and the only way they can do this is to show that they propose to apply in the conduct of their own administrative and economic life the principles which they enjoin upon others.

They are not doing this today. What is more serious, many of them do not realize that they are not doing it; still less do they appreciate the far-reaching consequences of this failure.

There are two points at which there is general agreement among church people that there must be some change in

our present system of international relations. They are agreed, in the first place, that there must be some limitation upon unrestricted national sovereignty. They are agreed, in the second place, that there must be some equitable sharing of the world's economic resources. Yet on both these points the present practice of the churches in the conduct of their own affairs is legitimately open to criticism. Each denomination claims for itself unrestricted ecclesiastical sovereignty. Each denomination—one may go farther in the majority of cases and say each local congregation—regards the economic resources it controls as its own property. Even in those denominations, like the Presbyterian, where the title to the property of a local congregation is subject to denominational control, the trustees who are responsible for the management of the property are often surprised when they are reminded of this fact. Under all ordinary circumstances they feel their responsibility to the local congregation and to the local congregation alone. Whatever that congregation may give to weaker churches is, with rare exceptions, looked upon as a charitable contribution, and is listed in a separate budget labeled "Benevolences." When economy is necessary, the latter is apt to be the first to suffer.

It is easy to understand how this has come about. Sovereignty is not simply a juridical concept which has been devised by clever international lawyers for the safeguarding of national rights, nor is unwillingness to surrender the economic control of property necessarily a sign of selfishness. Both sovereignty and economic control may have spiritual significance as the symbol and guardian of a cultural tradition of priceless value to the individuals who have lived under it. To limit a nation's sovereignty in such a chaotic world as we are living in today may well

seem to sincere patriots to imperil the way of life which they have inherited from their fathers. If, then, the spokesmen of the churches still feel that they can urge upon statesmen some limitation of national sovereignty, it can be only because they believe that such limitation may be consistent with the preservation of what is best and most distinctive in the national life.

In like manner, to suggest to the members of any one of the great Protestant denominations that they should share the guardianship of their religious heritage with persons of other spiritual antecedents may at first sight seem to them the betrayal of a sacred trust. Before they will consent to do this they must be shown that they are surrendering nothing that they cannot rightfully let go. This I hope to show in the pages that follow.

THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT AS A FIRST STEP TOWARD A NEW ORDER IN THE CHURCH

It may be said, granting that this is true, that it is a mistake to approach the subject by way of direct attack. Too many private and personal interests are involved to give such an approach any chance of success. Only if what is asked of the churches can be put in some larger setting as part of a scheme of world-wide reform is there any chance that churchmen will be brought to see their personal responsibility for change and their feet will be set in the path of reform.

There is much truth in this. The parable of the mote and the beam has not lost its relevance, and is never more applicable than to ecclesiastical affairs. One of my friends, after reading a recent program for world reconstruction adopted by a committee of student reformers, confided to me that he had noticed that enthusiasm for the different

parts of the program was in inverse ratio to their nearness to the parts which it was in the power of the persons who approved them to execute. I fear that it is not only the younger among our reformers of whom this is true. Of all forms of reformation, self-reformation proves in fact most difficult.

It is important, therefore, that any proposal for change in the government and activities of the Church should be based upon an assured foundation of fact. We must not ask or expect from ourselves or others any procedure which does not take account of sincere conviction and is not based upon tested experience. My justification for attempting this book is that I believe that such a basis of conviction and experience now exists. In the years since 1910 the movement for unity has entered upon a new phase. Things have been attempted and in a measure achieved which at the beginning of this century would have been thought impossible. What is more, a new spirit has emerged which has brought about a degree of understanding and fellowship between the representatives of the denominations more intimate than ever before. This new experience of unity has come to be known as the Ecumenical Movement.

The word "ecumenical" is the English translation of the Greek word *οἰκουμενικός*, which means "world-wide." It is a word which has come into use in order to describe certain aspects of the latest development in the movement for Christian unity which are not suggested by the more familiar synonyms "catholic" or "universal." The new thing for which it stands is the effort to bring about a kind of relation between *churches* which up to the present time has been thought possible only between the *individuals* who compose them.

For one thing, the Ecumenical Movement is a representa-

tive movement. In all its forms—and they have been many—it is the denominations themselves and not simply individual Presbyterians, or Episcopalians, or Baptists who have been the actors. The goal of the movement in all its forms has been the creation of agencies through which the convictions held in common by the members of all the churches can find expression in action.

Again, the movement has been a continuing movement. While it has found its most dramatic expression in public conferences which have attracted wide publicity, its most useful work has been done by continuing bodies like interdenominational councils or committees which have carried on their activity from year to year.

Still again, the movement has been a comprehensive movement. It has included each of the major aspects of the Church's life: the missionary impulse which finds expression in united witness, the social aspiration which aims to realize a more Christian social order, the central religious convictions which define the Church's faith and determine the different forms of the Church's order. These differing interests, at first cultivated side by side in parallel movements, have now been associated in a common stream and have created agencies like the World Council of Churches through which this growing unity can express itself on a world scale.

More important than anything specific which the movement has done has been the spirit developed in the doing of it. This has been a spirit at once open-minded and humble. Its point of departure has been the conviction that the things which unite Christians as disciples of one Lord and Master are more important than the things which divide them into denominations and schools of thought.

At the same time, those who have united in the move-

ment have been well aware that when one is dealing with matters as high and deep as those which comprise the Christian faith, one cannot expect from finite and imperfect mortals complete understanding as to their meaning and implications. The aim of the leaders, therefore, has been to find a form of unity which is consistent with respect for honest difference, and this not simply in matters of habit and preference but even in matters of vital belief. This consciousness of a unity which transcends difference and makes common witness possible across denominational lines marks the beginning of a new chapter in Christian history.

This experience of fellowship across difference has brought vividly to consciousness the fact that we do not have to create a united Church, for it is already here. Beneath all differences of nation and class and race, there is a company of men and women who have been able to maintain their sense of vital unity even across the barriers of war. It is true that such a fellowship has always existed. Even in the darkest days of the Church's history there have been men and women who have realized their brotherhood with Christians of other name and race, even of other churches. But for the most part they have been lonely souls with little knowledge of one another. Today through the Ecumenical Movement contacts have been made which even the shock of war has not been able to sever. These contacts, not only between Christians of enemy countries, but between their churches, give us an assured basis for hope.

This continuing fellowship is showing itself in many ways—first of all in a ministry of helpfulness and understanding which is being carried on from many different centers. Information is being shared, personal contacts

are being maintained, a chaplaincy service has been provided for prisoners of war, and help has been brought to refugees and others in distress. Christians of many different countries and churches on both sides of the firing line are engaged in this continuing ministry.

What is even more important, the Ecumenical Movement is promoting systematic study of the postwar responsibilities of the Church. From its inception, the major concern of the movement has been the enlistment of the scholars of the churches in a systematic study of their common tasks. Each of the great conferences—Edinburgh of 1910, Stockholm, Lausanne, Jerusalem, Oxford, Edinburgh of 1937, Madras, Amsterdam—has been preceded and followed by a period of systematic study. Today those who have been concerned primarily with special aspects of the Church's task are uniting in the effort to understand that task as a whole. From the many subsidiary questions which arouse interest and invite attention, the thoughts of the leaders of the churches are turning to such central issues as the nature of the Church itself, its function in a war-torn world, and the special tasks which will be laid upon it in postwar reconstruction.

This growing experience of united activity and enlarging fellowship I propose to explore in the hope that the study may suggest the further changes in the government and administration of the Church which are essential if it is to play its part worthily in the postwar world.

Chapter Two

WHY A NEW ORDER IS NEEDED IN THE CHURCH

WHAT IS MEANT BY A NEW ORDER IN THE CHURCH

THE word "order" is used in the Church to describe the system of government through which the churches express and administer their common corporate life. It includes the creeds to which their ministers give assent, the ritual through which they conduct public worship, the discipline to which they must submit on ordination, and the central administrative agency by which these conditions are imposed and from which—so far as human agency is concerned—their authority is derived.

By a new order in the Church is meant such a change in the present system of government in the churches as will make it possible for them to do together things which most Christians agree ought to be done but which, because of the present division of authority between the denominations, are either left undone or else are done inefficiently. Till this happens it will be impossible to demonstrate to a skeptical world the reality of the inner spiritual unity which in spite of all outward divisions makes the churches in fact one Church.

We have an analogy in the political sphere. The reason why a new order in the world is imperative is because our present system of divided sovereignty has broken down. It has not only become impossible for the existing govern-

ments to do together many things which it is essential to do, but—what is more important—the lack of any visible center for the many interests which the people of all nations have in common obscures the fact that, in spite of many and deep-seated differences, our world has become in many important respects one world.

This gives the movement for a united Church its timeliness. When we say that the missing factor in Christian thinking about the postwar world is the omission of any reference to a new order in the Church, it is not meant that Christians do not recognize the need of any change in the present government of the Church, or that they are not doing any thinking about it. It is meant that they think of this as a matter which concerns the Church alone, and which, therefore, has little or no direct bearing upon the problem of postwar reconstruction. In fact, it has a direct bearing. There is nothing that the churches could do that would so directly advance the cause of world order as to show that in this particular part of the postwar world a new order is in the making.

There are three obstacles which stand in the way of any radical change in the order of the Church: first, the self-complacency of those who do not believe that any change in the present order is needed; secondly, the skepticism of those who tell us that we do not yet know enough to determine what changes are needed; finally, and above all, the unconfessed suspicion, born of our doubts and of our fears, that even though we realize that change is needed and think we know what that change ought to be, the inertia and selfishness of the rank and file of the churches' membership will make any radical change in the present order impossible.

I believe that the lessons learned during the last third of

a century in the Ecumenical Movement justify the hope that no one of these obstacles is insuperable. In many forms of missionary and educational activity the churches are even now working together, and they have created agencies of responsible and continuing character through which their representatives are co-operating. What is more important, on every level of the Church's life—local, regional, national, international—federations or councils have come into being through which the common spiritual life of the one Church can find united expression.

Indeed, one of the chief difficulties that we face today is that there are so many forms of interchurch activity that the individual Christian is often put to it to choose between them. There are missionary societies, home and foreign, such as the Foreign Missions Conference and the Home Missions Council. There are educational agencies like the International Council of Religious Education and the Council of Church Boards. There are groups that specialize in different ages or callings: men's societies such as the Laymen's Missionary Agency and the United Stewardship Council, women's societies like the Council of Women for Home Missions. The young people have their own organizations: the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A., and the World's Student Christian Federation. Indeed, a list of all the agencies with their official staffs would fill the pages of a formidable Who's Who in religion.

It is fortunate, therefore, that side by side with this centrifugal tendency, concentrating on specific aspects of the Church's many-sided activity, there should be a centripetal tendency expressing the common life of which they are all a part. This has found expression on each level of the Church's life through the application in one form or another of the principle of federation. In country com-

munities this takes the form of the Larger Parish and the Federated Church; in cities, that of the City Federation of Churches; in intermediate units like the state there is the State Federation or Council. In this country twenty-five denominations are associated in the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and there are similar federations in other countries; while in the international field denominations of kindred doctrine and polity meet statedly in gatherings like the Lambeth Conference, the Lutheran World Council, and the Alliance of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches. The movement culminates in such comprehensive interdenominational bodies as the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches.

Nor has the movement toward closer unity stopped with federations either national or international. For many Christians the goal still remains complete corporate unity —and in the last thirty years definite progress has been made toward this goal. While the most important of these unions have brought together churches of similar doctrine and polity, such as the Presbyterians of Scotland, the Methodists of England and of this country, and smaller bodies of American Lutherans and Congregationalists, in Canada union has been consummated between bodies as different as the Presbyterians, Methodists, and Congregationalists. Moreover, conversations are under way in India and in this country looking toward organic union between churches of Episcopal and churches of Presbyterian and Congregational polity. The pressure for corporate unity is strongest among the younger churches of the so-called mission field. They see no reason why the divisions of the West should be perpetuated in their own country and they are working from many different centers for a united

national Church. In Japan such a national Church has already come into being, although in this case the early consummation of national unity was due to government pressure rather than to the initiative of the churches themselves.

WHY WE MUST BEGIN TO PLAN NOW

It may be said: If so much is already being done, what is the need for haste? Why not go further along the lines which we are already following? Even under normal conditions when we are at peace, the questions which we face when we try to unite the churches are so many and so complicated that a speedy solution seems impossible. How much more must this be true in time of war, when on every hand we are being challenged by new demands for religious ministry. Why not meet these with such agencies as we have at hand or can improvise, and let the larger questions wait for the future?

There are two reasons why this cannot be done. The first is that if we wait until the war is over to make the changes that are needed, we shall never succeed in making them at all. We shall be too tired to begin. The other is that, even if we do begin then, our chance will have gone. The main lines of church order will have been settled already.

This is not a matter of theory. It is only to recognize what is the plain teaching of history. After the last war I spent the summer of 1919 in England and on the Continent, talking with all sorts of people about the problems which the Church would have to face in the postwar world, and everywhere I found that it was all but impossible to get the attention of those whom I wished to interest. "Come back in five years," they said, "and we will

talk to you then. Now we are tired out and we want above all things to rest."

If that was the situation after the last war, what will it be after this, when the strain has been so many times greater and disorganization will be so much further advanced? If we do not make our preparations for our postwar tasks now, while strength and resolution still remain, it will be too late.

But there is another and a more compelling reason why we must begin now. It is this: if we do not prepare now, others will. Already plans for the new order are being drawn, and are far on their way to execution. No one has seen this more clearly than Hitler. He did not wait till the war was over before he made his plans for the new Europe. He has not only drawn his blueprint; the walls of the new buildings are already beginning to rise. Those who are unwilling to accept his plans must be ready with their own.

It is encouraging that so many people are beginning to see this. We realize more clearly than we did a quarter of a century ago that making peace is not simply a matter of treaties and constitutions. It is a spiritual enterprise in which all turns upon the attitudes and resolution of men. Tariffs and boundaries are not simply causes; they are effects. They register the moods of the men who make them.

There was a time, not many months ago, when public men hesitated to commit themselves on the subject of postwar reconstruction. Happily, that time has passed. Leading statesmen of the allied countries—Anthony Eden, Vice-President Wallace, Sumner Welles, most notably Secretary Cordell Hull—have pointed out what an important contribution to the winning of the war may be made

by a clearer conception of the nature of the peace which is to follow.

If this is true of the political aspects of the postwar situation, how much more must it be true of those moral and religious issues which are the primary responsibility of the Christian Church. Here the lines are already being drawn and the decisions made. If we would have part in the making of those decisions we must be about the business at once.

THE BASIS OF KNOWLEDGE FROM WHICH TO START

It may be said—indeed it is often said—that we do not yet know enough about postwar conditions to make it possible to plan wisely now. There is a sense in which this is true. There are many factors in the postwar situation of which we are ignorant and of which we will remain ignorant until the nature of the event shall reveal them.

But in a deeper sense we know already all that we need to know for wise planning. We know, as definitely as if we could see them with our physical eyes, the spiritual responsibilities that the Church must meet; and we know the economic and administrative problems that must be solved if these spiritual responsibilities are to be met rightly.

We know, for one thing, that we shall be facing a period of unparalleled material destitution. This will involve not merely a shortage of those common physical necessities which are the basis of all life, secular and religious alike—food, clothing, shelter—the loss of home and business, the destruction of public buildings, and the loss of the human lives whose labor is necessary to replace them. It will be true in special measure of the material resources which the churches require to carry on their tasks. In London alone the destruction of church property has been on a

scale fivefold greater than that of other buildings. And what is true in London has been true of many another English city. On the Continent too the physical losses to which the churches have been subjected are appalling. And when one adds to this the loss of human life, the waste of accumulated capital, the all but complete destruction of normal educational facilities, the appearance of a generation of young people who have been deprived for years of any regular spiritual ministry, we begin to realize what will be required of the Church if it is to set its own house in order.

What is more serious, we shall be facing a world in which the fires of hate will burn more fiercely than ever before. What has been done and experienced has left scars that will not soon heal. Those who have seen man's plighted word broken, whose pity has been taken as a sign of weakness, and whose good will has been systematically betrayed, will not find it easy again to trust. Moreover, the elemental sense of justice that sleeps in every right-minded man will crave a satisfaction, all the more insistent because it has been long delayed; and in the resulting passion of resentment it will be hard to distinguish between the innocent and the guilty. How, in such a world, shall Christ's word concerning forgiveness find a hearing? How, indeed, can one forgive those who still glory in their shame?

We know too that we shall face a world in which many people no longer know what to believe. Their old faith has gone, and they have no new faith to put in its place. This will be true of many who call themselves Christians, as well as of many who repudiate the Christian name. How can one believe in a God of love, they will ask us, in a world in which such things happen? Where, when

one authoritative creed has been proved untrustworthy by failure, shall one look for another?

Most formidable of all, we know that we shall be facing a world in which there is no longer any common language in which people can converse with one another. I do not mean simply the language that is spoken in words and which can be learned from dictionaries and grammars, but the language of emotions and ideals of which words are only the symbol. A generation of young people has grown up in Germany, in Russia, and in Japan, to whom all that goes by the name of Christ has little or no meaning. What touches us still more closely, many of the young people in Britain and America have gone through school and college without even a speaking acquaintance with the Christian religion. In matters of education we must begin all over again. We must find points of contact with the people we hope to influence, and for this purpose we must understand the world of thought and feeling in which they are living. In a word, it will be our task to re-create an international language to serve as our instrument of discourse.

There is nothing new in this. These are just the fields in which, in every age, the Church has found her most distinctive mission. It will be her task now, as it always has been, to provide a common faith, a common love, a common language, a common ministry of brotherly service; and, as a necessary condition of making all these things possible, it will be necessary for her herself to become an international administrative agency of world-wide scope.

WHERE THE PRESENT ORDER IS DEFICIENT

What we need then, I repeat, is such a change in the administrative machinery of the churches as will make it possible for them not only to do more effectively the things

they have already been doing, but to meet the new obligations which the war has laid upon them. Such a change, if it is to be immediately practicable, must not violate any fundamental conviction of faith. At the same time it must make possible prompt action in the matters on which all are agreed.

Here the experience of the last third of a century points the way to the kind of change that is needed. First of all, it must promote the spiritual ends for which the Church has been called into being. To change for the sake of changing would be futile. Every change that is proposed, from the least to the greatest, must be subject to this single test. Will it help the Church to give a more united witness? Will it open broader channels for the expression of Christian love? Will it remove obstacles to that understanding which is the *sine qua non* of effective service? If the change which is proposed will do this it is needed. If not, however desirable it may be for other reasons, it can wait.

Again, it must make it easier to combine unity of aim with flexibility in details. If there is one lesson more than another that the Ecumenical Movement has been teaching it is that no single way of expressing truth is broad enough to contain the Gospel in its fullness. The well-known maxim must find fresh illustration in the new order! "In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, charity." Our experience with federation in the many fields in which it has been applied gives reason for hope that its application in a still wider field may make this combination possible.

Finally, while conserving the heritage which has come down to us from the past, the new order must make ample

provision for the new light which the growing experience of the coming years will inevitably bring.

When we examine the present order in the light of these requirements we find it deficient in three respects. In the first place, it is so complicated that it is often impossible to locate responsibility for the quick and effective action which is needed. In the second place, even where agencies which could act are now available they lack authority to do so. Finally, so many Christians still put the denomination first among their loyalties that the motive which would lead them to approve the needed change and to grant the requisite authority is lacking.

Our failure at the first point is already widely recognized. Plans are being made in this country to correct the present overlapping of interdenominational agencies. In the local community the national bodies which in the past have made independent appeals are beginning to see the necessity for a united approach. In the nation plans are on foot for a corporate union of eight of the major interdenominational agencies, and there is good hope that the plan may be approved by the bodies affected. In the international field a long step forward has been taken through the creation of the World Council of Churches.

When it comes to delegating authority, however, there is almost everything still to be done. It is true that in specific instances the denominations or the boards that represent them have been willing to authorize interdenominational bodies like the Home Mission Council or the Federal Council to act in their name in fields where a divided approach is impossible. Nevertheless, what has been done is but a drop in the bucket as compared with what still needs to be done. The fact remains that the

possibilities which are implicit in the federation movement are possibilities only.

When we ask why this is so we are brought back to the greatest of all the lacks in our present order—the absence of a consciousness of corporate unity strong enough to give driving force to the movement for administrative reform. Still it remains true that in spite of all our lip service to unity it is the denomination rather than the Church Universal which commands the primary loyalty of most Christians. If the changes that are contemplated in the new order are to become really effective this state of mind must change.

For it must never be forgotten that what gives reality to any system of government is not the constitution which has been adopted, but the attitude of the people who must live under it. In a federal system, whether in Church or State, all turns on the primary loyalty. When the choice must be made between action taken in the name and for the sake of all the churches, and what is done by any one of them, we shall have the acid test by which we can tell with certainty how far the new order of which we are in quest has become a reality.

There are three groups of Christians whose support we must win before this test can be successfully met. One group consists of those who believe that no change in the present order is needed because God has already prescribed the right order, and they are living under it. To win them we must be able to show that the changes which are required to bring the new order into being do not involve the surrender of any essential conviction of faith.

A second group holds aloof because of a fundamental skepticism as to the importance of questions of order for the spiritual life of the Church—indeed, for spiritual life

of any kind. They feel so keenly the cramping effects of ecclesiastical red tape on the life of the churches, they have seen so many promising opportunities go unused because of the refusal of those in positions of authority to take the needed action, that they have come to despair of any large success through the use of formal ecclesiastical machinery and prefer to rely for the accomplishment of postwar tasks upon the co-operation of individuals in unofficial groups. Our chance of winning these discouraged persons to our cause will depend upon our ability to show that, without such help as a better organization can provide, the spiritual ends on which their hearts are set cannot be achieved.

But the most formidable obstacle we face is not any difference of conviction, whether on the right hand or on the left, but the simple inertia of those who have grown so accustomed to present ways of living that they cannot summon the energy to change them. There is only one way to win these lukewarm Christians—and they are the great majority—to the new order, and that is so to challenge them with the Church's inescapable tasks that they will accept at any cost the necessary conditions for their fulfillment.

This sets our course in the chapters that follow. We shall begin by studying the postwar tasks of the Church in some detail in each of the many fields of its activity—worship, witness, service, education. This will occupy us during the next four chapters. In the seventh chapter we shall sketch the outlines of the new order as a whole as it finds its symbol and prophecy in the World Council of Churches. Finally, in the last two chapters, we shall ask what we can do now to bring the desired goal nearer, and what must wait for the fuller light the future will bring.

