

# *Is God in There?*

AN INQUIRY CONCERNING THE CHURCH  
IN THIS NEW AGE

By

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To  
MY WIFE



*"In the art of living together—in social relations both as individuals and as nations—the record is dismal. Natural science has far outstripped social science. Our social skills have not kept pace with our technical skills. The consequences to society of this unbalance have been disastrous. We have discovered how to split the atom, but not how to make sure that it will be used for the improvement and not the destruction of mankind. . . . In moral and spiritual matters millions of men, having lost the strength and guidance which they used to draw from the teachings of the institutional church, are morally adrift or spiritually indifferent."*

—DR. SIDNEY B. FAX, professor emeritus of history at Harvard University, past-president of the American Historical Association

## Foreword

THIS BOOK has been written mostly on trains and planes, in railroad stations, at airports and in hotel rooms, as well as during all too few evenings at home. Consequently, it has obvious limitations. Nevertheless, I am bold to believe that within these pages are facts and proposals which Christians should ponder over and do something about without delay.

The task of an administrator, interpreter, and promoter of the world mission of the church takes him widely and continually across this country and many other lands. The experiences and responsibilities of the last few years have given him more than the usual opportunity to observe the church in both its national and international environment.

One finds the achievement of the ecumenical. But the framework is entangled and the program is confused. Moreover, the efficacy and integrity of the church are being challenged, not in traditional terms but by the standards and requirements of this undeniably new age.

Apparently, the majority of Christians do not sense the present and impending dangers threatening the place and influence of the church. Nor do they seem to grasp with clarity and due excitement the urgent relevancy of the Christian mission to the basic issues of our time. Though the average churchman gives evidence that he desires to be dutiful, he lacks, alarmingly, a stirring awareness of the crucial alternatives confronting Christian decision.

On the other hand, never before, in our generation at least, has there been such deep demand for the Truth that will make men free.

Upon such background, the intention here is to express a

concern, to encourage an inventory, and to sound a call to action. I raise questions and suggest answers not in despair, but with Christian hope—believing

“Our little systems have their day;  
They have their day and cease to be:  
They are but broken lights of thee,  
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

“We have but faith; we cannot know;  
For knowledge is of things we see;  
And yet we trust it comes from thee,  
A beam in darkness; let it grow.”

C.T.L.

*Brightwaters, New York.*

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## Is God in There?

A CHILD WAS STANDING at the door of a church. A man came along. As the man was about to enter the church, the child asked wistfully, "Mister, is God in there?"

What was the reply? How would you have responded?

Certainly, God is everywhere. "In him we live, and move, and have our being." The child undoubtedly wanted to know, however, with a child's precognition, if within that church God was to be found in a distinctive and superior way. A brief and simple affirmative reply to the innocent question rightly would satisfy the child and, perhaps, also the man. For, "except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." On the other hand, for one who has "become a man" and "put away childish things" and is seeing "through a glass darkly," the implications of the question are of such significance and are so provocative that an answer is not to be given quickly.

To hesitate as to whether or not God is in a church, unique and transcendent, may shock the average Christian. Nevertheless, the question may be a valid one. Indeed, it is frequently heard and too often it is pertinent. In fact, the child at the door of the church unknowingly raised an issue which is a major problem of our time. The modern mind, both of the intelligentsia and the masses, uses a different terminology with wider and deeper meaning, but

it presses the same moot point when it inquires: Is there a superior and sufficient power within the church to save this world? Modern skepticism is not so much directed toward *vera causa* as it is to the empirical and the pragmatic. The latter concern us here. For the church's "proving grounds" today are not primarily in the area of its true cause or origins; they are in the field of experience and production.

The ecclesiastical organization which we have inherited, Roman Catholic or Protestant