PART TWO

PRIMARY NEEDS OF THE POSTWAR WORLD

Chapter Three

THE NEED OF RENEWED FELLOWSHIP

THE WORLD'S NEED OF RENEWED FELLOWSHIP

AMONG the many postwar tasks of the Church, four stand out as of central importance: first, to provide a fellowship in which the type of life to which the Gospel points is shown to be practicable; second, to give a clear witness to those who are not yet Christians to the central spiritual fact which constitutes the Church's distinctive Gospel; third, to meet the pressing economic needs of the less-favored groups in Church and State by corporate sharing; finally, to find the needed points of contact between those who compose this fellowship, bear this witness, and render this service, and those to whom the Church's message still speaks an unknown tongue. Each presents problems of its own. No one can be adequately discharged apart from the others. Along all four lines a definite beginning has been made.

It will be my aim in the pages that follow to analyze what is involved in each of these central responsibilities, to call attention to the obstacles that must be overcome, to estimate the progress that has already been made, and to suggest the steps which seem next in the order of priority.

Some weeks ago in London I had a long conversation with the head of one of the governments in exile. He was a man who in earlier years had been active in the League of Nations and had served on some of its most important

committees. Now he is a refugee in England. He said to me: "For more than twenty years I have been a convinced believer in the democratic way of life and have made it my primary object to put it into effect in the life of nations. Suddenly I have seen all my hopes collapse. The promises on which my country had relied were repudiated. The guarantees in which I had been encouraged to put my trust were withdrawn. I went through hell." Then, after a pause, he went on, "If I still hold to my democratic principles, as I do, my faith must indeed be firmly grounded."

This conversation brings vividly to mind what must be a major responsibility of the Christian churches in the postwar years. This is to lay a spiritual foundation for the new social order in the fellowship of love. For this more than words are required. Greatly as the world needs a unifying witness to the Christlike God, it needs even more a demonstration of the practicability of the life of love. And such a demonstration only those who have learned Christ's lesson of the Cross can give.

For what does it mean to love as Christ has taught us to love? It means to see in each human being a child of God endowed with freedom and called to responsibility so that he may be fitted to take his place with others in a fellowship that knows no limits of race, or nation, or class. It means to be ready to forgive him when he has done us wrong, to believe in him when he has gone astray, to succor him when he is in need, and always and above all to respect him as one whom God has made, for whom Christ died, and with whom God's Spirit is pleading day by day.

It has never been harder to do this than today. Things have been done and experienced which seem to make any hope of such love an idle dream. Wherever we turn we are

confronted with all but insuperable obstacles. There is the sense of outrage on the part of those who feel that they have suffered intolerable wrong and whose very soul cries out for vengeance against those who are responsible. There is the uneasy conscience of those who have committed, or at least have condoned, the things that have been done and who distrust any promise of forgiveness from those whom they have so grievously wronged. Above all, there is the sense of insecurity which is the inevitable aftermath of a war psychology in which every criterion of truth and every standard of justice has been systematically violated.

In such a world it is futile for those who have suffered least to try to bridge the gap between the oppressed and their oppressors. Only our fellow Christians of the occupied countries who have borne the heaviest load can take the initiative in the Church's supreme task of reconciliation.

And they are doing this. This is the basic fact from which we must start. We do not have to create the fellowship of love which is the world's greatest need. It is already in existence in the hearts of Christians of many lands who, in spite of every obstacle, things suffered and things done, have proved that in a world of hate and fear it is still possible to love.

WHERE WE SEE LOVE AT WORK TODAY

It is not my purpose here to tell the story of what our fellow Christians of other countries have been doing and suffering. For this the time is not yet ripe, even if all the facts were available. Someday the story will be written, and when the record is complete it will be found that every country has contributed its share. One thinks of the Confessional Church of Germany, still maintaining its connection with the Ecumenical Movement even though many of

its leaders are in the concentration camp. One thinks of Martin Niemöller and of the brave spirits who have taken his place, ministers and laymen alike—Roman Catholics like Count von Galen, Bishop of Münster, who has dared to tell Hitler in plain words what his attack upon the Church is costing Germany; Protestants like some pastors who must be nameless, who for years have carried on a ministry of help to suffering Jews. One thinks of the pastors in Norway, meeting every demand for the surrender of their independence in the spirit of their great leader, Bishop Berggrav, who when told that he must either obey or face the concentration camp answered simply, "Here I am. Why do you not take me?" One would have to go back to Luther's famous speech at the Diet of Worms to match the thrill of these words. One thinks of the Protestants of unoccupied France, few in number but dauntless in spirit, who steadfastly refused to yield to the pressure put upon them to support the anti-Semitic program of the Vichy Government and who carried on a relief work for the refugees in the government camps out of all proportion to their resources. Above all, one thinks of the Christians of China—only a handful in number but indomitable in courage—after five years of privation, cruelty and war, in which they have been the victims of every conceivable outrage, still determined to maintain their relations with their Japanese fellow Christians in spite of every obstacle.

And there are many more whose names we do not know, and whose story, even if we knew it, we would not dare to tell. It is the tragedy of the present situation that even to say publicly to some of these fellow Christians who are closest to our hearts, "We love you," would be to do them the greatest possible disservice.

Nothing is more remarkable, nothing gives greater

ground for hope, than the extent to which these fellow Christians of ours who have suffered, either in their own person or in the persons nearest to them, the most intolerable wrongs have been able to overcome the temptation to hate.

It was my privilege some months ago to attend the enthronement of the Archbishop of Canterbury. I had just come from London, where on every other street I had seen evidences of the devastation which the German blitz had brought to the life of the churches. Building after building which I had long known and loved, and in many of which I had worshiped, was now only a heap of ruins. The chancel of St. Paul's was no longer available for service, and worship had to be conducted in the crypt. Westminster Abbey, while still standing, had suffered grievous damage, and the deanery and many of the canons' houses had been totally destroyed. The City Temple was only a memory. St. Columba's, the home and center of Scottish Presbyterianism, was gone. In Canterbury itself the house of the dean had been so damaged that he could not entertain us as his guests. Under these conditions I followed the service with keen interest in order to discover in what spirit the English Church would approach the subject of the war. There was only one reference in the formal service of worship, and that was in the bidding prayer. Ever since, the words of that prayer have been with me as a contemporary witness to the triumphant power of Christian love:

> At this time ye shall pray especially for all who bear command in the forces of the King and his allies, for all who serve by sea, land or air, for all who suffer through the war in this and in other lands; and ye shall pray, as Christ hath taught us, for our enemies, that their hearts and ours may be drawn to God the

Father of all and filled with desire to serve Him, that so peace may be established on the foundation of justice, truth and goodwill.

This is not an isolated case. When Dr. Cockburn, the moderator of the Church of Scotland, learned that some of the instructors in the training camps of England were trying to develop the spirit of hate in the young recruits, he wrote a letter to the commanding general, Sir Bernard Paget, which called forth this response:

I am writing to all the Army commanders about two points in our training, particularly the training at the battle schools, about which I have heard severe criticisms both from civilians and officers.

The first point is the use of strong and offensive language to urge students to greater efforts during training. This behaviour is a complete negation of leadership, and, while troops will respond to a lead, they will not be driven on by abusive language. When such language is used by N.C.O.'s to officer students I consider that it is most harmful to discipline.

The second point is the attempt to produce a blood lust or hate during training. Such an attitude of hate is foreign to our British temperament, and any attempt to produce it by artificial stimulus during training is bound to fail, as it did in the last war. Officers and N.C.O.'s must be made to realize the difference between the building up of this artificial hate and the building up of a true offensive spirit combined with the will power which will not recognize defeat.[1]

More striking, because wholly informal and unofficial, is this testimony which comes to us from China. One of the American missionaries, while visiting Chiang Kai-shek some months ago, was invited to stay for evening

[1] "The Spiritual Issues of the War"—No. 134, May 28, 1942.

prayers. These were conducted by the Generalissimo himself. He prayed not only for his own country but for Japan; and among his prayers for his own people was this —that they might be kept free from the spirit of hate, since the Japanese too were their brothers with whom they must someday learn again to live.

WHAT LOVE TO GOD ADDS TO LOVE TO MAN

This then defines our duty in the postwar world. It is to build upon the foundation which has already been laid and to extend the existing fellowship until it dominates the life of the Church as a whole.

Fortunately there are unseen allies on whom we may rely—the better man who sleeps in every one of us. For Christians, we must never forget, have no monopoly of love. It belongs to the nature of man to find himself in others. This capacity for fellowship—poles apart either from sentimentality or from passion, because based neither on liking nor on desire, but on persistent elements in our common humanity—is man's most distinctive possession. It is what makes him man.

In a recent number of *The Reader's Digest* there is a moving story of a visit which a little group of Americans paid to Russia in 1921, the year of the great famine. When conditions were at their worst the visitors were gladdened by the arrival at Stavropol of a relief ship laden with grain. But to their amazement the starving peasants would not touch it, for they said it was not bread but seed for fall sowing.

> There is the seed. It must be planted now, so there will be bread next year. But we have left our farms, hoping that boats would save us and our children. Now the Little Father Lenin

has sent us seed grain, and we are grieved that he has not heard that we are going to die. Nobody is left to plow and plant, so next year there will be great hunger, and the whole world will die.

There was only one thing for the visitors to do. They scoured the neighborhood for all available food and succeeded in collecting thirty loaves of bread, which they distributed to all whom they could reach. But here they met a new surprise.

We gave bread to the mothers, and as they took it a light came into their faces. Then they bent their heads over the bread and wept. The children stood holding the bread with both hands, not the smallest child nibbled at his bit of food. Our dole was obviously exhausted. But they waited. There was something we must do.

I have no idea how long this pause lasted. At first we felt a cold current running between us and that dark line of peasants. We were separated from them by Fate, History, what you will. Those moujiks must perish, we must live.

We couldn't bear this separation. These peasants were our neighbors, and we were giving them this last affront, a dole from our secure lives. We longed to tell them how much more we wanted to give them. If we could, we would cross the gulf and stand in line with them. But there was no gulf. These people had simply been waiting patiently for us to see that nothing can divide a man and his brother but their will to be apart.

The bread was not food to us now; it was the deepest sacrament men know. And though it was the hardest thing we ever did, we broke the bitter bread with our neighbors and ate. We all together ate that dark bread, and wept, and so were comforted.[2]

[2] August, 1942, pp. 23-24. Condensed from "Floyd Gibbons and the Famine," by Helen Augur, in *American Mercury*, June, 1942. Reprinted by permission of *American Mercury*, copyright owners, and *Reader's Digest*.

All true love has this reciprocal quality. It is willing to take as well as to give. But Christian love carries its reciprocity one step further. Christian love has its roots in God and finds in him its most distinctive expression. God too gives that he may receive.

This is the justification of what would otherwise be the most irrational of all Christian activities—worship. Worship expresses the reciprocal element in man's relation to God. It is God's gracious acceptance of the only thing we can give—our thanks. But to God, who sees the heart, acceptable worship must go beyond the words we speak. It must become the spirit's pledge that the great love wherewith he loved us has not been in vain.

We come closest to the meaning of this mystery in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Here the reciprocal quality of Christian love receives its most unequivocal expression. In the sacrament we receive by faith God's gift of himself in the Lord Jesus Christ, "whose once offering up of Himself upon the cross" we commemorate in the broken bread and poured-out wine. And we in our turn "offer and present . . . . ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto Thee . . . . through Jesus Christ our Lord." [3]

So we are brought back to what must always remain the supreme task of the Church: namely, to cultivate in its members, as many as it can and as fast as it can, the qualities which are the marks of Christian love as the Apostle Paul has described them for us in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and as Jesus Christ, our Lord and Master, has illustrated them in his earthly life.

For when all has been done that can be done along organizational lines, the fact remains that at the heart of

[3] *Book of Common Worship*, Philadelphia, 1932, p. 67.

all that the Church does or attempts there is a problem of the spirit: how to achieve the mind of Christ, the mind of him who gave himself without reserve yet was not too proud to receive the gift of even the humblest of his disciples. Many as are the lessons that our Lord has to teach this institutionally minded generation, that of the precious ointment which might have been sold for five hundred pence and given to the poor is the hardest to learn. Only those who have learned this lesson—who are willing to receive as well as to give, to learn as well as to teach—are fitted to play their part in the postwar world. Only the Church that recognizes in such tried spirits its truest representatives, the pledge of what it hopes someday all its members may become, can make its most distinctive contribution to the fellowship of love.

There are two ways in which the distinctive quality in Christian love finds expression. One is in the attitude taken toward one's own shortcomings. The other is in the attitude taken to the sins of others. Both go back in principle to the Christian conception of God.

HOW CHRISTIAN LOVE EXPRESSES ITSELF TOWARD GOD

The form in which Christian love expresses itself in reference to one's own shortcomings is penitence; and with penitence goes its sister grace, humility. Those who possess this grace are keenly conscious of their limitations and failures. They are not surprised, therefore, at the faults which they find in others, for they realize that there is something in themselves which had it not been for divine help might have issued in deeds as unlovely. This is why they cannot feel it in their hearts to hate men who have been enslaved by passions whose tyrannous force they understand only too well. For they know that if God

whose very nature is justice has forgiven them their sins, they too should be ready to forgive others, however many and however great the wrongs which they have done.

But penitence is not the last word that human love speaks to God. It is only the beginning of a continuing conversation of which the dominant note is hope. Those who love as Christ has taught us to love, see men and women as they are—and themselves first of all. They are under no illusion as to man, but see him as he is—selfish, willful, inconsistent, hiding his inner fears under a cloak of pride. Yet in this blundering pathetic creature they see something spiritual, something divine. For man, they know, out of their own experience, is one for whom God has given his best that he may make him over.

Hope, therefore, is of the very essence of Christian love, a hope that is rooted in faith. If God, who gave Christ his Son that men might learn to love, could see in man a being capable of love, then there is no place for despair, either for others or for oneself. How can one despair when one has seen God in the person of Jesus Christ? "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things." [4]

To trust where one cannot understand, to hope where one cannot see, that is love's secret.

HOW CHRISTIAN LOVE EXPRESSES ITSELF TOWARD MEN

Yet how hard to learn this! For there are obstacles in the character of those we are asked to love which seem insuperable. The men with whom we shall have to do in the postwar world have many of them done things that seem in the literal sense of the word unforgivable. One

[4] Rom. 8:32.

thinks of Rotterdam and Coventry, of starving Greece and looted Belgium. One follows the Norwegian schoolteachers on their lonely trip into exile. One stands on the barren wastes in Czechoslovakia where Lidice once stood, now only a desolate ruin, and one remembers worse things than these—a generation robbed of its right to higher education, a race pilloried before the world as the enemies of mankind and by slow degrees doomed to extinction. What can men who have done such things—more than this, who have gloried in doing them—expect but the universal execration of mankind?

Yet these too are included in our Christian commandment to love. Can one find any meaning in the command?

First of all, we must remember that Christian love never asks us to shut our eyes to the facts. If anyone can see things as they are it should be the lover, for it belongs to love to desire the best for others; and when they fall short, love should be the first to feel the pang.

We must be on our guard, however, against sweeping generalizations. We speak of Germany, or of Japan, as if Germans and Japanese were all of a piece; and when we speak in this way we shall be apt to act as we speak.

No one has brought before us with more uncompromising frankness the ruthlessness of the dominant military party which now rules Japan than our former ambassador, Mr. Grew. But in the same statement that warns against any illusion as to the intention of this military oligarchy, he reminds us of the existence of another group of Japanese who are moved by considerations of a very different kind. He tells us how, when he was in prison, these good friends maintained their contact with him, often at great risk to themselves; how they shared with him the most precious of their possessions—the meat to which they

seldom had access, but which, when secured, they turned over to him.

This is not an isolated case. My thought goes back to a day only a few weeks before Pearl Harbor, when a group of American Christians met with a group of their Japanese fellow Christians who had come to this country to explore the possibilities of a peaceful solution of the differences between the two countries. Whatever might happen, they assured us, they would never forget their fellowship with us in the body of Christ; and they would do their very best to maintain that fellowship unbroken, whatever the future might bring. On the existence of people like this, whether many or few, our hope of finding a way to live at peace with Japan in the postwar world depends.

What is true of our postwar relations to the Japanese will be still more true of our relation to the Germans. Of all European peoples the Germans feel most at home under an authoritative regime. It is easy, therefore, to hold the nation as a whole responsible for the sins of the leaders. It is easy, but it is none the less dangerous, for it makes any hope of permanent peace impossible. Here also —indeed, here most of all—we must discriminate.

There are at least three classes of Germans with whom we shall have to find a *modus vivendi* after the war. It is our duty to love each. But the way that love should express itself is very different in each case.

The duty which Christian love requires toward those who have been responsible for the kind of outrages that I have recalled is that they should be tried, found guilty, and visited with appropriate punishment. There is no greater mistake than to imagine that Christian love is inconsistent with punishment. That is to misread the

Bible from cover to cover. The God whom the Bible reveals is the righteous God, exacting for every sin its appropriate penalty; and this not only in the name of righteousness, but of love. The prophets of Israel well understood this. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth," writes Amos of sinful Israel; "therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." [5] The forgiveness of which the Bible speaks is not remission of punishment. It is God's admission of the penitent sinner into his fellowship of love in spite of his sin, which is a very different matter. But penitence there must be before there can be acceptance. This is elementary Christian truth.

It is true that human justice can never be more than an approximation of divine justice. But this is no more true of justice than of any other attribute in which we are charged by our Master to be imitators of God. The most that can be asked of the State, which is the human instrument of justice, is that it should use the best precedents which international law provides to reach a result which it is to be hoped the consciences of later generations will approve.

Side by side with condemnation must go reconciliation. There is another group of Germans toward whom Christian love calls for a very different treatment. These are sincere patriots involved against their will in a situation in which they have seen many things done by their government of which they disapprove, and so have been faced with the choice between loyalty and rebellion. In such a situation what ought they to have done? A few of them have made the more heroic choice. They have made their

[5] Amos 3:2.

protest, and when it was rejected they have accepted the concentration camp, or, if more fortunate, have made their escape to the freer atmosphere of Britain and the United States. The great majority, however, have felt it their duty to stand by their country, hoping for the day when the principles in which they believed would again be in control. Who among us can be sure that in their position we would have acted differently?

But the conscience of these loyal Germans has not been at ease in what they have seen their leaders doing. They have obeyed, but with a heavy heart.

In interpreting human situations of this kind, the novelists are often our wisest teachers. In Steinbeck's story *The Moon Is Down*, it will be remembered that the colonel in command of the forces of occupation in a small Norwegian mining town has been ordered by his superiors to hold the mayor of the town as hostage and to shoot him if there is any more sabotage. But he has no heart for the task assigned to him, for he has learned to respect the mayor and he knows that what he is ordered to do will be worse than useless. So they stand opposite each other, judge and prisoner; yet between them there is a bond of sympathy closer than that between the colonel and many of his own officers. When the mayor tries to recall the lines of Socrates' farewell to his grieving friends, the colonel supplies the missing words. Love that knows no bonds of lock or key has leaped the gap which separated judge and prisoner, and left only two men, partners in a fate for which neither is responsible and which both regret.

With Germans of this kind it will not be hard to re-establish fellowship. How many of them there are and where they are to be found we shall not know till the war is over and freedom of expression again becomes possible.

There remains a third group of Germans who will present an even greater problem for Christian love. These are the young Nazis who have been brought up in the National Socialist Party and know no other loyalty than to the Fuehrer. With them it will not be easy to find a point of contact. It may be that all we can do for the present is to go our own way and let them go theirs, till we have developed a way of life satisfying and compelling enough to command their attention and win their respect. The one thing we dare not do is to believe that the separation will always continue and that love which has conquered so many obstacles will not in time be able, here too, to find a way.

WHERE LOVE IS NEEDED IN THE CHURCH

This, then, I repeat, is the supreme task of the Christian Church—to cultivate in as many of its members as it can and to as high a degree as possible the spirit of love as it has been set forth by the Apostle in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians.

And the place to begin is at home, inside the Christian Church. If we do not love one another, we who call ourselves by the name of Christ, how can we expect to commend the gospel of love convincingly to others?

Yet it is just here, within the Church, that we find the greatest obstacle to the fellowship which is the final fruit of Christian love. For here the tension which is the inevitable result of honest difference of conviction in matters deemed important is reinforced by the sense of trusteeship which is implicit in Christian faith. What one might forgive, or at least tolerate, for oneself becomes a betrayal when one is acting in a representative capacity. So it comes about that, difficult as it may be to achieve

unity between the denominations, the attainment of inner denominational unity is often more difficult still.

What then can we do to overcome this most persistent and baffling of all the obstacles to a united church? First of all we must realize that it is not something wanton or arbitrary, but that it has its roots deep in human nature. Its basic source is in difference of conviction as to the extent of man's ability to grasp absolute truth.

There are some Christians—and they are to be found in all the churches—who are sure that there is only one way to understand the divine revelation and that they know what that way is. Any compromise, therefore, with those who reject this view in any matter which affects the substance of Christian faith appears to them to be sin. There are other Christians who are so keenly aware of the limitation of human knowledge in matters of faith that compromise involves for them no betrayal, but is simply the necessary condition of every form of fellowship between finite men.

Both these types are found in the Christian Church. To each the Christian law of love applies. This law requires us, first of all, to understand those from whom we differ; then, to respect them, so far as that difference is due to honest conviction; further, to co-operate with them in all matters that do not involve a betrayal of conscience; finally, and above all, to maintain fellowship with them in spite of difference.

The great contribution which the Ecumenical Movement has made and is making to the cause of Christian unity is by increasing the area in which practical co-operation with men of other views is seen to be compatible with loyalty to essential Christian faith. One way in which the Ecumenical Movement has been promoting the

understanding which is the precondition of fellowship is through the association of men of different views in common study. Another has been through their association in common service in fields in which no theological issue has been involved. But unquestionably the most direct contribution to the growth of the ecumenical spirit has been through the association of Christians of the two types in common worship.

No one has seen this more clearly than Dr. Douglas Horton, the presiding minister of the Congregational Christian churches. Speaking of the services of common worship at Oxford and Edinburgh he gives this account of his own personal experience:

> In St. Mary's in Oxford, and in St. Giles' in Edinburgh, where the delegates met daily for intercession, such a sense of spiritual oneness was engendered about the altar of God as to make all those who partook of the experience mystically aware of the presence of the Church. The Church, *Una Sancta,* appeared then in her beauty to eyes no longer holden; and all responded to the impulse of the same Spirit. There the richness which was in Christ was poured in lavish abundance and in its many forms of beauty, episcopal, presbyterial, congregational, into the souls of worshippers. It is that vision, luminous and sublime, of the one Church of the one God, already vouchsafed in common worship, which will hold the ecumenical movement on its course in spite of any tension, or any score of tensions.[6]

This is not an isolated experience. No single thing has done more to break down the wall of separation between different types of Christians and make real to them their common membership in the one body of Christ than the

[6] Douglas Horton, "Oxford and Edinburgh, 1937," in *World Christianity*, A Digest, Fourth Quarter, 1937, pp. 15-16. Reprinted by permission.

ecumenical services which have been a central feature of the last four of the Ecumenical Conferences—Oxford, Edinburgh, Madras, and Amsterdam.

It is good to know that the precedent thus set is being extensively followed and that in many communities ecumenical services are being held which bring together the different Christians of each community in common worship. When in a single American city of not more than one hundred thousand people it is found possible to bring together representatives of churches which hold services in six or seven different languages and to unite them in a service in which they can honestly share, we are given an impressive demonstration of the reality of the one Church.

But services of this kind, useful as they may be, reach only selected groups and leave many difficult questions of conscience unresolved. There is a more direct way which is open to those who are willing to follow it.

This is to gather little groups of Christians, preferably those whose religious life is of different types, for a period of intimate conference and prayer on the personal issues which divide them. Above all, it is helpful to do this when these issues concern not the participants only, but the congregations to which they belong, or the community in which they live. There is no more helpful way to approach a divisive question of conscience than by contemplating it together in the light that shines upon it from the face of him who loved us and gave himself for us—Jesus Christ our Lord.

If those of us who face divisive issues would approach them in this way there is no limit to the understanding and fellowship which might result.

PRESENT POSSIBILITIES OF INTERDENOMINATIONAL SACRAMENTAL COMMUNION

There is one further form of worship which opens the possibility of an even closer form of fellowship. I refer to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The very name Communion, by which it is familiarly known, suggests the appropriateness of its use as the Sacrament of reconciliation. Yet it is here, at our point of greatest need, that the obstacles created by our denominational divisions seem to bar the way to such use. It is all the more important to explore the possibilities which are open to us within the accepted law of churches.

These on closer inspection will be found to be far greater than is often realized. The very fact that by whatever form it is administered the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is recognized by every branch of Christians as an essential element in Christian worship makes it a symbol of spiritual unity of the highest value. Even though the law or custom of a particular church makes the physical participation of its members in the Sacrament of other churches impracticable, it is possible for them to commune with one another in the spirit. If we cannot sit down together at the same table we can celebrate the Sacrament on the same day and in our thoughts and prayers join our fellow Christians of other names in the common adoration of our one Lord.[7]

A helpful precedent has been set by a little group of women who for years have been meeting in Rochester to explore the possibilities of such sacramental fellowship. Among the group have been members of twelve different

[7] This is the conviction which has inspired the widespread movement for World Communion Sunday, a Sunday on which many different denominations unite in celebrating the Sacrament, each in its own way.

denominations differing as widely as the Episcopalians and the Friends. They have made it their primary business to discover what the Sacrament has meant to each member of the group in the form in which her own church administers it and have discovered that in this way, even without physical participation in the service, they were able to enter into what was to them in a very real sense a sacramental experience.[8]

But we can do more than this. We can go as far toward a joint Communion as the present law of our churches will allow us to go. And this, as the recent discussions at Edinburgh have made clear, is much further than we often now recognize. If joint administration of the Sacrament is not legally possible in some churches, let us practice open Communion wherever that is permitted. If regular intercommunion is not permitted, let us multiply such exceptional services as were possible at Oxford and Edinburgh. By doing this we shall enlarge our experience of fellowship and hasten the day when obstacles which now seem insuperable may be overcome.

Nor must we close the door to the possibility of such exceptional experiences as go beyond the limits of present ecclesiastical procedure. On Good Friday, fifteen years ago, a little company of Christians met on the Mount of Olives. They had come together from many different countries to bear their common witness to the Master who, on that spot more than nineteen centuries ago, had made the supreme sacrifice. All through the week they had been following the events of the memorable history which culminated on Calvary. On this day, sacred to all of them by innumerable personal associations, there was only one

[8] Elizabeth Stebbins, "In the Spirit of the Lord's Supper," *Christendom*, Autumn, 1942, pp. 462-69.

thing that it seemed to them possible to do. That was to take literally the command of the Master who, on that last night he spent with his disciples, after he had broken the bread and poured the wine, said to them: "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." So in the quiet of that Friday afternoon they sat down together at the Lord's Table, ministers and laymen of many churches. In this unique service all legal considerations were transcended, and on this Good Friday, the most memorable of their lives, they shared what was in every sense of the word a joint Communion.

That is the way, I am persuaded, that the final obstacle which church law now puts in the way of a joint celebration will be finally overcome. Someday we shall be drawn so close together in common work and worship that it will be made clear that there is now no longer any obstacle which should prevent us from joining in the supreme Sacrament of common worship. In the meantime let us use every present possibility that existing law provides to deepen the spiritual fellowship of which the Sacrament of the Supper is the outward and visible sign.

Chapter Four

THE NEED OF A UNIFYING FAITH

THE CHURCH, A CONTINUING WITNESS TO THE FACT OF CHRIST

A PRIMARY duty of the Church in every age is witness. Something has happened that is of supreme significance for mankind. It is the responsibility of the Church to see that the story of this happening is made known as widely, as accurately, and as simply as it is possible to tell it.

This is elementary Christian truth. All Christians recognize it. Whatever else they may have left undone they have never wholly neglected this primary duty. But with the passing of the years the form of the witness has varied. Transmitted as it must needs be through the lips, and still more through the minds of men who are themselves living and growing, it tends inevitably to be limited by the interest and experience of those who are its spokesmen. Whatever authority one may attribute to the original records which gave us our first knowledge of the Gospel story, it is simple matter of fact that these records have been differently understood by those who have received them. Moreover, the emphasis given to one part of the story or another has varied with the differing interest and experience of the readers. What has been central for one has left slight impress upon another. So, little by little there has grown up about the central fact which constitutes the Gospel a mass of associated matter which to the

conscience of those who have inherited it acquires the sanctity of divine revelation. Instead of a single Church giving its unchanging witness with united voice, we find a group of self-governing churches, each conscious of its own responsibility as witness, yet each the custodian of a tradition which differs in greater or less degree from that of its sister churches. Is it any wonder that under such conditions a skeptical world should be most impressed by our differences, and end by questioning whether there is in fact any single central Gospel as to which all the churches are at one?

Here the Ecumenical Movement gives us needed help. For the Ecumenical Movement has made it its primary business to discover what is common in these parallel traditions. The result of this inquiry is available in the reports of the Ecumenical Conferences, notably that of Lausanne on "The Church's Message to the World—The Gospel," that of Jerusalem on "The Christian Message and the World Mission," and that of Edinburgh in its "Affirmation of Union." All three agree in giving the central place to Jesus Christ as not only the one through whom the Gospel has first come to us, but as one who is himself in a very real sense the Christian Gospel.

Of the three the formulation of Jerusalem is the most impressive, not only because it accepts and reaffirms the Lausanne statement, but because it speaks for the younger churches of the so-called mission field as well as for the older churches. It says:

> Our message is Jesus Christ. He is the revelation of what God is and of what man through Him may become. In Him we come face to face with the Ultimate Reality of the universe; He makes known to us God as our Father, perfect and infinite in love and in righteousness; for in Him we find God incarnate,

the final, yet ever-unfolding, revelation of the God in whom we live and move and have our being.

WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE FAITH IN THE LIVING CHRIST

Professor Ernest Hocking, speaking as the chairman of the Layman's Missionary Inquiry, has criticized this way of stating the Christian Gospel as too narrow, and specified various points at which, in his judgment, it needs supplementing.

Such criticism, however well meant, betrays a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of the symbols by which religion lives. A symbol is a physical fact which is pregnant of spiritual meaning. To use old and familar language, it is an outward sign of an inward and spiritual grace. For this purpose it must be concrete, easy to recognize and to grasp. It must be simple, open to the most limited as well as the most highly developed intelligence. Above all, it must be dynamic, speaking its own message in its own way to each receptive spirit with whom it is confronted. Such a symbol is given us in Jesus Christ.

What Professor Hocking would add to the simplicity of the Jerusalem statement, Christians have in fact been adding through the centuries, each in his own way. Christ has meant to them many things—Brother Man, Jewish Messiah, the divine Word made flesh, very God of very God incarnate for man's salvation. When our fellow Christians at Jerusalem said of Christ that he is the Gospel, they were not narrowing that Gospel, but expanding it, for the whole realm of what he had meant to their predecessors and what he might still mean to those who were to come after them was uncovered to their view.

Yet through all variations of interpretation certain central elements persist, and these give to the word Christ

a dynamic quality which makes the personality it calls to mind the channel of a continuing self-revelation.

For one thing, Jesus Christ is true man, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh; sharing man's experiences, bound by his limitations, tempted at all points as other men, yet, unlike them, victor over temptation. In him we see the kind of man we were meant to be. More than this, in him we see the kind of man it is God's purpose that we shall become.

But to Christian faith Jesus Christ is more than man. He is God in man. In him the divine Word, or, in more familiar words, the outgoing creative Spirit who in every age has been active in the world as the source of life and light and joy, took flesh and dwelt among us. How this indwelling took place is the mystery of mysteries, with which the wisest of the fathers and the schoolmen have wrestled in vain. One thing only the Church can tell us about this mystery, and that is that in this divine indwelling each of the members, the divine and the human, retains its essential quality unimpaired.

Still again, the word Christ recalls to us the purpose of the incarnation. It was for our salvation. In non-theological language this means that Christ was sent to bring us practical help at the point at which we most need this help, the inner spiritual dislocation which our pride and self-will have brought about in our relation to God and to one another. Through Christ springs of spiritual energy have been released which have borne fruit in transformed lives; and not in the transformation of individual lives only, but in the relations of men with one another.

When asked what new things he has to bring to men who are in search of a Gospel, the modern missionary will answer in words spoken at Lausanne and repeated at

Jerusalem: "I bring you Jesus Christ, the eternal Word incarnate, Son of God, and Son of Man, full of grace and truth."

Through His life and teaching, His call to repentance, His proclamation of the coming of the Kingdom of God and of judgment, His suffering and death, His resurrection and exaltation to the right hand of the Father, and by the mission of the Holy Spirit, He has brought to us forgiveness of sin, and has revealed the fulness of the living God, and His boundless love toward us. By the appeal of that love, shown in its completeness on the Cross, He summons us to the new life of faith, self-sacrifice, and devotion to His service and the service of men.[1]

Thus the Gospel is "more than a philosophical theory." It is "more than a theological system." It is "more than a programme for material betterment." "The Gospel is rather the gift of a new world from God to this old world of sin and death." It is

the sure source of power for social regeneration. It proclaims the only way by which humanity can escape from those class and race hatreds which devastate society at present into the enjoyment of national well-being and international friendship and peace. It is also a gracious invitation to the non-Christian world, East and West, to enter into the joy of the living Lord.[2]

Finally, the statement goes on to say, we see in Christ the founder and head of a new society, the one "who has knit together the whole family in heaven and on earth in the communion of saints, united in the fellowship of service, of prayer, and of praise." [3]

[1] *Faith and Order*, George H. Doran Co., New York, 1927, p. 462.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 462-63.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 462.

How this service is to be rendered, how this worship is to be offered, Christians do not agree. As to what more needs to be added to the language of this statement in order to develop its full significance, they part company at many points. But in this they are at one: when they say that Jesus Christ is the Gospel they mean this at least, that he is very man, God incarnate, Saviour of the world, head of the Church.

This then is the spiritual reality to which the Church is witness, the central fact which it is its mission everywhere and by all possible means to make known among men.

In all this there is nothing new. It is only to say in other words that Christianity is a missionary religion and must of necessity be so. There have been times in which the missionary impulse has been more active than at others, and there have been periods in which it has seemed to languish. But sooner or later it has revived and found new ways to express itself. Were it ever to die out altogether, Christianity, in the form in which we have come to know it through its history, would cease to be.

THE TWOFOLD TASK OF THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY

As a missionary religion, Christianity faces obstacles of two kinds. There are the elementary physical obstacles of space and time. There are peoples to whom the Christian Gospel has never come, and it is the missionary's task somehow to gain access to them. But physical distance is the least of the obstacles he must overcome. There are barriers of the mind that must be surmounted, ignorance and prejudice to be overcome, and here an even greater resourcefulness is needed. Dealing with persons to whom the whole set of ideas through which the Christian Gospel

finds expression is all but completely unfamiliar, the missionary must find some point of contact in their personal experience before he can hope to make himself understood.

At different periods in Christian history the relative importance of these two aspects of the missionary's task has varied. Sometimes the geographical aspect has been in the foreground. How to make physical contact with his would-be converts has been his main preoccupation. It was so in apostolic days, when Christians were only a little band of converts facing a world to which the Christian message had not yet come. It was so during the days of the barbarian invasions, when Christianity, now the recognized religion of Rome and Byzantium, had either to win these new conquerors to its faith or be content to leave wide provinces of the imperial domain still pagan. It was so during the days of the explorers of the seventeenth century, when a new world broke upon the horizon of the West, and missionaries sailed with soldiers in the tiny ships that carried the pioneers who sallied forth to try their fortunes in the new continent. It was still truer in the more recent days of modern missions, when the ancient civilizations of the Far East, India and China, as well as the backward peoples of Africa, first felt the impact of the Christian Gospel. At all these periods there were difficulties of space and time to be overcome which taxed the ingenuity of the missionary.

But space and time are the least difficulties that the missionary has had to overcome. There has been an inner frontier to be penetrated, mountains and rivers of the mind to be traversed and here the history of missions introduces us to a story of almost inconceivable variety. There was the Jew, proud of his divine calling as a member of a messianic race, but unwilling to recognize in the

crucified Jesus God's promised Messiah. There was the Roman, secure in his position as called to an imperial mission and willing to tolerate any religion that would recognize the primacy of the Emperor and burn incense at his shrine. There was the Greek, heir of Socrates and Plato, who recognized in his own way God's revelation through the divine Word, the light that lighteth every man who cometh into the world, but was unacquainted with the Christ through whom he had most clearly spoken. There were the Eastern faiths with their pantheistic philosophy and their mystic ritual, ready to initiate any who would follow their leading into the immortal life. There was the barbarian, child of nature, whose god was Odin or Thor, strong in his simplicity and simple in his strength. To each of these the Christian missionary had to bring his message. In the mind of each he had to find some point of contact to which he could appeal.

THE NEW FRONTIER IN MISSIONS

Judged by this test, can anyone doubt that the Christian missionary is facing today what is very literally, in both of these senses, a new frontier? It is so from the point of view of geography. A century ago—one may go farther and say a generation ago—the geographical frontier of missions was to be found in the Far East—India, China, and Japan—in Africa, and in the islands of the sea. Today that frontier has moved nearer home. Europe is the great mission field today, for Europe is the home of two of the three great missionary religions that are today the most formidable rivals of Christianity—Communism, National Socialism, and Shintoism. In Russia, a generation ago the home of many millions of professing Christians, atheism is the official religion; and until

recently young people were urged to enlist in a systematic campaign to bring to the less fortunate peoples of the so-called Christian countries the good news that there is no God. In Germany, boys and girls are taught in school that not Jesus, but Adolf Hitler is the promised Messiah, and that he summons them as members of the master race to introduce into the life of every people—willingly if they will have it so, but if not, by force—the blessings of a new order. In Japan, the Emperor is deified as God's chosen ruler of mankind.

With this change, the attitude of the missionary to the older areas of missionary endeavor must change accordingly, and this in two ways. With the growing self-consciousness of the younger churches as independent and self-determining bodies, he must be content more and more to see the direction of policy pass to the hands of the indigenous Christian. His chief contribution must be as a counselor. More than this, in the struggle that is on between Christianity and the new fighting forms of pagan religion, he will see in the nascent churches of the East and of Africa his best allies in what has now become a world-wide struggle—the struggle for a religion as inclusive as man himself.

For what has been going on in Europe in the rise of a triumphant paganism has been repeating itself in the Far East in the experience of Japan. In contemporary Japan we have an almost exact counterpart of National Socialism, an imperialistic religion conscious of being called by God to impose its own type of culture upon other peoples whether they are willing or unwilling. With a secularized religion of this kind, missionaries from other countries could avail little, even if their physical presence were tolerated. Only the Christians of Japan can deal suc-

cessfully with this latest challenge to Christian faith. Only the Christians of Japan can Christianize Japan.

If the missionary is to meet this test successfully, he must be adequately prepared. This is always true when one is dealing with an unfamiliar situation. It was sound strategy, therefore, which led the leaders of the missionary enterprise a generation ago to establish what they called the Board of Missionary Preparation. This Board, composed of scholars of recognized standing in many fields, undertook a systematic study of the conditions in the countries to which the missionaries were to go, and, not least, of the faiths with which they would be brought into contact. In this way it was possible for a new recruit before he reached his intended field to make acquaintance with the sacred books of the religion to whose adherents he was to minister. He discovered that, side by side with much that was crude and superstitious, these books contained not a little that was true and helpful. Indeed there was a sense in which, like the religion of Israel, even if not in so direct a degree, they could be thought of as a *praeparatio evangelii.*

Christians have differed as to the extent to which in fact such a preparation can be found in the non-Christian faiths. Some have seen in the Christian revelation the consummation of an agelong historic process in which each of the older religions and civilizations had its contribution to make. Others have believed that the most direct access to the hearts of men was to be found by sharpening the contrast between the Christian message and its rival gospels.[4]

[4] Thus, at Madras, Dr. Kraemer, the leading advocate of the latter view, urged the need of drawing the line of distinction between Christianity and

Whatever may be one's attitude toward this controversial question, it is certainly true that to preach Christianity effectively to men of other faiths, one must meet them where they are; and for this the more one can know about their past history and present beliefs the better. To Christian faith, history is not a meaningless process in which individuals and nations struggle for mastery according to the law of the jungle. It is the scene of God's continuing self-revelation. We who stand in the middle of this historic process will understand God's word to us most fully if we have first learned what he has been saying to the generations which have preceded us.

What has been true of the older faiths, which still claim the major part of the Church's missionary activity, namely, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Mohammedanism, will prove equally true of the militant secular religions which challenge Christianity today. Before we can overcome them, we must understand them.

WHAT CHRISTIANS CAN LEARN FROM COMMUNISTS

This is particularly true of Communism. Of all the secular rivals of Christianity, Communism has the most consistent theoretical foundation, and makes the most direct appeal to the intellect of man. Lenin, the true founder of Communism, was all his life a student; and the weary years which he spent in exile were welcomed by him as his opportunity to acquaint himself with what was best in the thought of the great thinkers who had preceded him. During these years of waiting, he worked out to the last detail the faith which he would commend to his followers. When one realizes how extraordinary

other faiths in the sharpest possible way, while others were eager to discover every possible point of contact between the non-Christian faiths and their own.

has been the influence of this one man who is today revered by millions of our follow men as a saint, it is amazing that so few of his works—there are some thirty volumes in Russian—have been made accessible in English translation. Here is a task for a new Board of Missionary Preparation, and it should be undertaken without delay.

On my return to America a few days after the conclusion of the Stockholm Conference, I had as my fellow traveler Bishop Brent. His mornings were spent in studying a little book with paper covers which bore the title *The A B C of Communism*.[5] In this book, originally designed as a textbook for use in the schools and colleges of Russia, a consistent philosophy was set forth covering every aspect of human life.

Brent was enormously impressed by what he read. He was impressed not only by the earnestness of the authors, but by their ability. "Unless we can match this faith," he said to me, "with a faith as consistent and as uncompromising, we shall fail, and we shall deserve to fail."

Nothing has been more surprising than the extraordinary valor with which the rank and file of Russians have been holding their own against the all but resistless onslaught of the German war machine. There can be only one explanation, and that is in the spirit of the fighters. When one has given due weight to the ability of the Russian commanders, the excellence of their equipment, the additional help which has been going to them from Great Britain and America, there is still a further factor to be taken into account—the belief which has been drilled into the rank and file of Russians from their earliest years

[5] By N. Buharin and E. Preobrazhensky; Communist Party of Great Britain, July, 1925.

that the cause for which they are fighting holds in store the issues of the future, and that in resisting Hitler to the uttermost they are fighting not for their own country only, but for a better world.

A dozen years ago, before it had become the fashion to speak of Communism as a religion, I remember calling the attention of Mr. James MacDonald, at that time head of the Foreign Policy Association, to four points in which present-day Communism presented a parallel to the early days of Christianity. First was its concern for the common man, and particularly its sweeping away of all barriers of nationality and race; then its apocalyptic hope, its faith in a better world just beyond the horizon; still again its missionary zeal. What the Russian disciples of Lenin believe today they were convinced that all men would believe tomorrow, and they were determined to do what they could to help them to believe it. Finally, there was the deep-seated conviction that what they had been taught was not simply human wisdom, but a truth securely rooted in the nature of things, so that whether one accepted or rejected the articles of the new religion it was certain in the end to prevail.

It is all the more of a shock to the Christian to discover that this new religion, which at so many points parallels his own, omits what is the central fact to which the Church is called to witness—the reality of the righteous and loving God who has revealed himself in the person of Jesus Christ our Lord.

It must be a primary responsibility of some new Board of Missionary Preparation to find a complete and satisfying reason for this omission. In the meantime I venture two suggestions. First, and most obvious, is this: that what we see in the Communists' exaltation of atheism is a

passionate protest against the use of belief in God to justify, or at least to palliate, remediable social evils. No one can understand the Society of the Godless who has not touched at first hand the corrupt and bureaucratic Church against which it is a protest.

But there is another and deeper reason. In Communism the contemporary glorification of science has reached its apotheosis. The fundamental assumption of Soviet philosophy is that there is no reality beyond the competence of science to grasp. Any belief in a transcendent being with whom men may have commerce by faith is ruled out of order as superstitious and therefore as illegitimate.

But this is only to make explicit what is the working philosophy of many of the teachers in our so-called Christian colleges and universities. In Communism we have the logical development of the type of thinking which holds the right of way in many leading academic circles in Britain and America.

Here Communism itself furnishes the best antidote to its own negation. Where can one find in the facts of human nature, as science reveals them, any justification for the apocalyptic hope of Communism or any adequate reason for its missionary zeal? It is faith and faith alone that gives dynamic to the new hope which the Russian revolution has released. It is faith and faith alone that can give birth to the religion which is to supplant it.

WHAT CAN BE LEARNED FROM GERMAN AND JAPANESE IMPERIALISTS

National Socialism and its analogue, the revived Shintoism of contemporary Japan, present the Christian missionary with a problem of a different kind. Here too he faces a direct challenge, but there are points of contact as

well. Both National Socialism and Shintoism are examples of imperialistic religion. Each, in its own way, aims at world supremacy. But whereas Communism bases its claim to be the religion of the future on the ground that it alone has succeeded in transcending the divisive features of the religions of the past—nationality, or class, or race—National Socialism and Shintoism each believes in the special calling of its own people as representative of the master race to put all others in their place and assign them their appropriate duties. Unlike Communism, each recognizes a transcendent factor in human life. Each has a place for God—or the gods—in its philosophy. But the god in whom it believes is not the Universal Father of Christ, but the sovereign will who has chosen one particular people—one may go farther and say one particular individual, as representative or leader of that people—to be the instrument of his inscrutable will.

Thus, in spite of their superficial resemblances as totalitarian religions, Communism and National Socialism differ fundamentally in their philosophy of life. Communism is a brotherhood with no divine Father. National Socialism believes in God, but a god in whose plan there is no place for universal brotherhood.

Yet even with National Socialism Christians have points in common. The conception of a divine calling to a particular nation to be God's messenger to a world that has fallen into discord and sin is a familiar Biblical idea. And what the Bible teaches, experience confirms. It is the plain teaching of history that God's gifts to mankind are not given indiscriminately, but that at certain times certain peoples have been entrusted with gifts which were afterward to become the property of all mankind. From Greece we received our philosophy; from Rome our law;

from Israel our religion. Why should not Germany and Japan have a lesson to teach us which we need to learn?

And it is not hard to discern what that lesson may be. To the so-called Christian democracies, tempted by generations of prosperity to think of freedom as a right rather than as a privilege, the experiences of the last few years have been a reminder of aspects of our national life too long neglected. They have been a summons to individual self-discipline, a call to national reformation. They have been a revelation, none the less salutary because written in letters of blood, of the inescapable validity of that ancient word of Scripture too often dismissed with mere lip service, "We are members one of another."

In the new imperialistic religions that threaten our easygoing security we see in intensified form the demonstration of the goal toward which our own national pride and selfishness have been leading us. Germany is not the only nation which has felt called by God to set the world to rights, nor is Japan the only people who have felt their rightful claim to a place in the sun denied by peoples of alien blood. We could contemplate Hitler's treatment of the Jews with an easier conscience if we did not remember how far we have fallen short in our own treatment of our fellow citizens of black skin. Our condemnation of Japanese treachery would have been more unrestrained did we not remember how in the second decade of this century the Japanese were denied by us the possibility of a citizenship freely granted to men of other races. In the terrible outrages perpetrated on the helpless and innocent in the name of race purity and race superiority, we have a warning of dangers which may come to us if while there is still time we do not mend our ways.

For it must never be forgotten that in this most baffling

and perplexing of our problems, the race question, the crucial factor lies in the realm of the spirit. What is most deeply resented by men of every race is not the inequality of their legal status or the refusal of economic equality, important as these may be in their place, but the denial by action that speaks louder than words of that essential humanity which binds all races together as members of the human family.

Only one thing can meet the challenge of these new and formidable rivals, and that is a Gospel more comprehensive and more satisfying than their own. For it remains as true today as it has ever been that Christianity can prove itself the world religion we claim it to be only as we can show that it brings to mankind something distinctive which is nowhere else to be found. There is only one way to persuade others that God has something important to say to them, and that is to become the recipient oneself of God's revelation. It was so in the beginning. It is still so today. "That which . . . . we have heard, ... seen, ... and . . . . handled, of the Word of life . . . . declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." [6]

When men begin to see in our faces the light that shines from God as it has come to us from the face of our living Lord, they will accept our witness. There is no other and easier way.

Jesus Christ, then, as God's living word, present in the world by his Spirit as the head of his Church and the first fruits of the better society which is in the making, must be our primary loyalty now as in the days of the apostles.

[6] I John 1:1-4.

Our varying denominational emphases may still remain as reminders of our history and expressions of our personal taste, but our supreme business from now on must be with the central core of the Christian message which we share with our fellow Christians of every name—the Father God, the Saviour Christ, the present Spirit, the fellowship of love.

THE NEXT STEP IN CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

If our witness to this Gospel is to carry conviction it must be borne together. The motives toward unity which we have already seen to be implicit in Christianity have been mightily reinforced by the experience of the past decade. Against the relentless sweep of the new secular religions, appealing as they do to impulses deeply implanted in human nature—pride of race, solidarity of class, love of adventure, craving for authority—only a faith more deeply rooted and more passionately held can hope to hold its own. The time has passed when we can afford to spend our time on peripheral matters. In the conflict which has now been joined, we must concentrate on our central witness.

For this more than words will be needed. The most impressive fact about these new secular religions is that they meet us as *organized* bodies able to speak and act as one. If we Christians are to bear a convincing witness we must show by our acts as well as by our words that we can do the same.

Here the missionary leaders have been setting precedents that point the way for the future. Both within each nation and between the churches of the different countries they have set up agencies through which a united approach is possible. In the United States, for example, the missionary societies meet statedly in the Foreign Missions Conference, while in the international field the statesmanlike

vision of Dr. John R. Mott has brought into existence the International Missionary Council, an agency through which if necessary the churches of all the different countries can act as one.

During the third of a century since the Edinburgh Conference notable progress has been made toward bringing about such united action. In each of the larger fields of missionary endeavor councils have been created in which the representatives of the missionary societies of the home countries meet with delegates of the younger churches for the discussion of matters of common interest and the development of a common program. Important studies have been made of the relation of the missionary enterprise to the political and economic environment in which it must be carried on, and much knowledge has been gained which bears directly on the problems of the home churches. Above all, a consciousness of unity has developed among the leaders of the younger churches. They have become increasingly impatient of the obstacles to union presented by the divisions of the West; and at the latest of the great missionary conferences, that of Madras, that impatience found eloquent expression in a statement which concluded as follows:

. . . . Union proposals have been put forward in different parts of the world. Loyalty, however, will forbid the younger churches going forward to consummate any union unless it receives the whole-hearted support and blessing of those through whom these churches have been planted. We are thus often torn between loyalty to our mother churches and loyalty to our ideal of union. We, therefore, appeal with all the fervor we possess, to the missionary societies and boards and the responsible authorities of the older churches, to take this matter seriously to heart, to labor with the churches in the mission field to achieve this

union, to support and encourage us in all our efforts to put an end to the scandalous effects of our divisions and to lead us in the path of union—the union for which our Lord prayed, through which the world would indeed believe in the Divine Mission of the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.[7]

This growing consciousness of unity has recently received impressive confirmation in action. When it became clear that the tide of war was to sweep over many countries which had been the scene of missionary activity, the International Missionary Council was quick to step into the breach. With help given by the churches in countries which were still free to act, it was able to make provision for carrying on the work of all the missions that were cut off from their parent churches. Where governmental restrictions made it impossible for the churches to send funds to their missions, financial aid was provided. Where the necessities of war required the internment of workers, neighboring missions shared personnel. Such assistance in money and personnel has been given in one hundred and twenty missions in over a score of different countries. Funds amounting to more than two million dollars have been collected and expended since the outbreak of war in the autumn of 1939. Not a single appeal has come from missions in distress but it has been possible to meet it in full.

This gratifying result has been possible because in the International Missionary Council the Church already had a tried administrative agency through which it could act. No time had to be wasted in preliminary negotiations, since the men through whom the missionary societies had

[7] *The World Mission of the Church*—Findings and Recommendations of the International Missionary Council, Tambaram, Madras, India, December 12 to 29, 1938. International Missionary Council, New York, London, 1939, p. 131. Reprinted by permission.

been accustomed to act in the past were already at hand and on the alert.

This sets a precedent for the future. What the International Missionary Council has done for all the churches to meet a wartime emergency they may do on a far wider scale in time of peace if the will to have it done is there. No doubt when peace comes many of the activities carried on for the time by the Council will again be resumed by the churches most directly concerned. But there will still remain many fields of common need which can be adequately met only by a united approach. In this most difficult and responsible of all tasks laid upon the Church, common witness to the Christian Gospel, surely the time has come when the churches should give to the International Missionary Council, or some similar agency fully empowered to serve in their name, authority to act for them in the many places where it is not possible for them to act separately.

But to stop there would be to leave the lessons of the last thirty years unlearned. Each of these years has made it clearer that the old division between Home and Foreign Missions has hopelessly broken down. There is not a single problem which is faced by the Church in the so-called mission field that cannot be paralleled by a similar problem at home. What we need most of all today is a pooling of our experience both at home and abroad, so that the lessons learned in every field may be co-ordinated and a comprehensive program worked out to which the total resources of the churches in every country shall be devoted. No lip service to unity could be comparable in its effect upon a skeptical world with a demonstration that in this, the most compelling of all the postwar tasks, the churches propose henceforth to speak and act as one.

Chapter Five

THE NEED OF ECONOMIC SHARING

WHY CHRISTIAN LOVE MUST EXPRESS ITSELF IN CORPORATE ACTION

LOVE that is sincere will find ways to express itself in action. This is elementary Christian truth.

So far as the individual Christian is concerned the duty of translating feeling into conduct presents no difficulty save such as it encounters in the selfishness of the human heart. Face to face with one's fellow men there are innumerable ways in which one can express one's consciousness of brotherhood in kindly and generous deeds. It is only when one begins to consider the remoter implications of his action that his difficulties begin. We are not simply isolated individuals bound by direct ties to other individuals. We are members of communal groups whose corporate action may have far-reaching consequences. Yet in the shaping of this action we may have little or no part. Indeed in many cases this takes place quite without our knowledge, and it is only later that we discover the unhappy consequences for which, through our membership in the group, we have become in part responsible. One of the most perplexing questions of social ethics has to do with the degree of the individual's responsibility for these indirect and often unintended consequences of his action.

It is the merit of what is often called the Social Gospel that it has brought this too-long-neglected aspect of Chris-

tian duty into the foreground and focused upon it the white light of the Christian conscience.

There are two ways in which the individual Christian is involved in these perplexing questions of social responsibility: first through his position as a citizen of a particular country; then through his membership in some one of the many organized bodies which together make up the Christian Church. Each confronts him with definite duties. Both bring him face to face with the problem of corporate sharing.

This problem meets him in his capacity as a Christian citizen. We have seen that, however hard we may try as churchmen to hold aloof from the complicated issues presented by the contemporary political and economic situation, we can never do so completely. For the religious organizations to which we belong are in a very real sense a part of the political and economic structure of contemporary society. As individual voters who are trying to live by Christian principles we must do our best to discover how far the course of action followed by our Government both in its domestic and in its foreign policy is in accordance with these principles, and where this is not the case we must do what we can to change it.

The clearest example of the impact of Christian principles upon political policy is the pacifist issue. But this is only an extreme example of a type of question with which the earnest Christian is concerned at every point in his political and economic life. Wars do not spring out of the void. They are in part at least the result of preceding economic and social causes. Tariffs that deprive the citizens of other countries of a market for their goods are such a cause; immigration laws that restrict and limit the right of asylum to those who are oppressed are another.

It is futile to hope for a peaceful world unless the causes which produce wars are removed. Thus the very nature of his religion gives the Christian citizen a motive for engaging in political action.

But the responsibility for such action comes still closer home; for the churches, as we have seen, are themselves legal corporations organized under the laws of the State, and as such they own and administer property. Their members are responsible, therefore, not only for helping in their capacity as citizens to determine the general laws under which that property is held and administered, but for the use they make of it under existing law. Here they face all the issues that are involved in social reconstruction —the proper rate of compensation for service, for example, the nature of the securities in which the church's funds should be invested, the church's responsibility for the care of the aged and helpless, and the like.

We have seen that at two important points the present practice of the churches departs from the principles which they recommend to statesmen in the conduct of the affairs of the nation. Whereas they insist that there can be no lasting world peace without some limitation of national sovereignty, they have up to the present time with few exceptions insisted upon the maintenance of unlimited ecclesiastical sovereignty. Whereas they have criticized governments for failing adequately to consider the needs of weaker nations in the formulation of their own economic policy, they have been inclined both as denominations and as local congregations to look upon the denominational or congregational property as their own and to use it as they saw fit. It would never occur to a Presbyterian judiciary, for example, that it could be its duty to share its Presby-

terian funds with another denomination just because that denomination was economically weak.

It is one of the merits of the Roman Catholic system of government that it is in a position to deal in an effective way with the economic problems which face the Church in a period of social transition like the present. By locating the title to all church property in a diocese in the bishop, the Roman system makes possible a comprehensive and far-sighted policy for which the voluntary system of Protestantism has not as yet been able to provide an effective substitute.

When, however, we raise the question as to how we are to apply the love we profess to our practice as corporate bodies, we are plunged into a nest of complicated problems whose implications for Christian practice we have scarcely begun to explore, still less to master. In what follows I cannot hope to do more than suggest a method of approach which if entered upon in good faith might put us further on our way.

What then may fairly be asked of the representatives of the churches as together they face their postwar responsibility as members of organized bodies which exercise economic and political power? This at least may be asked: that in their capacity as citizens of countries committed to the establishment of a new social order they shall hold constantly before the eyes of their governments the type of life to which acceptance of this new order commits them and shall be ready to accept for themselves whatever sacrifices and responsibilities this commitment involves; then, that in the part of the postwar world for which they themselves are primarily responsible—the administrative and economic practices of the Church—they face seriously the question of what the principles which they commend

to others imply for their own corporate conduct as churches, and so far as they see their duty, act upon it; finally, and above all, that they not only make place in their total program for those higher and more intensive forms of Christian living which are now practiced only by the few, but that they make it their primary responsibility by every means in their power to increase the number of those who recognize the obligation which the acceptance of such a standard imposes upon them in their corporate conduct as members of the organized Church.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCHES FOR POSTWAR PLANNING

Of these three duties the first has been most widely and most unreservedly accepted by the present membership of the churches. Perhaps more keenly than any other group of people they have been conscious of their responsibility for making possible the kind of order, after the war, which shall make any recurrence of the present lamentable experience impossible. Wherever we look—whether to England, or America, or Switzerland, or France, or Holland, or even Germany or Japan—we find Christians centering their thoughts on the kind of world we shall have to live in after the war. Whatever may have been the attitude of Christians in the period immediately preceding the war, isolationism in the sense of refusal to accept responsibility for determining the conditions of the postwar world would be generally regarded by all Christians, pacifists and interventionists alike, as the heresy of heresies.

Those Christians who have concerned themselves most intensively with postwar problems have not been content to stop with generalities. Their conclusions have taken the

form of tentative blueprints. Some of these go into considerable detail. More than fifty such blueprints are already available, of which the Papal Encyclicals,[1] the Malvern Declaration,[2] and the Delaware Statement [3] are only the most familiar. A recent study of thirty-four of these blueprints [4] reveals a remarkable agreement as to the main features of the new order which it must be the aim of the churches to achieve. Among these are such as the following:

First, that there must be some limitation of national sovereignty both in the matter of judicial procedure and of military power;

Second, that as a necessary condition of this limitation there must be some form of world government with power to enforce its decrees on member states;

Third, that there must be a thoroughgoing reconstruction of international economic relationships with a view to removing existing inequalities and hardships;

Fourth, that whatever may be necessary in the intermediate period immediately following the war, any lasting peace must be reached through negotiation, or, in other words, after free discussion by the parties concerned.

One of the encouraging aspects of the present situation is the extent to which the main lines of these blueprints have already been accepted by governments as pointing the way which they ought to take. The Atlantic Charter was such a signpost. The comprehensive statements of

[1] *E.g.*, Christmas, 1939; Christmas, 1940; June 1, 1941; Christmas, 1942.

[2] Malvern Conference Report—Official Version, January, 1941.

[3] *A Just and Durable Peace*, Federal Council, New York, June, 1941.

[4] Liston Pope, *Religious Proposals for World Order*, Church Peace Union, New York, December, 1941.

postwar aims made from time to time by responsible statesmen of the different allied nations are others.

Nor have governments been content to stop with words. Already at more than one point commitments have been made to the policy of postwar co-operation. The Lend-Lease legislation of our own country was such a commitment. One is not accustomed to look to political documents for a statement of the Christian view of sacrifice, but this is what the President of the United States had to say in his report on the Lend-Lease administration of June 11, 1942:

> The real costs of the war cannot be measured, nor compared, nor paid for in money. They must and are being met in blood and toil. But the financial costs of the war can and should be met in a way which will serve the needs of lasting peace and mutual economic well-being.
>
> All the United Nations are seeking maximum conversion to war production, in the light of their special resources. If each country devotes roughly the same fraction of its national production to the war, then the financial burden of war is distributed equally among the United Nations in accordance with their ability to pay. And although the nations richest in resources are able to make larger contributions, the claim of war against each is relatively the same. Such a distribution of the financial costs of war means that no nation will grow rich from the war effort of its allies. The money costs of the war will fall according to the rule of equality in sacrifice, as in effort. [5]

So far as words can commit our government to the principle of international co-operation we are already committed.

Nor have the Allied governments stopped with words.

[5] *Fifth Report to Congress on Lend-Lease Operations*, for the period ended June 11, 1942, pp. 22-23.

Definite steps have already been taken looking toward greater equality of opportunity in the postwar world. The appointment of Governor Lehman to be the United States representative in organizing a comprehensive plan of postwar relief was such a step. The renunciation of extraterritorial rights in China by Great Britain and the United States was another. But these are only first gestures which must be followed by many others—such as the repeal or modification of the Oriental Exclusion Act—if the sincerity of the promises made is to be vindicated.

Yet the very extent to which governments are already committed to a program of international helpfulness seems to be robbing the churches of their distinctive mission. There was a time when the Church was almost the sole minister of mercy to a needy world. It brought help to the sick, knowledge to the ignorant, food to the starving, clothing to the naked; but all this is now being done by governments. In competition with the colossal problem of aid to Europe which is contemplated in the postwar plans of the associated governments, what is there left for the churches to do?

There is at least one thing that they can do. They can apply the prinicples they recommend to governments to that part of the contemporary world which is their own primary responsibility, namely, the economic and administrative practices of the Church itself.

What form this application should take in detail it is not possible to anticipate. But already certain general lines of approach suggest themselves for which there is precedent in the present practice of the Church. Some of these have to do with fields in which the pooling of interdenominational resources is called for. Others require changes in the practice of each of the co-operating denominations.

WAYS OF CORPORATE SHARING WITHIN THE CHURCH

One thing that can be done is to apply in the needy areas of the home Church the methods which have already proved successful in the foreign field. Here the International Missionary Council has set a precedent which is full of promise. Where the progress of the war has invaded the territory of enemy countries, the Council has acted as trustee for the orphaned missions and, through money and workers supplied by the churches in countries which are still free, has made it possible to carry on the work without interruption.

Why should this be regarded as an exceptional procedure? Why should there not be a similar pooling of resources in needy areas everywhere—in the country church, for example, where there are wide regions without a settled ministry, or in the congested districts of our great cities? Here our present policy of go-as-you-please has hopelessly broken down. Only a united approach offers any hope of success.

We have precedents that point the way. In movements like the Larger Parish, the will to unite is finding ways to express itself in the local community; and in the existing federations, city, state, and national, we have agencies which might furnish the needed leadership if the will to use them were there. Why should not the Home Missions Council or some similar body acting for the whole Church prepare a comprehensive plan by which this could be done?

This is the more necessary because in the absence of such leadership a group of independent churches is growing up—the so-called union or community church—with no other denominational relationship than is provided by the denominational affiliations of their pastors and with no

unifying historical background. For a time a temporary makeshift may be found in some sort of federated church —that is, a church allowing its members to maintain connection with more than one denomination—but it is already clear that this cannot prove an adequate solution for the problem as a whole. Only two alternatives seem possible: the union of the scattered community churches into a new denomination without historical background or world outlook, or the provision of some central co-operative agency through which these rising churches can be related to the system of historic Christianity.

A possible line along which a solution may be found is suggested by the experience of the church at Boulder Dam. This is one of a number of churches which have been started under the auspices of the Home Missions Council in connection with government projects, where only a united approach was possible. When the church at Boulder Dam was opened it was wholly dependent upon the Home Missions Council for support. Now it has reached self-support and become in every respect an independent church. Yet when confronted with the choice between becoming a denominational church, a union church without denominational affiliation, or continuing in its present friendly relation to the Home Missions Council, the members by a large majority voted for the latter procedure.

In more than one government-controlled community in the United States, Christians of many different communions are worshiping together under a single ministry. So at Gatun in the Panama Canal, a community church is being supported by the contribution of many denominations expended and administered through the Federal Council.

There are doubtless many other churches, now wholly

independent, that would welcome such a relationship did they know that it was possible. Why should not the precedent set by the Home Missions Council at Boulder Dam be used to provide interdenominational leadership and direction for the large body of community churches which now lack any systematic oversight?

A second group of situations in which a united approach is called for is that of special groups which present problems where the primary need is understanding and sympathy—underprivileged groups like the negroes, economically depressed groups like the chronically out of work. These present points of tension in the body politic where the counsel of some disinterested third party may provide the point of spiritual contact which is so sorely needed.

For years the churches have been exploring possibilities of helpful action in such centers of social unrest—the Federal Council through its Committee on Social Service and its Committee on Race Relations, the Home Missions Councils through special committees of their own. One of the first groups in which the churches began to interest themselves was the American Indians. In this field work has been carried on co-operatively for more than twenty years, and at the present time the boards of fifteen denominations contribute to this form of interdenominational work. Another group is the migrant workers who have no settled home. Twenty-one years ago the Council of Women for Home Missions opened centers to care for the neglected children of agricultural and canning migratory workers. Eight such centers were opened in four Eastern states with seven boards contributing. In 1940 there were sixty projects in fifteen states with eighteen denominations contributing. Recently the Board of Home Missions has been undertaking work for the sharecroppers and has

organized a service program in a number of Southern states.

One field in which a united approach on the part of the churches needs to be greatly strengthened is that of race relations. At no point has our condemnation of Hitler been more sweeping than on his claim for Nordic race superiority. At no point has our national attitude toward the thirteen million negroes who form so substantial and useful a part of our population shown more points in flagrant contradiction to our professed aims. There are many aspects of this difficult question to which it is not easy to find a quick solution. But there is one point at which the churches have it in their power to give a lead which would have far-reaching effect, and that is to make sure that in the life and worship of the Church itself these black children of our common Father are made to feel that they have an equal share. *When we have shown that, in the house of God at least, the Church will tolerate no race discrimination we shall have made our most outstanding contribution to the solution of the race question.*

Nor is it only in the case of the underprivileged that the mediation of the Church is greatly needed. There are tensions in the body politic which are dangerous not because the parties to the conflict are weak, but because they are strong. The relation of capital and labor is such a point of tension. It is to the credit of the Church that in the early days of labor movement it had the foresight to stand for the right of labor to organize. But power brings responsibility, and the time may be at hand when it will become the duty of the Church to say this to the leaders of organized labor in no uncertain terms.

The cases thus far cited are examples of interdenominational responsibility; but there is an internal problem

which is quite as pressing, namely, that of dealing with the inequalities which are found within each denomination in the economic status of the different units which compose it. What should be done to bridge the gap between the city church whose minister receives a salary of many thousands of dollars and the country minister who receives only a few hundreds of dollars? The first step has already been taken by the denominations in their inauguration of a pension system, but this is a pitifully small step in comparison with the greatness of the need. Still there remain in the Church's attitude toward its own employed workers many maladjustments which parallel at almost every point the problems that meet us in secular business. It is no doubt true that the ministry is an unselfish calling, and the Church should welcome to its ranks those who are moved by motives of this kind. But that is no reason why their generosity should be exploited for the benefit of those who employ them. If the churches are to insist upon a living wage for those who are employed in other callings they must be willing to accept a similar standard for their own workers. There is no contribution which the Church could make to the postwar world that would be more effective than to show that in circles controlled by the Church the problems of economic maladjustment were on their way to an equitable solution.

What is true of the relation of the individual church to its own employed workers is true of the relation of different congregations to one another. Here again we find great inequalities which can be dealt with equitably only by a united approach. Why, for example, should a city church which has decided to move regard the increment of value which results from its change of location as its own affair alone? Why should not all the weaker churches of

the city share in the added resources thus realized? Or again, why should the suburban churches in the vicinity of a great city which are drawing off the young people upon whom the city churches are accustomed to rely for support regard what happens to the churches thus impoverished as no responsibility of theirs?

It needs only a moment's consideration to perceive that in facing problems of such difficulty and importance our present system has largely broken down. Only a united approach covering the whole field holds out any promise of success.

Still another field in which the churches face unexplored possibilities of sharing is in their relation to the welfare organizations, which are in fact their children but which in the course of the years have become separated from them. There was a time when the Church was responsible for the care of the sick and the relief of the needy. Now medicine has become an independent profession, and social work is rapidly becoming one. But in the process of achieving independence something precious in the original relationship is in danger of being lost. There is something that the Church has to give to these specialists in human service the importance of which they themselves are just beginning to perceive—the constant reminder of a spiritual factor in personality which lies at the heart of all true worship. Under modern conditions it is no longer possible for doctors and nurses to touch the Church as they used to in the days when life was simpler. It is for the Church to provide new points of contact which will reach those who need its worship wherever they are.

Here too a beginning has been made. In such organizations as the Federal Council's Committee on Religion and Health, and the Institute for the Clinical Training of

Ministers, we have examples of the fruitful co-operation of ministers and doctors in exploring the contribution which religion may make to the healing and still more to the prevention of disease.

These experiments point the way to a kind of co-operation which is needed in each of the specialized callings of our modern life. There is no profession which does not need what the Church could give; there is none which has not something distinctive of its own to offer in return. What is lacking is some way to bring about the needed contact. A possible way of doing this has been tried by the New York Federation of Churches in its volunteer placement bureau. In every great city, and for that matter in the suburban communities which have become for all practical purposes integral parts of the city, there are many churches in well-to-do districts whose ministers are at a loss to find distinctive work for their young people. On the other hand, many of the accepted social agencies are in great need of voluntary workers of the right kind. The Federation, through its bureau, has undertaken to introduce these two groups to one another. Why should not this be done by the churches in a systematic way for the whole country; for that matter, for the whole world?

The postwar situation will offer exceptional opportunities for service of this kind. When all has been done that can be done by direct governmental action and by governmentally sponsored agencies like the International Red Cross, there will still remain a wide area in which help of a more intimate and personal kind will be needed and welcomed. Here the Friends have set an example which the other churches might well follow. In the Friends' Service Committee they have created an agency

which combines efficiency of administration with the more personal touch which makes help doubly welcome.

We need an agency representing all the churches, equally efficient yet more broadly representative, through which the churches may carry on their ministry of relief during the trying postwar years. It is good news that the first step toward creating such an agency has been taken.

THE WAR AS SUMMONS TO FURTHER STEPS IN CORPORATE SHARING

Thus at whatever point we touch the Church's corporate life we find unlimited possibilities of co-operation. Yet when one compares what has been done with what might be done the showing is pitifully small. In almost every one of the areas of possible co-operation we find that experiments have been tried which prove that united action is possible. In agencies like the Federal Council, the Foreign Mission Conference, the Home Missions Council, and the International Council of Religious Education, we have instruments through which such united action could be indefinitely expanded. Yet it must with sorrow be confessed that those who are ready to take the forward steps that are needed are comparatively few. Still, for most Christians, the denomination marks the limit of their sense of corporate responsibility. If the Church is to rise to its present opportunity its leaders must expand their horizon till they see the opportunity of the Church as a whole in all its thrilling possibilities.

In this crisis the war has come upon us as God's summons to corporate self-reformation. Whatever may have been the case in prewar days, now at least we are facing tasks which cannot be done separately. We face these tasks in the Church's ministry to the armed forces of the United

States, where the spiritual care of our soldiers, sailors, and airmen demands the best that the Church has to give. We face them in the communities about the camps, where a few denominational churches are suddenly confronted with the task of ministering to thousands of young men who are meeting the unfamiliar experiences and temptations of camp life. We face them in the new industrial communities which are springing up like mushrooms to meet the insistent demands of the war machine for munitions and supplies. Face to face with such unparalleled demands, only a concerted approach has even the smallest promise of success.

Even if the denominations were willing to be satisfied with the present makeshift which is all that we can offer in our divided state, the Government will not allow us to continue as we are. If we are to enter the camps we must go together. Only three great religious groups can be recognized in the assignment of chaplains—Catholics, Protestants, and Jews. How responsibility is to be divided between the Protestant denominations is a matter which they themselves must settle through their official representative, which in this case is the Federal Council's Committee on Army and Navy Chaplains.

In the camp communities too the Government insists on a united approach. Here Catholics, Protestants, and Jews are co-operating in the U.S.O. In this co-operation the Protestants are handicapped by the lack of a closely knit organization as directly responsible to the Church as is the National Catholic Community Service. Useful as are the Y.M. and Y.W.C.A., their connection with the Church is less close and they do not feel the same responsibility for a direct religious ministry as is felt by the corresponding Catholic agency.

Nevertheless the fact remains that, whether effectively organized or not, in this important area of war service the churches are being forced to act together. It remains to ask, What are the prospects of continued co-operation when the war is over?

The experience of the General Wartime Commission in the last war furnishes an instructive precedent. This was the agency through which the Protestant churches co-operated with the Government in all that had to do with war service. Early in the war the question had to be faced whether the commission was to be an independent agency raising its own funds for the purpose of doing the things which the denominational war commissions could not do separately, or whether it was to be a representative body recognized by the churches as their own, financed with their funds, and responsible for the formation of the general program through which all were to co-operate.

Fortunately, the latter alternative was chosen. The commission was recognized by the denominations as their official representative in all matters affecting the government. It was financed by a proportional levy on the funds of the denominational war commissions and it was able, through the voluntary staff of workers whose services it commanded, to achieve a degree of unity which had not yet been reached in any earlier co-operative enterprise of the churches.

This promising beginning was not followed up. When the war was over and the commission disbanded, no effective successor was provided to carry on its work. There was, to be sure, in the Interchurch World Movement an ambitious program of denominational co-operation, but it included no parallel to the General Wartime Commission. In the gigantic askings of the movement, mounting as they

did into the millions of dollars, not a single cent was provided for the co-operative work of the churches. That was to be regarded as the direct concern of a group of friendly citizens who unfortunately failed to materialize. Through all the weary years from 1918 to the present the co-operative work of the churches has remained a beggar at the door of the denominations, eking out the pittance they have deigned to give through the generosity of private persons.

Our Roman Catholic fellow Christians made no such mistake. When the war broke out they were very skeptical as to the possibility of creating a Catholic War Commission which could act for all the different Catholic agencies. Only the persistence of Father John Burke, who —as he himself assured me—traveled from Maine to California and interviewed more than fifty important Catholic dignitaries in his effort to achieve unity, was able to overcome the opposition.

But when once the difficulty had been overcome and the Catholic War Commission had come into existence, the hierarchy was the first to see the advantage it conferred. When the war was over there was no thought of discarding it. The Catholic War Commission became the Catholic Welfare Council. It established headquarters at Washington with Father John Burke as secretary, and there it has been carrying on with increasing efficiency ever since.

Once again the war has given the Protestant churches the opportunity to take their corporate responsibility seriously. It remains to be seen whether they will repeat the mistake of the past, or whether they will learn the lesson God is teaching them and will move forward together into the new day.

Chapter Six

THE NEED OF WORLD-WIDE UNDERSTANDING

THE CONTRIBUTION OF EDUCATION TO POSTWAR RECONSTRUCTION

On the twenty-second day of April, 1942, anyone who had been listening to the German radio would have been one of the audience at a very remarkable ceremony. It was the initiation into the Hitler Youth Movement of German boys who had reached the age of ten. In this particular year there were one million of them. Under conditions of the utmost solemnity they were informed that it was now their privilege to dedicate their lives to their country, and especially to their Fuehrer; and as a token of this new responsibility each received a dagger to be used against the enemies of his country.

We touch here the greatest of all the obstacles with which we shall be confronted in the postwar world—the existence of millions of young people of other faiths who have been taught from earliest infancy to despise the things we hold most precious, yet who bring to the cause to which they have committed themselves a consecration so complete as to make any point of contact with their inner life seem hopeless.

I have taken Germany for illustration because the Germans, with their accustomed thoroughness, have carried the indoctrination of the young farther than any other

people. Early in his career Hitler saw that if he was to be master of the nation he must first control the school. To that end he has given himself with tireless energy and with increasing success. Whatever may be true of the older generation of Germans who remember other days, and with whom, therefore, we have points of intellectual contact, it is generally agreed by those who know that in the youth of Germany Hitler has the most loyal and unquestioning followers.

Hitler, to be sure, is not the only leader who has seen the central place that must be given to the school in any totalitarian scheme. Lenin saw it, and made universal education of his own kind the cornerstone of the Communist control of Russia. The Japanese have seen it, and have made education for patriotism the central feature of the school life of every Japanese boy and girl. When I was in Japan twenty-five years ago, the most familiar sight which greeted me on the streets of Tokyo or Kyoto was some group of Japanese boys or girls who had been given a holiday from school that they might be taken by their teachers to visit some place famous in the national history. And long before Hitler and Lenin were born, or Shinto had begun to take itself seriously as a religion, the Church of Rome made control of the child's education the foundation of its spiritual power.

How are we to bridge a gap of this kind? What hope is there of achieving a unified society when mankind is divided by so deep a cleavage? These questions confront us with what may prove in the end the most difficult of the Church's postwar tasks—that of education for fellowship. Somehow we must find a point of contact with these convinced and loyal young people so that we can speak to them in a language they can understand.

It will help us to see this task in its true setting if we remember that what we face in contemporary Germany, Russia, and Japan is not an exceptional situation, but only an extreme example of a problem which meets us every day and everywhere—the problem of bridging the gap which separates those who hold differing philosophies of life. We meet it in our own country as truly, if less obviously, as in the totalitarian states. We meet it, for example, in those teachers in our universities and colleges whose rationalistic philosophy leaves no place for God in their scheme of life, and who look upon religion in its developed institutional form as it meets us in the Church as the survival of an outworn superstition which should have no place in a scientific age. We meet it in politics in the contrast between the reformers and the standpatters, in economics in the debate between the advocates of a planned economy and those who resent any limitation upon their freedom to buy and sell as they please. Underneath the technical questions at issue there is a failure of spiritual understanding which makes any effective co-operation difficult, if not impossible.

But we must come even closer home. The need for spiritual understanding meets us in the Church. It meets us in the tension which develops between those who identify their own particular type of Christianity with Absolute Truth, and the rank and file of Christians who see no reason for perpetuating denominational or doctrinal differences which have ceased to have any meaning for them. This cleavage, rooted in temperamental differences but reinforced by religious conviction, has given birth to the familiar phrase *odium theologicum,* the hate that theologians have for one another. For here the persisting human differences which meet us in every walk of life

are reinforced by the consciousness of a divine mission to hold fast the truth once delivered to the saints.

LANGUAGE AS THE TEACHER'S TOOL

How, I repeat, can we keep the sense of mission which is the very life breath of a world religion and yet feel our kinship with those who seem to us hopelessly in the wrong?

There is only one way in which we can hope to reach the desired understanding, and that is by education of the right kind. For education is the name we give to the process by which those who were at first strangers are introduced to one another. Language is the schoolmaster's specialty. It is his business to help his pupils to understand one another when they speak, and himself to speak to them in a language which they can understand.

When I say that the schoolmaster's specialty is language, I do not refer primarily to the language that is spoken in words and written in books, the language that must be learned with grammar and dictionary. That no doubt is important in its place. But it is only the outer shell of the real language of thought and feeling. This is communicated in many ways besides the words we speak. Before there were spoken words there was a sign language, and this is still the most effective way in which we speak to one another. The grasp of a hand, the look in an eye, the kindly deed done when no one is looking—these are only samples of the actions that speak louder than words. The wise teacher knows this and will make this sign language basic in all that he does. Important as may be the place that he will give to the technical part of speaking, he will center his teaching in those studies which show man as he is engaged in the vital process of achieving understanding with his fellows: history, which

is the story of what he has done; literature, which is the revelation of how he feels; philosophy, which interprets to us what he most values. These are and must ever remain the core of any effective system of education—the kind of education, in a word, that fits men for fellowship by understanding.

This duty, the duty of interpreting to his pupils the vital faiths by which men live, is doubly the duty of the teacher when his field is the Christian religion. For Christianity alone envisions a fellowship that can transcend all differences of race, nationality, and class. It alone aspires to speak in language that everyone can understand.

WHAT IS LACKING IN CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION

Yet who will dare to say that we have succeeded in doing this elementary duty? Few of the members in our churches really understand their own faith and can interpret it to others. Fewer still can distinguish its vital core—the things that constitute the Christian Gospel as we have tried to define it—from the many subsidiary matters with which it has come in the course of time to be associated. Many do not even feel the need of trying to make the distinction in their own minds; or, what is harder still, the need of understanding the convictions of those who are following a different way of life.

How has it come about that we have so signally failed in doing this? Why are there so many otherwise intelligent people who are strangers to their own religion? I venture to suggest that it is because of a basic fault which runs through all contemporary education and is reflected in the teaching of the Church—the loss of the sense of proportion. By this I mean *the loss of the conviction that*

there are some things so important to successful living in any social order that everyone must know them, whatever else he has to leave unlearned.

Our Fathers had this sense of proportion. They believed in putting first things first; and, what is more, *they believed that there were some things that should come first.* On this conviction they based their belief in universal education. There were some things, they were persuaded, that the citizen of a free democracy must know. He must know the meaning of the world in which he lives and the divine revelation which interprets it to him. He must know the great literature of the past in which the wisdom of his predecessors has found classical expression. He must have a personal philosophy which will help him to understand the society in which he lives, the government by which it is carried on, and his own place in that government as a citizen with definite rights, duties, and responsibilities. So they based their education on the Bible, the classics, mathematics—which was the science of the day—and philosophy. These were the things which an educated man, whatever his calling, needed to know. So in the early colleges of New England, ministers, doctors, lawyers, and businessmen studied side by side, and studied the same things.

It is a far cry from those old simple days to the chaotic world of contemporary education. I use the word "chaotic" advisedly, though it is not my own word, but one used by the president of one of our greatest universities. The characteristic feature of contemporary education in all its branches, President Robert Hutchins of the University of Chicago assures us, is the absence of any organizing principle. You can study many things—indeed, almost anything you please, if you know what you

want. But there is nothing that you *must* study, not even the history and government of your own country.[1] There is no common basis of conviction that underlies everything that the school does and gives it unity and proportion. The old subjects—the Bible, the classics, philosophy—are still taught, but they are no longer central. They take their place among many others as competitors in an ever more overcrowded schedule. Religion, once the very heart and center of all democratic education, has become an elective.

Nor is this the whole story. The bargain counter theory of education, as it has been called, has invaded the educational institutions of the Church—and not least, the theological seminaries. Here again you can study many things—or rather, *little bits of many things*. But the basic elements of all sound Christian education—the Bible, the Church, the Gospel—no longer determine the structure of the curriculum as a whole. They too have become subjects among other subjects.

Is it any wonder that in such an environment half the children in our so-called Christian America should be growing up without even a speaking acquaintance with the Christian religion, and that of those who are nominally members of the Church there are many who, if put to the test, could give no intelligible reason for the faith that is in them?

This situation confronts those who are responsible for conducting Christian education with the choice between two alternatives, neither of which seems to offer any practicable way out: either to provide a complete system

[1] A recent survey of the curricula of American universities and colleges revealed the fact that in only some ten per cent of them was even an elementary knowledge of American history a condition of graduation.

of education paralleling that of the existing schools and colleges at every point, or to superimpose the teaching of religion upon a foundation which lacks many of the most essential elements.

Only the Roman Catholics and some Lutherans have attempted to explore the first of these alternatives, and even they have not been able to carry it through consistently. It may be that further experiments along this line will be needed. For the most part, however, we must be content to do what we can with the tools at our disposal. And here there is much in the present attitude of those responsible for public education which gives ground for hope.

SIGNS OF PROMISE

In many different quarters we find a recognition that something is lacking in our present system of education that only the right kind of religion can supply. This new recognition meets us in the experiments which are being made to provide some place for religion in the public schools. It meets us in the action taken by leading universities—not only free universities like Princeton, but state universities like the University of Iowa and the University of California—to establish departments of religion on as sound an academic basis as any other department. It shows itself in unmistakable manner in the cordial reception given to the University Preaching Mission of the Federal Council by many of the leading state universities. When the churches approach the universities with a united front, they find that they are welcome.

But all this is only on the surface. Something much more radical is needed. It is not enough to give religion a place beside other studies, however honorable that place

may be. Religion must itself become the unifying center of all education if it is to meet the world's need today.

Let us recall the primary purpose of all education. It is to introduce individuals to one another so that they may live peaceably together in society. But there are different ways of trying to do this. One may assume that there is only one right way of living and that he knows it, and that because he and he alone knows it, it is his business to share it with others—willingly if they will receive it, but if not, by every means in his power. This is the totalitarian theory of education. In religion it has its most consistent exponent in the Church of Rome; but it has dominated all Christian education, Protestant and Catholic alike, to a far greater extent than in our easy-going way we often realize. Contemporary nonreligious education must be understood as in part a justified protest against this authoritarian way of treating the school. It has two main roots: an exaggerated idea of the competence of pure science to master the secrets of nature and of man, and an equally exaggerated estimate of the right of the individual to live his own life and to follow his own bent as he pleases. If we are shut up to a choice between these two kinds of education we are in an evil case indeed.

But there is another way, a better way. We may educate our pupils for understanding by interpreting to them, in an atmosphere of sympathy and good will, the faiths by which men live; their own faith first of all, but also and equally the faiths of those from whom they differ. For the art of living as we of the democracies aspire to practice it is to live in peace with those with whom we differ because we and they alike have given first place to those basic human interests which we share as men.

There are many different angles from which one may

approach this central task. One may approach it by the way of history. One may study history, not as it is too often taught today, as a collection of intricate scientific puzzles which it will tax the best wits of the research specialists to unravel, still less as a source of propaganda for views already accepted—the superior excellence of one's own country,[2] for example, or the exclusive truth of one's own party views—but as the story of the way in which men of different faiths have been trying to master the difficult task of living together. One may interpret to one's pupils the story of one's own country in the light of the formative principles which give it national unity, but also what is vital in the faith of other peoples of different antecedents and conditions.

One may approach it by the way of literature. The great classics are what they are and have survived as they have survived because they sum up the wisdom of the ages with a simplicity and a beauty that outlasts their own generation, and because they speak to each succeeding generation of matters which it recognizes as germane to its own time.

One may approach it by the way of sociology. The persisting institutions of human society—the family, the farm, the workshop, the school, the State—have at their core a vital faith and sum up in their tradition centuries of human experience.

One may approach it by the way of psychology; not the technical psychology of the specialist who breaks up the individual into parts that he may measure his reactions, only to find that when he has done this he cannot put him

[2] The Commission on Education of the Stockholm Conference called attention to the fact that one of the most potent causes of international misunderstanding was the kind of history taught in the schools of the different nations.

together again, but that broader and more humane psychology championed by men of creative imagination like William James and Carl Gustav Jung, who group men in persisting types and make place in their philosophy of life for those hidden impulses, instincts, and passions which together make up what we know as the subconscious.

Above all, one may approach it by the way of philosophy, that synthetic study which brings to bear upon the whole group of questions to which exact science can give no answer but which nonetheless haunt mankind with their irresistible fascination—such questions as the meaning of life, the purpose of history, the significance of the individual, the mystery of God—the same objectivity, openmindedness, and faith which have won such signal triumphs in other fields. We may decide that whatever else education does or leaves undone, it must acquaint its students with what the greatest of mankind have thought about the greatest of subjects.

From whatever angle we approach this central task we shall be brought back at last to religion. The history of a people is in great part the history of its religion. How can one write the history of the European nations without at the same time telling the story of the Popes? What course in literature would be complete which did not put at its center the book which has formed the style of all the greatest writers of English—the Bible? What course in sociology could make claim to academic respectability which did not make its students acquainted with that institution which commands a greater share of the time and money of our contemporaries than any other single institution except the State—namely, the Christian Church? If one is to study psychology, what textbooks could be found comparable to Augustine's *Confessions*, à Kempis' *Imita-*

tion of Christ, Pascal's *Pensées,* and Jonathan Edwards' *Treatise Concerning Religious Affections?* While, as to philosophy, surely the time has come when in the interest of scientific honesty the estrangement between philosophers and theologians, the most unhappy of all the legacies of our so-called scientific age, should be finally ended.

On all sides, then, we who are teachers of religion find an open door if only we ourselves are prepared to enter in. But if religion is to find its place in general education, it must be the right kind of religion, and it must be taught in the right way.

HOW THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT CAN HELP

Here the Ecumenical Movement can bring us needed help. Two convictions have inspired it from its inception: first, that there is a central Christian Gospel to which the Church is witness and which it is its privilege to share with all mankind; second, that no single branch of the Church, nor all of them combined, has a monopoly of that Gospel, but that each denomination apprehends it only in part and from the angle of its own limited history and experience. Humility and open-mindedness then should characterize all approach of Christians to one another. Their aim should be to reach a formulation of the common Gospel through a systematic study of the different ways in which it is apprehended by each. But this is the very spirit which is essential for the study of all controversial questions on the determination of which vital issues depend.

Of many examples of the contribution of the Ecumenical Movement to the solution of controversial issues, let two suffice.

At the heart of the great debate we call the Reformation was the question as to the nature of the Christian life. Cath-

olics believed that life, while in the deepest sense the gift of God, must be achieved little by little by human effort. Protestants believed that God's gift of salvation was given once for all, and only after man had accepted God's free forgiveness through faith could he find the impulse to good works. But Protestants themselves were soon divided on an older and even more baffling question—that of God's part and man's part in the work of salvation. Calvinists believed that God chose whom he would and then gave the power that was necessary to fulfill his purpose. Arminians believed that God desired all men to be saved, and the only limit to the appropriation of God's grace was man's will.

Each of these issues led to a split in the Church. On each those who held one view or the other were so certain that they were right that they would not hold fellowship with those who held what they regarded as an erroneous view. Today we see that neither issue, important as it then seemed, was vital enough to justify breach of fellowship. Each party to the debate stood for something that was essential to a complete Christian faith. In a Church which should be truly Christian, place must be made for both. This at least was the conclusion reached by Commission I at Edinburgh in its report on these highly controversial issues.[3]

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that the scholars alone are responsible for this change of view. They had their part to play—no unimportant one. But if they had not been helped from other quarters their mediation would have been unsuccessful. Something had been going on in the lives of the people to be reconciled. They had been working together. More than this, they

[3] *The Second World Conference on Faith and Order*, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1938, pp. 225, 226.

had been worshiping together; and in the experience of common work and of common worship they had become conscious of a fellowship so intimate that no theoretical puzzles, however baffling, could avail to break it.

What is happening in our study of the more formal ecclesiastical divisions which express themselves in denominational creeds must be repeated in the more baffling internal differences which meet us in the rivalry of differing schools—the strife of Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic, for example, as to the credentials of the Christian ministry, or that of the pacifists and the interventionists on the use of force in the service of love. Here we meet the deepest cleavage which divides society, the difference between the absolutist who feels that any compromise would be betrayal and the relativist who sees that without some concession to men of other views there can be no continuing order of society.

It is the triumph of the Ecumenical Movement that it has been able to transcend even this most persistent of all the cleavages of Christian history and to unite absolutists and relativists in the consciousness of a common faith and worship. In doing this it is rendering the greatest of all possible services to the cause of general education.

For what is true of the attitude of Christians toward one another should be true of the relation of men to one another everywhere. God has not confined the revelation of himself to the Christian Church. In every age and in every religion, even in ages and in countries which seem to us most irreligious, he has had his own way of making himself known to men. The differences which meet us in the Christian Church are only the reproduction in the field of religion of differences which meet us among men everywhere, and the task God has laid upon us as Christians of

winning understanding across difference is a task which he has laid upon all men everywhere. *We shall help the teachers in our secular schools best to solve their difficult task of education for fellowship by showing that it is possible to solve it in the schools of the Church.*

WHAT MINISTERS SHOULD KNOW

I come back to the point with which I began. *We must recover our sense of proportion. We must put first things first.*

Let us take for example the training which is now given to candidates for the ministry. In many respects it is far superior to what was open to the ministry of a generation ago. It includes more subjects. It is taught more accurately. It commands the services of a more highly trained personnel. But there is something lacking, the one thing needful of which the Apostle Paul wrote so movingly, *the woe is me if I preach not the Gospel.* The primary business of the Church we have seen is witness—witness to the fact of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ. This Gospel of redemptive love must be the organizing principle of ministerial education. Everything that is taught and everything that is learned must be subsidiary to it. This means that theology in the sense of the systematic expression of the convictions which constitute the Christian Gospel must be the organizing center of the seminary curriculum. To learn what the Gospel is, to discover what it implies, to discipline oneself to its service, must be the primary business of professors and students alike.

It follows that the Bible must be the basic source book of the seminary curriculum, and this for two reasons: first, because it is our primary source for the content of the Christian Gospel; then, because it is the Book of Wor-

ship for all branches of the Christian Church. But if the Bible is to do for the prospective minister what it ought to do, then it must be studied in the right way; not—as the totalitarians study it—as a source of proof texts to reinforce a single authoritative system of doctrine, or—as the Biblical critics study it—as a record of a past phase of human thought to be laboriously reconstructed by the critical imagination, but as a living Book that is speaking to the consciences of men today as it has spoken in every generation, revealing to the receptive spirit those deathless truths which make it vital in every generation, however differently they may from time to time be understood.

With theology and the Bible must be associated the Church as a further basic element in any sound system of ministerial education. And by the Church I mean the *contemporary Church as it meets us in its various denominations and schools of thought, in its worship, in its philanthropies, in its movements for unity, in its specialized ministry—the Church of which the Ecumenical Movement is the expression and the clearest contemporary voice.*

To know the Church one must of course know its history. But there is more than one way to study history. We may begin at the beginning and move forward, or we may begin at the end and move back. Each method has its uses, but the second is the more fruitful because it gives us what the historical student needs most of all—a principle by which to determine what it is most important for him to know. If we begin at the beginning we shall be apt to stop halfway through. No course in church history I ever took brought me in sight of the contemporary Church. The farthest I ever got was the seventeenth century. But it is in the contemporary Church that the minister must

do his work. This then is the Church he must understand if he is to take his part in it intelligently.

Once more, the minister must know people, not only his own kind of people, but all kinds of people, and especially the different kinds of Christians with whom he must work in the one Church. For this, he must share with them in the two most characteristic expressions of Christian life—worship and service. We have made real progress here. We recognize the importance of applying laboratory methods to the teaching of religion. But we have only made a beginning. There is still much more that needs to be done, and here the teacher can best help his pupils by himself sharing the activities for which he would prepare them. There is much to be said for the Scottish system of drawing upon the parish ministry for theological professors. If the teachers in our American seminaries had a more active part in the life of the Church they would be better able to help their students.

NEEDED EMPHASES IN THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF LAYMEN

The principles which should control the education of the Christian ministry are equally applicable in every part of the Church's educational program. Here too there is much that is encouraging to report. In no field is there more practical co-operation between the denominations. In no field are so many working together. Yet in comparison to the energy that is being expended the results are disappointing. We are teaching many things, and teaching many of them well; but too often the all-important matters are overlooked or crowded into the periphery.

This is true of the education of our children. We recognize today that children need special training accord-

ing to their age and intellectual maturity. Sunday-school teachers, therefore, have been working out a graded curriculum, and this is a step in the right direction. Unfortunately, the instruction given is too often superficial and inadequate. Children too need an education which includes, in a form appropriate to their capacity, the elements of all sound Christian education—the Gospel, the Bible, the Church. They should be made familiar from their earliest infancy with the majestic language of the Scriptures so that, even if at the time it has no meaning for them, there will be something there for later experience to lay hold of. They need to form habits of worship and to be trained to use the historic prayers and creeds of the Church. They should be made acquainted from their earliest childhood with the symbols of the Christian religion—the Water of Baptism, the Bread and Wine of the Supper, the Cross on which the Saviour died, and Him who hung there.

A special opportunity is open to the minister in preparing young people for church membership. Some substitute for the old method of catechetical instruction is needed here, not as a device for imposing a uniform belief, but as a help in acquainting prospective church members in a systematic way with the meaning of Ecumenical Christianity. A catechism prepared in an ecumenical spirit might be a useful addition to educational literature. The important thing would be to help prospective church members to see their own particular form of Christianity in its wider setting and to recognize that when they join the church they are not simply becoming Presbyterians, or Methodists, or Episcopalians, or Baptists, but members of the Church Universal.

There is an educational task too for the older members

of the church. They should be encouraged to do systematic reading in the field of religion; and for this the church should provide a lending library. Accurate information should be made available, through the Parish Bulletin or other ways, on what the Church is actually doing in the world. And by the Church I do not mean the denomination alone, but the Church Universal. Laymen as well as ministers must no longer think of the Church as a group of independent and in part competitive denominations. They must be helped to see their own branch of the Church in the larger setting this book has tried to present.

One way by which such training can be given is by uniting in common worship. One of the notable features of the past few years has been the development of ecumenical services in which the Christians of a community—Protestants, Old Catholics, and Eastern Orthodox—have assembled in one place to give expression to their common fellowship as members of the one Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Such services should no longer be exceptional. They should be part of the regular church year for every community.

Another way of developing the ecumenical consciousness is by association in common service. There are pressing tasks facing the Church for which the ministry has not the necessary technical skill. Some of these have been suggested in a previous chapter. Here the laymen of the Church can bring a fund of special knowledge of the highest value. There is no surer way of developing the ecumenical consciousness than for the laymen of the different churches to be associated with one another in common tasks.

Most of all we need a new kind of education for our leaders. I am not thinking particularly here of the train-

ing to be given to prospective ministers in seminaries or to Sunday-school teachers in colleges and universities, though that is important. I am thinking of the need of educating those who are leaders of the denominations in their larger duties as ministers of the Church Universal. Here is a field which is all but uncultivated, at least in any systematic way. It will be a great day for the Church when in the service which sets a man apart as moderator or consecrates him as bishop there shall be a definite clause which defines his responsibility to that larger Church of which his own is but a part.

On Mount St. Albans in the national capital there rises a majestic edifice which overtops even the Washington Monument. It is the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul. It is unique among the cathedrals of this country—one may go further and say among the cathedrals of the world —in that it is incorporated under a national charter which opens membership in its governing body to Christians of every denomination. The only restriction is that the presiding officer shall be the Bishop of Washington, and that the worship shall be in accordance with the ritual of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

In the close of that cathedral and as a part of the cathedral foundation there is a very remarkable institution. It is a College of Preachers founded by a generous gift for the purpose of providing more intensive training for ministers of the Protestant Episcopal Church. To this college come week by week a selected group of ministers from all parts of the country to spend a week under competent leadership in conference, study, and prayer.

Why should such a privilege be open only to the ministers of the Protestant Episcopal Church? Why should not the ministers of all the churches receive such a spe-

cialized training? Why should not some generous donor add to the funds of the original foundation a further sum that would make it possible under the broad terms of the Washington Cathedral Charter to admit to this graduate school for leadership an equal number of ministers of other communions with those who now enjoy this privilege?

There is one more field in which the Ecumenical Movement is setting a precedent which the Church as a whole may well follow, and that is the organizing of systematic study in the field of applied religion.

When one thinks what a place research occupies in the life of the modern world, when one contemplates the vast sums that are being spent on this subject in every field of human interest but this, when one realizes how general is the agreement that at the heart of every social and economic problem there is a spiritual factor, it seems incredible that we of the Church should have been blind to this imperative need.

The Roman Catholics can set us a needed example. They have long seen the importance of organized research in the field of applied religion and have carried their provision for work of this kind to a point for which we Protestants have nothing to show in parallel.

At Vanves, near Paris, there is an institution conducted by the Jesuits in which nineteen Fathers give their full time to studying the application of Christian principles to the social life of France. In the Research Department of the Federal Council we do not even command the full-time services of the man who is its head, and the other agencies of research in the Church are similarly handicapped.

This is not because we are without resources in men or means. It is because of the same lack which we have been

obliged to recognize at every point in the Church's educational program—the lack of a sense of proportion. *Had one tenth of the energy which is being spent year by year in retracing the early history of the Christian religion been given to a systematic study of its present practice, we should not now be facing the task of the modern world as lamentably ill equipped as we are.*

Fortunately, the need of such a central bureau of research is being recognized in responsible quarters. At the meeting of the International Council of Religious Education in February, 1942, a resolution was passed recommending the creation of a single department of research for the Church as a whole in which all the existing agencies of research should be combined. If the lead thus given is followed we shall have taken one of the most important steps toward a comprehensive program of Christian education.

THE CHURCH'S NEED OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

All these things we ought to do, yet when we have done them we shall still have left our most pressing educational task undone. This is to provide a comprehensive system of popular education through which the central task of the whole Church is interpreted to all the churches by a single body competent to speak for them all.

It may seem a curious criticism of the current system of Christian education to say that it is deficient in popular appeal. If there is one feature of our present educational procedure which could be selected as most characteristic, surely it would be the attempt to translate Christian truth into the language of today and to drive it home by the use of every possible channel of popular appeal. There is no one of all the organizations of co-operative Chris-

tianity that is not sending out a ceaseless stream of literature designed to tell the story of contemporary happenings in the life of the Church. The documents issued by the Federal Council alone in the course of a year would keep one busy for a week. And the Federal Council is only one of eight national interdenominational agencies each of which has its own bureau of information. When one adds to this the output of the denominational press the sum total is staggering.

That is just the difficulty. People are being given so much to read that in despair they are ceasing to read anything. What is needed today is a central bureau of information, representing all the churches, in which the vast mass of material which is being produced is sifted and co-ordinated so that the most important matters can be brought to the attention of those who are interested in a systematic and authoritative way.

To say this, however, only pushes the responsibility one step further back. Before there can be an adequate system of popular education for the Church there must be someone competent to plan it. And that means someone who has the sense of order and proportion, someone who can see the one in the many and can put first things first.

We are brought face to face here with what is the greatest weakness of our present ecclesiastical order—the lack of any central body, in touch with all the different parts of the life of the Church, which can think and plan for the whole. To borrow military language, we need a general staff.

The discovery of this need is no new thing. More than twenty years ago, when attempting to sum up the lesson which the experience of the last war had been teaching the churches, the present writer called attention to the need of

a central bureau of information and research as the outstanding lesson of the hour. In saying this he was only repeating what many wiser than himself had said. Yet year has followed year and little or nothing has been done. Once again we are facing tasks and problems of staggering magnitude with the equipment and the psychology of a generation ago. Is it too much to hope that this new challenge will find us in a more receptive mood and that without undue delay this outstanding lack of our present educational program will be promptly and adequately supplied?

THE LANGUAGE EVERYONE CAN UNDERSTAND

We have come a long way from the young Nazis whose initiation into the National Socialist Party set us on our quest of a sound system of education. But it will be found, I believe, that, however far we have seemed to move afield, they have never been far from our thoughts. For they too are members of the human family with whom we must find some way to live together. And for this we must be able to talk to them in a language which they can understand.

What that language must be we are beginning to see more clearly every day. It is the language of deeds, not of words. What they admire in others are the qualities they have been taught to consider admirable in themselves—strength, courage, discipline, above all, unity. There was a time when they had been weak in body and in spirit. Now they are strong. There was a time when they had been afraid because they knew themselves to be weak. Now they fear no one. They had been living in a disorganized world under an inefficient government. Now they have a leader who is ruthless indeed, but in the inter-

est of a great cause. Once their country was divided. Now it is united in a single aim—to make Germany great that it may bring order to a disorganized world.

A narrow ideal, it will be said. Granted. A ruthless ideal, intolerant and brutal, blind to one whole side of man's nature—and that to us the highest. Still an ideal, and one not wholly ignoble. Had it not been so, it could not have fired the imagination of these young Nazis and enlisted their loyalty. Only one thing can detach them from their present allegiance, and that is a higher ideal and a more commanding loyalty. Only as we confront these young revolutionaries with other young people who in their own way—even if it be a different way—have accepted as uncompromising an ideal and have submitted to as relentless a discipline, shall we find the point of contact which is now lacking. Let us of the democracies show that we too can be strong and courageous, disciplined and united, and we shall be talking to these young totalitarians in the only language which they can understand.

And the time to begin is now. For the danger that we shall be facing in the postwar world is not merely the difficulty of finding a point of contact with a well-organized and competent group who know what they believe and where they desire to go. There is another possibility that we must face, with which it may be even more difficult to cope. In the defeat of the cause on which they have set all their hopes these young Germans may swing to the opposite extreme and question whether there is any cause left in the world which is worth fighting for.

Here too our course is clear. It is to provide an alternative that will supply all that seemed lost in the collapse of the old cause and more. That alternative is the chance to

be associated with the young people of other countries in the making of a new and better world.

This is not wishful thinking. It is only to say over again in other words what has been recently said by one of the most thoughtful students of postwar problems, Professor Edward Hallett Carr:

> Much has been written of the difficulty of collaboration between people who are not "like-minded" and of the necessity of creating a "psychology of cooperation." But neither "like-mindedness" nor a "psychology of cooperation" are fixed attributes. People become like-minded by doing things together and by sharing the same experiences; and the way to create a psychology of cooperation is not to preach cooperation, but to cooperate. This is particularly true of the younger generation. The only way to make young Germans into good Europeans is to give them a rôle to play in the reorganisation of Germany and of Europe which will restore and enhance their self-respect. Hitler appealed to the youth of Germany by demanding service to a narrowly national cause. Anyone who is to sway the destinies of Europe after the war must have the imagination to make an equally cogent appeal to the youth of Europe for service to a larger cause.[4]

The best way to show that we are in earnest in making this appeal is to begin today to do ourselves the things in which we invite them to share.

[4] *Conditions of Peace*, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1942, p. 240. Reprinted by permission.

PART THREE

HOW A RIGHTLY ORDERED CHURCH CAN HELP TO MEET THESE NEEDS

Chapter Seven

THE WORLD COUNCIL AS SYMBOL AND PROPHECY OF THE NEW ORDER

THE PLACE OF THE WORLD COUNCIL IN THE NEW ORDER

THUS far we have been trying to make a case for the new order by showing, in connection with each of the most important tasks of postwar reconstruction, that the duties which will be laid upon the churches in the postwar period are so colossal that they simply cannot be met under our present system of divided responsibility. It remains to ask what changes in the present order are needed and what must be done to bring them about.

Any attempt to forecast the new order in the Church must take its departure from the World Council of Churches. This is the most ambitious attempt which the churches have yet made to furnish the common life which has found expression in the Ecumenical Movement with a central body through which it can function.

The World Council of Churches is a Federation of Churches of different countries—Protestant, Eastern Orthodox, and Old Catholic—which now includes more than seventy-five self-governing communions. It has come into being through the union of the two most important forms of the Ecumenical Movement—Faith and Order and Life and Work—in a single body. A constitution has been prepared for the proposed new body by a committee of some eighty leading Christians representing the churches

which have supported the earlier forms of the movement, and this has already been accepted by seventy-eight churches in all parts of the world. This constitution contemplates a General Assembly of some five hundred persons, a Central Council of ninety, and continuing study commissions in the field of Life and Work and Faith and Order. In the meantime the interests to which the existing movements are committed are being cared for by a Provisional Committee with a central office in Geneva.

The philosophy which underlies the plan for a World Council and determines all that it hopes to do can be summed up in a single sentence: Common action in the field of agreement; common study in the field of difference. It is the attempt to apply in the field of organized religion the methods which have been proved successful in the relation of individuals who are trying to achieve unity in an atmosphere of freedom.

The faith to which the World Council owes its existence may be thus expressed: Just as individuals find it impossible to live together in an atmosphere of freedom without respect for the differences of conviction which separate them, so it will prove impossible for churches to realize the Christian ideal of a united Church unless they make it their business to understand the beliefs of the churches which differ from their own and are resolved, so far as those differences spring from sincere conviction, to respect them and to learn from them. Further, this faith affirms that just as individuals, while agreeing to differ on the points in which such difference is due to honest conviction, have yet found it possible to work together in many fields for ends on which they are agreed, so churches, while loyal to their own distinctive doctrine, polity, and tradition, may unite in common action in the matters on which they

find themselves in fact at one. The World Council is a form of order which has been constructed for the purpose of creating the understanding and respect which is the indispensable prerequisite of such common action. It is the institutional goal toward which the whole Ecumenical Movement has been consistently leading. It must, therefore, be our point of departure in any future development.

There are several reasons why the World Council is peculiarly fitted to render this service. First of all, because of its emotional possibilities. What non-Roman Christianity needs above all things is a unifying symbol. Such a symbol the World Council gives us. Here and here alone, so far as we can now see, all the scattered members of the Christian family can meet for counsel and fellowship, and from this center can speak with a single voice the things that lie closest to their hearts. When one reflects what it has meant to the Roman Church that the Pope through his encyclicals is able to speak for the Catholics of every land; when one realizes how even such limited national utterances as those of Malvern and of Delaware have stimulated the imagination and kindled the hope of multitudes, one begins to appreciate what it may mean when from a single center a Council of Churches that embraces within its membership two thirds of the whole Christian family can bear its united witness to the world.

There is a second reason why the World Council is fitted to serve as organizing center in the new order. All the other interdenominational agencies which are functioning today on a world-wide scale are secondary bodies. They derive their authority from bodies created by the parent denominations and act only in the field and for the purpose for which power has been delegated to them. That field is in every case a limited field. Only the World Coun-

cil owes its existence to the direct action of the churches which have created it, and can deal with any matter they choose to commit to it. Only the Council, therefore, is in a position to speak and act for the Church as a whole.

This power, to be sure, imposes great responsibility and should be exercised only under great safeguards. A third reason why the World Council is fitted to serve as unifying center of the new order is that these safeguards are provided in its constitution. It can act, to be sure, but only in those matters in which its constituent members are agreed that it ought to act. It can speak, but only when those whom the churches have authorized to represent them are of one mind. While this makes hasty action difficult, in many matters indeed all but impossible, it makes action when it is finally taken all the more impressive.

For we must never forget that there are some matters on which the mind of the Church is already at one. There are some things on which the hearts of Christians are set which they are now doing together. The World Council is not a device of theorists who have spun a constitution out of their dreams. It is a plan made by hard-headed practical men to create an instrument by which the churches can do together, and so more effectively, things which they are now doing separately.

One more advantage the World Council possesses which fits it to act as organizing center of the new order is the provision which it has made for continued study of the differences that remain. The difficulty with most constitutions is that they attempt to project into the future conditions which are appropriate only to the time when the constitution is drawn up. At most they provide a way in which change can take place when it is desired. But they

do nothing to make sure that men's minds shall be prepared for the change when it comes.

Here the World Council takes time by the forelock. By its provision for permanent commissions in the field of Life and Work and Faith and Order it ensures that the conditions which now limit unity shall be studied by men who approach these differences with mutual self-respect. In this way it justifies the hope that, as enlarging experience brings increased trust, the number of things that the churches can honestly do together will increase.

When all has been said, however, the World Council is still only a possibility. It is an instrument which the churches *may* use for their common purposes if the will to use it is there. But the will must be there if the deed is to follow.

AD INTERIM RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROBLEMS

It had been originally planned that the first meeting of the World Council should be held in 1941, and that it should take place in the United States. That plan has been made impossible by the war. Today no one can tell when it will be possible for the Council to meet and what will be the specific tasks which will confront it. It is all the more important to appraise its future possibilities, and to see to it that whatever steps may be taken by the churches in the meantime are such as will make possible the transition with the least degree of waste and friction.

One step has already been taken to bridge the gap: namely, the appointment of a Provisional Committee which, pending the convening of the Assembly with plenary power to create the needed committees, is carrying on as best it can. This committee is already doing important work in many different fields. It serves as a bond

of communication between the constituent churches. It is furnishing needed information as to what is happening in the churches which are no longer free themselves. It is meeting, with such resources as the churches have entrusted to it, the most pressing tasks of relief and spiritual ministry that the Council would perform if it were here. It remains true that what it does, however important, is provisional. It cannot commit the churches to any definite course of action for the longer future. Thus must wait till the Council can meet.

Yet it may prove in the long run that this necessary postponement will have its good side. When one attempts to forecast the problems which the World Council will have to face when it meets, it becomes apparent at once that they will present many points of delicacy. Hasty action might easily lead to mistakes which it would be difficult to rectify. The intervening years may bring added wisdom which will save time in the end.

We have an analogy in the political field. There is general agreement that one of the reasons for the failure of the Treaty of Versailles was that it tried to do too many things at once. It attempted to settle the difficult questions of political frontiers and financial readjustment while the passions which the war had kindled were still burning fiercely. Under such conditions failure was all but inevitable. If a period for cooling off had been provided between the armistice that was to close the war and the treaty that was to make the peace, the outcome might have been different.

In their plans for postwar settlement the statesmen of the allied nations are agreed that there must be an intermediate period of discussion and experiment before the final settlement crystallizes into the form of a treaty.

Passions will then have had time to cool. Experiments will have been tried. Mistakes which have been made can be corrected. The decisions reached will be slower, but their results will be more stable.

So postponement of the first meeting of the World Council may be all to the good. The time we are obliged to spend in preparation need not be lost. The Church, when it finally possesses this instrument for action, will be in a position to make wiser use of it than it could do today.

But if postponement there must be, there need be no delay. While we are waiting for the World Council to meet, we should be perfecting the intermediate agencies which are now at our disposal. This means that the Provisional Committee of the World Council must be strengthened and supported and the corresponding agencies in the different countries be furnished with the needed staff and funds. Above all, steps must be taken to see that such changes are made in the organization and procedure of the constituent churches as will make possible a sure basis of support for the World Council when it finally meets.

IMPORTANCE OF LAYING A FOUNDATION IN THE CONSTITUENT CHURCHES

We enter here a field of great complexity in which no single pattern is everywhere applicable. The religious life of each country has developed along its own lines and presents problems in many respects different from those of any other. Some, like Germany and the Scandinavian countries, have long accepted the principle of establishment. Others, like the United States, give equal recognition to all denominations. In Great Britain the two

systems exist side by side. It is clear, therefore, that there can be no one simple and uniform way of determining the relations of these independent and already existing bodies to the World Council.

In countries like Sweden, and Germany as it was before the war, where the prevailing form of Christianity is of a uniform type and the principle of establishment has long been accepted, the problem of relationships is on the whole a simple one. The agency is already at hand through which contact can be made. In France too, and most recently in Holland and Norway, common experiences of suffering have developed a consciousness of unity which has created its own organs of common action. Here too the World Council can count on the needed support when the time is ripe.

Great Britain presents a problem of its own. Here we have not only the existence side by side of an established church and a group of free churches, but we have two established churches differing widely in polity and ethos, each conscious of its own rights and dignity, with no superior authority to which it owes allegiance. Recently, however, a way has been found to create a central body through which all the groups can act together. This British Council of Churches, as it is called, is an official body of which the Church of England, the Church of Scotland, and the free churches are constituent members. It is financed from the treasury of the churches, functions through committees which they recognize as their own, and is carrying on in their name common action along all the more important lines of Christian interest—missions, evangelism, education, social service, and research. This is the body through which the support of the World Council is apportioned to the different churches and

through which its recommendations, when they are made, will be conveyed to them.

Another perplexing problem of relationship is provided by the younger churches. These churches have hitherto been related to the older churches through the International Missionary Council. But they are feeling restive under this arrangement and desire their own place in the World Council of Churches. While provision has been made for this in principle by the constitution, there are many practical questions of adjustment to be made, due to the fact that the number of places is limited. Moreover, the younger churches are in differing stages of development. Many of them are still dependent for their support upon funds contributed from the home base. Only a few are in a position to stand on their own feet. Tact, therefore, and patience will be required in making the needed adjustment. A first step was taken at Madras by the appointment of a Joint Committee of the International Missionary Council and the Provisional Committee to canvass the field and take the needed action. A point of contact was provided by the appointment of Dr. William Paton, a secretary of the International Missionary Council, as associate secretary of the Provisional Committee of the World Council. But these are only foretastes of the fuller union still to be achieved.

These are examples of many questions of relationship which the World Council will have to face when it meets—questions of its relation to the existing executive agencies through which the churches are already functioning in the international field, such as the International Missionary Council, the World Sunday School Association, and the Central Bureau of Relief, as well as more unofficial

bodies, such as the World Alliance and the International Y.M. and Y.W.C.A.

CONSEQUENCES FOR THE CHURCHES OF THE UNITED STATES

In the United States the problems of relationship are more complex than in any other country. Here the co-operative movement has gone so far and has developed along so many independent lines that it presents a problem even more baffling than that which the World Council itself has had to overcome. In the United States too the denominations are far more numerous than in any other country, and the complications which result from denominational overlapping and competition are more acute. The encouraging feature is that the evils of the present situation are keenly realized and definite steps are being taken to overcome them.

To follow these steps in detail would carry us too far. All that one can hope to do is to picture the goal toward which they seem to be moving.

As in the international field the World Council must be the central and determining factor, so within the nation, and for the same reason, a comprehensive National Council must be the organizing center. Only a body that derives its authority directly from the constituent denominations, and through which they can speak and act together, can do for the churches in America what now needs to be done.

The Federal Council, including as it does not only Protestant churches but representatives of Eastern orthodoxy in the Syrian Antiochian Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, comes nearest to being such a body. But the Federal Council does not yet include all the churches in the United States which are constituent mem-

bers of the World Council. As at present constituted, therefore, it is not in a position to serve as the American representative of the World Council.

There is a further reason why the Federal Council as at present constituted is not in a position to fulfill all the functions which should be discharged by a truly representative national council. The Federal Council is not the only body through which the churches of the United States are co-operating. There are two other ways in which they are giving active expression to their common spiritual life. One of these is through interdenominational committees of the boards which are the executive arm of the denominations in their missionary and educational work—such bodies as the Foreign Missions Conference, the Home Missions Councils, the International Council of Religious Education, and the like. We have already had occasion to take note of the kind of work these bodies are doing and the important place they hold in the life of the churches.

It is desirable, therefore, that there should be a closer integration between the Federal Council which alone is authorized to speak for the churches which are its constituents, and the agencies which they have charged with responsibility to act in their name. Only a body which combines the functions now discharged by the Federal Council and the more important interdenominational agencies of executive character will be in a position adequately to represent the non-Roman churches of America and to be the agent through which they co-operate with the churches of other countries in the World Council.

Such an inclusive council is in the way of being established. Following the precedent set at Utrecht, a committee representing the Federal Council and seven of

the most important interdenominational executive agencies was appointed to prepare a plan for such a national council. That plan was submitted to the parent bodies at Cleveland in December, 1942; if and when approved by them it will go to the denominations, which are the court of ultimate authority, for their consideration and, it is to be hoped, their approval.

One of the features of the proposed plan is that the new council shall include a certain number of representatives of the state federations of churches, which are at present the most direct link between the national bodies and the local congregations.

This reminds us of another way in which the common spiritual life of the Church is finding expression, and that is through local federations like the city federations of churches, as well as more limited bodies like the Larger Parish. This form of approach differs from the others in that it has grown up in relative independence of the other two and was until recently in large measure free from denominational control. If the churches of the United States are to make their full contribution to the new order which is to culminate in the World Council, this more informal approach to the problem of a united Church must be properly related to the more formal organizations of unity.

Here the existing federations must be our point of departure. Where there is no such body at present available, one should be created. It should assume, in a form adapted to local conditions, the two functions to which the World Council is committed: common action in the field of agreement, common study in the field of difference. The goal will not be reached until each local congregation

feels itself definitely related to the World Council and contributes to its support.[1]

To bring this about it will be necessary to create, or to develop where they are already present, adequate intermediate units corresponding to the states or other convenient geographical sections. Here the existing state councils and federations furnish appropriate points of departure; but the process needs to be carried much further and related both to the national administrative units on the one hand, and the local communities on the other.

Here we meet what seems at first sight an almost insuperable obstacle: namely, the existence of intermediate denominational units that have grown up under other historic conditions and bear no logical relation either to the corresponding interdenominational units or to one another. Unless these are modified in such a way as to play their part in a consistent whole, it is difficult to see how much progress can be made.

We are brought back to the denominational self-consciousness as the major obstacle which must be overcome if success is to be achieved. So long as each denomination insists upon the maintenance of its own sovereignty and judges all that is done by the extent to which it enhances denominational prestige, little can be done. We need a process of mass conversion in which the change which is taking place in the attitude of those who are responsible for the different interdenominational agencies is repeated in the case of the denominational leaders themselves. We need men who feel that, great as is their loyalty to the par-

[1] A way of doing this has recently been provided by the incorporation of a body known as the Friends of the World Council, through which local congregations may contribute to the work now being carried on by the Provisional Committee of the World Council.

ticular branch of the Church in which their lot is cast, their obligation to the central agencies which represent the Church as a whole is still greater.

When I say that denominational self-consciousness is the major obstacle to be overcome if success is to be reached, I do not mean that denominational self-consciousness is itself a bad thing. Far from it! One might as well say that love of family is inconsistent with true patriotism. In fact, experience shows that the practice of the lesser loyalty may be the best school for training in the more comprehensive devotion. There are values in each of the denominations which have ripened through many centuries of experience and constitute a heritage which no sensible churchman would willingly let go. There are resources of organization and experience which are available for use for new and larger ends if the will to use them be there.

What I have in mind is something more fundamental. It is an attitude of the spirit. What we ask of Presbyterians and Episcopalians and Baptists is not that they should love their own branch of the Church less, but that they should see it and—what is more important still—feel it in its true setting as an essential element in that larger whole in which Christ lives and works today. When the time comes when the thing which is done for the Church as a whole arouses more denominational pride than that which is done for the denomination as such, the victory will have been won.

Chapter Eight

A PROGRAM FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TIME FACTOR

WHEN one attempts to measure what it will require adequately to bring into existence the kind of order that we have seen to be imperatively needed, the first impression is one of discouragement. What chance is there that, in the interval before the needed reorganization can be completed, the churches, with their present inadequate organization and imperfectly trained constituency, will be able to carry the load which will so suddenly be laid upon them?

It will help us to answer this question if we fix our thought upon certain familiar principles which may help to bring order into what would otherwise seem an almost quixotic enterprise. First of all, one must not try to do everything at once. Of the many duties laid upon the Church, we must concentrate on those which constitute her primary responsibility; and we must give these right of way. Next, we must remember that we are not the only ones on whom God has laid responsibility for postwar planning. His Spirit is at work with men in every profession and walk of life. We must recognize this fact and rejoice in it. Our eyes must be open and our minds sympathetic to every parallel approach to the better order which is our common goal. Still again, we must take account of the time factor in every complicated enterprise. There are some things that we can do at once, and one by one.

than of policy. A more important question has to do with the definite program which the Council will set for itself. How far will it accept the unique opportunity which is presented to it and undertake not simply to speak but to act for the churches?

There is one field in which action will be imperatively needed, and in which it would seem that the World Council is the only body that can do what must be done. This is the re-establishment upon a stable basis of the institutions of religion in the countries—East and West alike—which have been devastated by the war. Under the auspices of the Provisional Committee a responsible group of Christians has been studying the needs of the European churches and has already made a comprehensive survey of the things which will have to be done. A similar study should be made of the needs of the younger churches in the areas which have come under Japanese control. All that this survey will reveal cannot now be anticipated; but already enough is known to make it clear that only a body of world-wide scope, in which both the stronger and the weaker churches are represented, will be in a position to undertake the colossal tasks which will be required.

If, as is to be hoped, the Council is willing to assume this responsibility, what shall be its relation to the existing executive agencies in the international field—the International Missionary Council, the World Sunday School Union, and the Central Bureau of Relief? Will these become the executive arm of the Council, or will some more thoroughgoing process of reorganization prove necessary?

Then there will be important questions of relationship to be determined. What shall be the points of contact beteween the Council and those freer and more flexible bodies like the International Y.M. and Y.W.C.A.'s, the World

Student Federation, and the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches, into which so much of the best life of the Church has been poured? One of the specific duties assigned to the Council in its constitution is to cultivate closer relations with these bodies and to co-operate with them in the wider areas in which their aims coincide.

Finally, there remains the question, in some respects the most perplexing of all, how the World Council when it is fully developed is to be related to its base in the churches of the different countries on which it depends and from which it derives its authority. Shall the relation between the Council and each of these constituent members continue to be direct as at present, or is there need of intermediate units in the interest of economy of administration? If the latter course seems expedient there are two possibilities to be considered, each of which has its advocates. One would be to make the international denominational associations like the Lambeth Conference, the Lutheran World Council, the Alliance of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, and the like, the co-ordinating bodies. The other would be to use the national federations of churches as the base on which to build. There are many reasons why the latter seems the more desirable, if only we can secure in each country a body fully representative of all the interests included in the World Council.

Decision on this point is complicated by the fact that in each of the areas to be considered a process of reorganization is going on which is not yet complete. Here too we must distinguish between the nearer and the more distant goal and make our immediate decisions in the light of issues not yet completely determined.

To take our own country as an illustration, we have seen

that in the church life of the United States an extensive process of reconstruction is under way. A committee appointed by the eight most important national interdenominational agencies has prepared a plan of corporate union which would substitute for the existing bodies a single organization of which the present agencies would be constituent parts. But even if this plan should be approved by all the bodies affected, and ultimately by the denominations from which these bodies derive their authority, a considerable period of time would have to elapse before it could be put into effect.

Yet here again the life of the Church must go on. However many the issues that must be postponed, there are some with which we must deal without delay. If there were no other reason for haste, the pressure of the war with its insistent demands for emergency service would force immediate action.

We have seen in a previous chapter how, under the stress of the present emergency, the churches are uniting in many forms of war service, many of them of a temporary character. It is important, however, to remember that in what we are doing now we are forming habits which may carry over into the more normal days which we hope will follow the war. It is essential, therefore, that without waiting for the outcome of the pending negotiations we do what we can to prepare the way for the more united Church of the future.

SOME THINGS WHICH THE DENOMINATIONS COULD DO AT ONCE

The first point to attack must be the limitations of the denominational consciousness. This, we have seen, is the most formidable of all the obstacles to effective unity.

Unless we can use the impact of the war emergency to shift the center of emphasis from the particular tasks for which each denomination feels responsible to the broad field in which all alike share responsibility, we shall be in danger of repeating the mistake we made after the last war and slipping back into our former ecclesiastical isolationism.

One thing which could be done immediately would be, so far as possible, to hold the meetings of the various denominational agencies at the same time and place. A beginning has already been made in certain states, but this process should be repeated in a systematic way in the nation at large. It was in a modest step of this kind that the World Council had its inception. Who knows what changes might take place in the attitude of the denominational leaders if they would meet statedly with the leaders of the other churches for joint consultation on their common task?

A second thing that could be done would be to lodge in some properly constituted body authority to act in the name of the denominations during the interval between the meetings of the central body. One of our greatest difficulties is due to the fact that there is no uniform practice which determines the time of these meetings. Some, like the Presbyterians, the Congregationalists, and the Baptists, meet annually. Others, like the Episcopalians, meet only once in three years; still others, like the Methodists, only once in four years. In the meantime there is no one who can commit the denomination as a whole to any new policy; and even when there is general agreement that a thing ought to be done, there is no one who is in a position to do it.

Above all, it is essential that each denomination should

accept its responsibility for a proportional share of the financial support of the various interdenominational committees which are carrying on the co-operative work of the Church. This is the only way in which the great body of church members can be brought to realize that what the World Council and the International Missionary Council are doing in the international field, and the Federal Council and its related agencies are doing within the United States, they are doing as the representatives of all the churches, and not simply as private concerns to which each denomination contributes driblets out of its excess bounty.

These things could be done now if the will to do them were here. What we need is someone with courage and strength who will set a precedent for others to follow.

Why should not such a forward step be taken at once? In each of the great denominations there sleep unused possibilities of influence which, if courageously and promptly used, would set a standard which could lift the life of the whole Church to a higher level. Take the Methodists, for example. They are the largest of all the denominations in membership, but in spite of the fact that they have retained the episcopate they lack the facilities for properly centralized administration. Why should they not take steps at once to supply this lack? Let us suppose that at the next General Conference of The Methodist Church they should decide that from this time on they will not only accept their full quota in the support of the interdenominational work of the churches, but will make it a first charge on all denominational funds; that they will instruct their boards of missions and of Christian education to use denominational funds in the support of co-operative projects to be carried on in the name of all the churches; that in order to support the boards in such action they will

create a working committee authorized to represent The Methodist Church during the interval between the quadrennial meetings and direct it to confer with other similar bodies appointed by other churches as to the larger program of the churches; and, finally, in order that the whole body of church members may appreciate the significance of the step taken, that they will direct their denominational press to give the same publicity to what is done by Methodists in support of the interdenominational work of the Church that they give to their own denominational work. Would not the precedent thus set find speedy imitators? For very shame other churches would follow suit.

Or take the Southern Baptists. They are the second largest body in the United States. Of all the denominations none take their obligation as Christians more seriously. Many still practice the tithing system. No communion is more loyal in the support of its missionary activities. Yet the Southern Baptists alone among the larger denominations in the United States have thus far refrained from joining the World Council. There are many reasons which they give for this. But the most plausible is that the Baptists as a congregational body recognize no authority above the local congregation and so have no right to take the action which is requested.

Yet it would seem that if this be the true reason a very simple way out of the difficulty could be found. If the local congregation be the final authority, let the local congregation decide. Why not transmit to each Southern Baptist church a copy of the constitution of the World Council, with a statement of what it is doing through the Provisional Committee in the interest of Christian service and brotherhood, and ask each congregation to decide

whether it would like to join? If the result should be in the negative, the refusal of the leaders would be vindicated. Should it be in the affirmative, the lacking authority would be given and the way be open for the denomination as a whole to join.

Episcopalians and Presbyterians too can make their dramatic gesture. For years a committee of the two churches has been trying to work out an arrangement that would put an end to the scandal of competing churches in small communities. Progress has been slow because of the doctrinal and ecclesiastical difficulties involved. Whether it will be possible finally to overcome these difficulties only the outcome of the present negotiations can determine. But there is one thing the Presbyterian and Episcopal churches could do now which does not involve any of the doctrinal and ecclesiastical difficulties of the proposed plan. They could decide that, pending the outcome of the present negotiations, in all things that do not involve questions of faith the two churches shall henceforth act as if they were one. They could instruct their respective boards of missions and of education to survey the whole field of the Church's activity, and wherever it is possible to bring about joint action to take this action at once. What would more completely convince the members of the two churches of the sincerity of the will to unite? What would set a more heartening precedent for other churches to follow?

SOME THINGS WHICH LOCAL CONGREGATIONS CAN DO

All these things involve denominational action. But there are many things that can be done by local congregations which do not require any official sanction. For many years I have lived in Seal Harbor on the little island of

Mount Desert. When I came there forty years
the religious life of the island was at a low ebb.
churches were few and feeble, often without a pasto
long periods, and the children were growing up wi
regular Christian instruction. On the outlying is
conditions were as desolate as those on the Labrador
before Wilfred Grenfell made that bleak coast the
of his exciting mission. Today all this has changed
Larger Parish with a staff of three full-time workers
ministers to the religious needs of what were once
independent churches. The children receive syste
religious training in Sunday school, and the young p
are prepared to join the church in catechetical classes.
outlying islands are no longer forgotten, but are re
by the friendly visits of the *Sunbeam,* a little steamer
moves up and down the coast as the agent of the
Seacoast Mission.

The churches which are associated in the Larger
are Congregational and Baptist in polity. But in
of the communities included in the parish ther
Episcopal churches which are not technically memb
the Parish. In spite of this, ways have been four
the ministers in charge to share in the educational a
ligious work of the parish so that for all practical pu
they are working as one body. The completeness of f
ship which exists between minister and people of th
ferent churches was dramatically symbolized by s
held at Northeast Harbor and Seal Harbor on th
Sunday of September, 1942. At Northeast Harbor
people of the different churches gathered in the Ep
Church of St. Mary's to hear a sermon from a Presby
minister, while at Seal Harbor a similar meeting w

in the Congregational church, the Episcopal minister being the preacher.

What has brought about this happy result? No action of any synod or church council. No change in the law of any church. Only the vision of a few farsighted men and women, permanent residents and summer visitors alike, who had decided that the time had come to put an end to the policy of go-as-you-please and to plan for a united approach.

Not all communities are so situated that the method followed in the Larger Parish at Mount Desert is applicable. But there is no situation in which, if the will to unite is present, some practical way of co-operation cannot be brought about. An example of what can be done in an old community facing changing conditions is the Williamsburg Larger Parish in Brooklyn. In this experiment nine churches are associated: two Presbyterian, two Baptist, two Methodist, two Episcopal, and one Lutheran. The City Mission Society has provided the parish with a staff of four workers, who, on behalf of all the churches, carry on evangelistic activities, maintain classes in religious education, and work with young people and in the field of church music. The plan is attracting attention in other parts of the metropolitan area, and already the churches of Mott Haven are planning to engage in a similar co-operative experiment.

These are only examples of ways of united approach which are open to congregations if the will to take the new order seriously is there.

SOME THINGS THAT EACH OF US MUST DO

We come back to the individual Christian as the focal point from which all our plans for a united Church must

start. What is needed more than anything else at the present time is men and women in our churches, ministers and laymen alike, who possess—let me say, rather, who are possessed by—the ecumenical mind. By this I mean people who see all that they do and plan as members of their own particular branch of Christ's Church as part of that larger world fellowship to which all who bear the Christian name belong, and who because they see this are eager to explore every possibility of co-operation with others who share a like vision.

This brings responsibility for the new order in the Church down from the decisions of the councils and conventions, where it must ultimately crystallize into accomplished fact, to the court of last resort—the conscience of the individual Christian. The Church will be what in the purpose of God it is meant to be when those who are its members see it through God's eyes and, wherever they are, act on what they see.

What then can ordinary Christians—people who are not bishops or moderators or secretaries, but ministers of particular parishes and members of local congregations—do to prepare the way for the far-reaching changes that are needed.

One thing they can do is to understand what these changes are. Much has been said in the pages that precede of the need of reform in Christian education. But the place for that reform to begin is in oneself. The person in whom we must first try to create the ecumenical consciousness is the person we know best, and the best way to create that consciousness is to study what the ecumenical movement is and what it is doing. There are many helps at our disposal. Indeed, the chief difficulty will be that they are so many. Already there is volu-

minous literature dealing with various aspects of the Ecumenical Movement, but much of it is in the form of reports of conferences and pamphlets dealing with specific aspects of the movement. We still lack a single volume covering the whole field which will give what is needed in concise form.

In the meantime there are two centers to which one may turn for help. One is the central office of the Provisional Committee at Geneva. The other is the office of the Joint Executive Committee in New York. Here the available literature is assembled, and any request for help will receive a prompt answer.

A second thing one can do is to become a worker for unity in the place where one is, and here the opportunities are almost literally limitless. There is no phase of the life of the Church where the ecumenical spirit is not needed and where it is not possible for the man or woman of good will to find useful opportunities of action.

This is true in the local congregation. Each parish may be an experiment station in the practice of Ecumenical Christianity, making each of the things which it does—its preaching, its worship, its practical activities—a means of deepening the sense of fellowship with Christians of every age and country.

It is true of the community in which the Church is located. Wherever human beings are gathered together, they face the ecumenical problem of achieving unity across difference; and the methods which have been found effective in bringing the leaders of the denominations to unite in their plan for a World Council will be found to be equally applicable to the life that Presbyterians and Episcopalians and Baptists are living in Utica or in San Francisco.

So we might go on to explore the possibilities of culti-

vating the ecumenical spirit which are open to the ordinary Christian through his membership in his denomination or in any one of the interdenominational agencies which must somehow make their contribution to the new order. But to do this would be to embark upon an endless quest. We must therefore trust each reader of these pages to choose which of the many paths that open before him he will elect to follow.

One question, however, presses for decision which cannot be postponed, and that is this. *What place will he give to the Ecumenical Movement in his estimate of priorities? Will it be for him in the future what it is to be feared it has too often been in the past—one cause among other causes to which he will give a part of his time and thought, as much as can be spared from other things—or will it have a primary claim upon his devotion?* The Church needs, more than anything else today, men and women who have chosen the latter alternative, for it is to them that we must look for leadership in the critical days that lie ahead.

One can set no limits to what such a choice may mean for the individual who has made it. It will give him a unifying Gospel, for he will realize that every time he joins in the recitation of the Creed he is voicing convictions which he shares with his fellow Christians in all the churches. It will deepen and enrich his worship, for when he kneels in prayer he will be conscious of an unseen company kneeling by his side. It will open unexplored possibilities of leadership, for wherever he touches the social life of the community in which he lives he will see things to be done that can only be done if he can persuade others to join him in doing them. Finally, and above all, it will reinforce his faith; for the story of Ecu-

menical Christianity is only the last chapter in the history of the spiritual life of man, and as he begins to understand this better and to live himself into the experiences of the good and great who have preceded him, he will find his outlook expanding, his hope reviving, and his courage reinforced.

I end where I began—where every far-reaching scheme of social reform must end—in the personal experience of the individual Christian. Whether we think of the World Council or the Federal Council or the denomination or the local church, we are brought back at the last to some man or woman on whom rests the responsibility of leadership. What we need today more than all else is someone who has the vision to see and the courage to dare. When such a leader shall appear there will be many in every country and in every section of the Church who will be eager to follow.

Chapter Nine

QUESTIONS FOR THE LONGER FUTURE

SOME PERSISTENT QUESTIONS

LET us sum up, in briefest compass, the argument of the book.

If the Church is to fill its place worthily in the postwar world a radical change in its own order is necessary.

This change must consist in such a readjustment of the present administrative agencies of the Church that they will represent the Church as a whole, have authority to act for it in the region of common agreement, and make provision for systematic study in the region of difference.

The purposes which the new instrument are to serve are the purposes to which the Church by its very nature has been committed from its inception: common witness to the redemptive love of God as manifest in the Cross of Jesus Christ; response to that love in common penitence and thanksgiving to God and common ministry to all in need, and the sharing of this experience of new life in God through a system of education in which religion is given its rightful place; finally, such changes in the organization of the churches themselves as may prove to an unbelieving world that they take their words about the need of radical social reconstruction seriously.

The first step toward the creation of this new order has already been taken in the acceptance by seventy-eight churches in different parts of the world—Eastern Ortho-

dox, Old Catholic, and Protestant—of the constitution of a proposed World Council of Churches. But this step must be followed by others if it is to become effective. The Council when it meets must itself accept the responsibility of leadership thus offered to it and outline a program of activity commensurate with its opportunity. This program must be accepted by the denominations which are constituent members, and such changes must be made in their relationship to one another within the different countries affected as will furnish the assured basis of support on which the Council must rely. This will require changes both in the procedure and policy of the individual denominations and in the program and relationship of the interdenominational bodies through which they are now co-operating. To make these changes possible in time, a new consciousness of unity must be developed in each of the subordinate units of which the national bodies are composed—a development possible only if each Christian in the place where he now is reconsecrates himself to the cause of a united Church. In the meantime each of us must do what he can with the organization we now have.

The procedure thus advocated has this advantage—that whatever may prove God's ultimate purpose for his church and for his world, it points the way to steps toward that goal which can be taken now. It is a comprehensive plan in which each individual and each agency can find its place. There is a place for the expert to point out what needs to be done, and to show us ways of doing it. There is a place for the nonconformist to warn against danger, and when mistakes have been made by those in authority to utter his protest. There is a place for the plain men and women who make up the membership of our churches and without whose loyal interest and support any

plan must suffer shipwreck. Let us each do our part, and we may safely leave to God the final outcome.

But it may be said: This is all very well so far as it goes, but at best it is only a makeshift. Even granting that the changes which are here advocated are desirable changes and that there is nothing in the law of the churches to prevent them from being made, all that we have gained is a somewhat more successful and economic functioning of independent bodies whose only form of union is still federation. What of that more far-reaching ideal to which the Faith and Order Movement has been committed from the first? What place do you give in the new order to organic union?

The same place, I answer, that this ideal holds now—no greater, but also no less. What is here proposed under the name of the new order is not the final order, God forbid, but it is the next step that must be taken if that order is to be brought nearer. For even if we believe that organic union in the sense of a single all-embracing union which sets the model for all its parts is God's ultimate plan for his Church, it will still be true that we must move toward that goal one step at a time. What the final order is to be when it comes—whether, as some Christians believe, it is to be in all its major features a uniform order, or, as others think more likely, a federal system in which large powers are reserved to the constituent units, or indeed whether it is ever to be completely realized on earth—God only knows. But this is certain: if it is to be reached it will not be because it has been imposed from above on authority, or instantaneously achieved through mass conversion, but because in the providence of God men's minds have been brought to see it as his plan, and their hearts moved to accept it as his will. The advantage of what is

here proposed is that it makes it possible to continue the process of mutual conference which is now going on in the Faith and Order Movement under conditions more favorable to mutual understanding than they are today.

The one thing that cannot be tolerated—indeed, if one might dare to use scriptural language, the one sin against the Holy Ghost—is to make one's loyalty to this higher and more distant goal an excuse for refusing to take the steps to which God's voice is manifestly calling his Church today. To each generation, as to each individual, its peculiar and manifest duty. To our generation that duty is to heal the wounds of war by the united witness of faith and love. For this we need an appropriate instrument. What that instrument should be and how it is to serve the common cause, we have tried to point out.

But to say this, true as it is, is to leave the most important thing unsaid. It seems to imply that one can separate the matter of present witness from the more distant duty of achieving complete unity. The fact is that the two are indissolubly connected. The only way to make progress to the more distant goal is to go on by the light that we now have, as far as it will take us. And the more basic the questions that separate us, the more deeply they are rooted in fundamental convictions of faith, the truer this becomes.

This is not a matter of theory. It is a lesson which the experience of the last third of a century has been driving home to our consciousness. When we met at Edinburgh in 1910, and again at Stockholm in 1925, it was in the belief that we could separate questions of duty from questions of faith. We have found out our mistake. The more we have tried to work together for practical ends, the more clearly we have seen that if we are to put

our hearts into the work we are doing we must see eye to eye on matters of faith. The more frankly we have faced our differences of faith, the clearer it has become that we can make progress toward their solution only as we are willing to work together in the matters on which we are agreed.

But there is a corollary of this principle which the experience of the past thirty years has proved equally true. The more Christians work together in matters in which questions of faith are involved, the more progress they will make toward resolving their differences of faith. The years in which the churches have been co-operating in the Ecumenical Movement have seen more corporate unions consummated between Christian denominations than any similar period since the Reformation. Some of these unions we have had occasion to report, such as those between kindred bodies of Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, and Congregationalists, as well as between churches of different polity like the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists of Canada; others are in contemplation or in process of consummation. What the future may have in store only the event will reveal. Enough has already happened to reinforce faith and enlarge hope.

THE PLACE OF LAW IN GOD'S THOUGHT FOR HIS CHURCH

Let us take the most basic of all the differences which baffle us in our discussions of organic unity, that of the place of law in God's plan for his Church. Here we meet the deepest of all the cleavages which divide the churches, that between the Roman Catholics and the daughter churches that call themselves Protestant. At the heart of this great debate, underlying all other differences, is a difference as to the nature of the Church, To Rome,

the Church is a legal institution given by God from its inception a definite constitution and entrusted with authority through its head, the Pope of Rome, to speak as Christ's vicar in all that concerns faith and life.

Protestants do not accept this conception of the Church. To them it is the fellowship of those who have been redeemed by Christ and in whom he lives by his Spirit. That Spirit speaks to the individual believer directly through the Bible. In this Book whatever is essential for man's salvation, faith, and life is so clearly set forth that not only the scholar but the simple believer may attain a sufficient understanding of it. Protestants do not deny that law has its place in the Church. But they have learned from the Apostle Paul to think of law not as their master, but as their servant. It follows that there may be more than one form of government in the one Church. Any form is legitimate to which God has set his seal by the working of his Spirit.

This difference of belief has separated Protestants and Roman Catholics for four hundred years, in the course of which every argument has been used by the scholars of both sides without bringing about any material change in the positions to which each side is committed.

But all the time another process has been going on—the process of living together. And in the course of this process changes have taken place on both sides which have radically altered the original relationship. Thoughtful Catholics no longer speak of Protestants as apostate Catholics, but as misguided fellow Christians who are kept from enjoying their rightful heritage by the immaturity of their thought. Protestants no longer think of the Pope as that man of sin who is described in the Book of Revelation. They gladly acknowledge that through the Church of

Rome, with its promise of infallible authority, God is ministering to the need of many of his children whom the Protestant churches are unable to reach.

This process of growing understanding has not as yet led to any change of conviction on the fundamental issues at stake. But it has opened a possibility of co-operation and fellowship which would have been thought out of the question a generation ago. Roman Catholic scholars have co-operated with Protestants in the common study of controversial social issues like that of the eight-hour day in industry. Priests and ministers have found it possible to carry on an evangelistic campaign side by side in needy districts of great English cities like Manchester and Birmingham. What is more encouraging still, Catholics and Protestants are praying together for the spiritual ends both have at heart.

An impressive example of such co-operation is the recent pronouncement of the leaders of the British churches as to the duty of the churches in the postwar world. In this statement, signed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster and the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council, the following "five standards" were proposed to guide statesmen in solving postwar economic and social problems:

> Extreme inequality in wealth and possessions should be abolished; every child, regardless of race or class, should have equal opportunities of education, suitable for the development of his peculiar capacities; the family as a social unit must be safeguarded; the sense of a divine vocation must be restored to man's daily work; and finally, the resources of the earth should be used

as God's gifts to the whole human race and used with due consideration for the needs of the present and future generations.[1]

In such a drawing together of leaders of the Christian churches of widely separated groups, we see an approach to the inclusive spiritual society which is mankind's chief need today.

What is responsible for this extraordinary change of attitude? Many influences no doubt have played their part. But I am persuaded that when the final story comes to be written it will be found that one of the most important influences which has led to this better understanding has been the growth of the Ecumenical Movement. The more Roman Catholics have seen the churches which are associated in this movement—Eastern Orthodox and Protestant alike—agreeing to explore the possibilities of common action up to the limits of their common faith, the more they have found it possible to co-operate with them, even though unofficially, along many different lines.

What is true of the relation of Protestants and Catholics is true of those inner differences which still keep the members of the Reformed family of churches apart. The more we work together in the things in which we are agreed, the more light we shall receive as to the best way to deal with the doctrinal and ecclesiastical issues on which we still differ.

For within Protestantism too we meet the same basic question—the place of law in God's plan for his Church. This is the rock upon which, up to the present time, all efforts to achieve organic union between the Protestant churches have suffered shipwreck.

[1] From a letter, signed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, and the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council, to the London *Times*, December 21, 1940.

Catholics are not the only Christians who have given a fundamental place to law in their theory of the Church or made differences of church order the occasion for ecclesiastical division. There is scarcely a Protestant denomination but has had at one time or another a *jure divino* party which made its own concept of church government the article of the standing or falling Church. While happily many of these controversies are now only a matter of history, it is still true that differing views of church law constitute today the one insuperable obstacle to complete corporate union among the Reformed churches. If we ask why it is still impossible for Christians to sit down together at the Lord's Table, although such great progress has been made toward the recognition of a common Christian life, it will be found that it is due primarily to the Anglo-Catholic doctrine of apostolic succession and the Southern Baptists' insistence upon believers' baptism. Only a priest rightly commissioned by a duly accredited bishop, say the Anglo-Catholics, can administer a valid sacrament. Only a minister who has been immersed on profession of faith, rejoin the Southern Baptists, is true to the commission which Christ has originally given to his Church. Neither is allowed by his conscience to recognize the ministry of those who hold erroneous views on either point.

Here again our only hope of making progress is by moving further along the lines which this book has attempted to explore. If we cannot agree on all points, at least let us act together where we honestly can. In this way, and in this way only, may we hope that with our growing experience of fellowship God will give us the further light we now lack.

IS THE CHURCH RESPONSIBLE FOR CHRISTIANIZING CIVILIZATION?

One final question requires brief consideration: What are the prospects of success? Can there be in this world, even within the modest limits here suggested, a completely united Church? That is part of a larger question: Has God made the Church responsible for Christianizing civilization?

All through the centuries this age-long debate has been going on, and the end is not yet. It was present at Stockholm and at Oxford, and limited the degree of unity which could be reached. It divides the Lutherans of every school from their fellow Christians of other churches in the attitude which they take toward the relation of Church and State. To the Church, Lutherans assign the duty of witness to ultimate reality; to the State, the necessary compromises which must be made with the stern world of fact. Most of their fellow Protestants, on the other hand, still hold to the ideal of a Christianized social order and think of the Church as an instrument which may be used in the providence of God to bring that order into being.

But the question cuts deeper and the resulting cleavage is still wider. It divides Catholics as well as Protestants. The Eastern Orthodox incline to the Lutheran position. They give the State a more controlling place in the economy of God than the Roman Catholics. Of the two divine institutions, Church and State, they are inclined to assign primacy to the latter, gaining compensation for any resulting failure and inconsistency in a mystical piety that finds in the monastic life the most direct and satisfying way of approach to God. Orthodox monasticism is of the

contemplative type. It focuses attention upon the inner experience of the soul and leaves it to God in his own good time to have his way with his world.

Roman piety, on the other hand, has been of the active sort. It has refused to limit Christ's command to Peter in Matthew 16 to authority in the field of religion, technically so-called. When the barbarians swept over Rome, the Pope stepped into the place left vacant by the Emperor. In the chaotic days that followed, Rome was the center not only of Western religion, but of medieval civilization. The great Popes, a Gregory, a Leo, an Urban, claimed the right of investiture over the Emperor and fought to maintain that right by every means in their power. The story of the Papacy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is a part of the political history of Europe, which even the most secular of historians cannot pass over in silence.

But Rome itself found no easy solution for this age-long question. Within the Church itself two conflicting ideals struggled for the mastery—what Troeltsch has called the Church Ideal and the Sect Ideal. On the one hand, there was the conception of a legal institution clothed with political power in every sense of that word and as such committed to set the standard for civilization; on the other, that of an inner core of pious souls using the discipline of life here as a preparation for a better world to come. Rome solved the strife between these two conflicting theories by making place for both in its doctrine of the Church. For the great mass of Christians it recognized the necessity for a life of compromise with the world, on which the Church looked with tolerance as a necessary concession to the weakness of human nature. For the elect it offered a disciplined life in nunneries or in monasteries, where the soul in quest of perfection could give itself up

to the cultivation of the higher life without concern for what was passing in the world without.

Protestants rejected in theory the doctrine of a double standard. But they found it impossible to ignore the facts which had led to the theory. In the early days of Protestantism the ideal which had inspired the reformers—of a Church according to the mind of Christ—still maintained itself. As time passed, however, it proved increasingly difficult to carry this out consistently. As the new churches grew in numbers and influence, other motives came into play. In countries with a prevailing Protestant population church membership came to be regarded as a matter of course, and the tension between the more earnest and the more lax standards of conduct increased. Sometimes a compromise was tried, as in the New England Doctrine of the Halfway Covenant.[2] But for the most part practical considerations rather than any consistent theory determined the outcome. So it has come to pass that we find in Protestantism a practical acceptance of the double standard in spite of the fact that it is rejected in theory.

However we may solve the theoretical puzzle, this fact is plain; we cannot expect from the Church in its organized capacity as it meets us in the existing denominations the kind of action that we honor in exceptional Christians such as those whose recent experiences we have briefly passed in review.[3] When we set a standard for the Church as a whole we must take account of this obvious fact and make no demand upon the Church of tomorrow for which some

[2] This was an arrangement under which it was possible for children of believing parents to be admitted to church membership even if they themselves had not given signs of conversion.

[3] Pages 43-44.

basis has not already been laid in the Church of today. This does not mean that we are to be satisfied with a standard less than the highest for any Christian, but it does mean that we must take account of the time factor in the situation. We have a right to ask of the churches in their organized capacity only such action as is the honest expression of the convictions to which, in the providence of God, their members have been led.

But if this be true, it is all the more important that we should provide within the Church itself for the expression of the more advanced type of Christian life to which the more mature Christians feel themselves called. At present, with the single exception of the brotherhoods and sisterhoods of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the only way in which the need for such expression can be met is through unofficial bodies like the Groups or the Iona Fellowship. Even the Salvation Army, which has made the attempt to realize the Christian life of consecration and obedience more consistently than any other body, is not recognized by most Protestant churches as a part of the Church itself. It is high time that this anomaly should end and place be made within the Protestant churches for men and women who desire, under the guidance of the Church itself, to give themselves to the cultivation of the higher life.

A gesture looking in this direction was made at the Edinburgh Conference of 1937 by the adoption of the following statement:

> It should, however, be recognized that there are other members of our Conference who are not persuaded that it is God's will that the one spiritual life of the undivided Church should be expressed through any one form of government, but . . . . within, or beside, the more formally organized body, or bodies,

would include freer societies like the Friends and the Salvation Army.[4]

THE PART PLAYED BY HISTORY IN GOD'S CONTINUING SELF-REVELATION

We are brought back here again, as always when we meet persistent practical issues, to an ultimate philosophical question—namely, that of the place of history in the purpose of God.

Alone among religions Christianity gives a central place to history in God's plan for his world. To the faith of Christians, as to that of the Jews before them, history is not a meaningless succession of events in which generation after generation of men struggle for the mastery. It is not a vain show in which the changes that occur delude the spectator with the illusion of progress. History is the scene on which God is saying to his children what it is necessary that they should hear for their good. He is not saying it in words alone, though from time to time prophets have arisen who have had some clear word from God to speak. He is saying it in the more impressive language of deed. History is the story of God's self-revelation in action. It is the stage on which he unfolds his mighty acts in the majestic drama of war and peace. No one can understand the meaning of the experience through which the nations are passing today till he detects behind the human actors a divine figure moving in unfathomable ways to his predetermined end.

This view of history as the scene of God's progressive self-revelation is common Christian property. But Chris-

[4] *The Second World Conference on Faith and Order,* held at Edinburgh, August 3-18, 1937. Edited by Leonard Hodgson. The Macmillan Co., New York, 1938, p. 190.

tians differ as to the lessons which this revelation is designed to teach. Some find the meaning of history exhausted in the discipline which it makes possible for the individual actors in the drama, as through the successes and failures of this life they are prepared to take their place worthily in the fuller life for which this life is only the preparation. Others believe that history has independent significance as the place where things happen that have meaning for this life as well as for the life to come. It is the scene on which Christ, who is human as well as divine, has committed to his Church the task of realizing his Kingdom on earth.

In every generation Christians have parted company on this question. To some the ultimate goal is not here, but in the unseen country across the river. The most that can be asked of the Church is that it should be a witnessing Church—it may be a martyr Church—preaching its gospel of the just and loving God to an unbelieving world, and content to wait for the life to come for the vindication of its witness.

But to others such a position seems an explicit denial of the Master's simplest and most characteristic teaching: "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Whatever may be true of the life to come, here in this life, they are persuaded, it is not enough to pray, "Thy kingdom come"; we must do our part to hasten its coming.

So, generation after generation, we find Christians setting their hands to the social tasks which need most to be done: healing the sick, succoring the poor, clothing the naked, righting entrenched wrongs, and, when they cannot prevail, fighting the battle with undiminished courage. This complex of habits and customs we call our civilization is a poor enough thing at best; but when we ask what is

sweetest and best in it, we are led back to some Christian who has dared to take the Master's prayer seriously about God's will being done on earth.

Which is right in his interpretation of God's plan for his world only the outcome can determine. In the meantime we must live together as best we can, using the light that God has given us.

In this impasse there is one assured basis on which we can all take our stand. Whatever may be God's ultimate purpose for his *world*, it is our duty as Christians to make his *Church* as nearly Christian as we can. In doing this we shall be making our most direct contribution to the betterment of the existing social order. *For the Church in its present economic and administrative life is still a part of that order. We cannot make it truly Christian without at the same time affecting the whole order of which it is a part. The more nearly Christian the Church becomes, the closer we come to solving the administrative and educational problems to the discussion of which this book has been devoted, the nearer we shall come to an answer to the world-old puzzle—Can civilization be made Christian?*

We touch here the ultimate mystery—the place of human personality in the ongoing process of history. In the eyes of exact science, men and women are cogs in an endless chain of cause and effect, doing what they must do today because of what their past has made of them. As seen by Christian faith, they are creative personalities invited by God to become fellow workers with him in his divine enterprise of reconciliation, and using for that purpose the familiar instrument of order—political and ecclesiastical—which is the indispensable condition of all continuing social life. This alternative, old as the birth

of man's first conscious choice, yet new as tomorrow's sun, challenges the leadership of the Church today to a forward step commensurate with the greatness of its opportunity.

Bibliographical Note

To give even a selection from the voluminous literature on the subject is beyond the scope of the present book. Those who desire a guide in this field may find useful hints in the reports of the last four ecumenical conferences—Oxford, Edinburgh, Madras, Amsterdam—the current files of *Christendom,* and the following recent books:

Barnes, Roswell P.: *A Christian Imperative.* New York: Friendship Press, 1941.

Brown, William Adams: *A Creed for Free Men. A Study of Loyalties.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941.

Paton, William: *The Church and the New Order.* New York: The Macmillan Co., 1941.

Pope, Liston: *Religious Proposals for World Order.* New York: Church Peace Union, December, 1941.

Van Dusen, H. P.: *For the Healing of the Nations.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940.

Van Dusen, H. P.: *What Is the Church Doing?* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943.

A convenient bibliography of the more recent literature is given in *A Christian Imperative.*

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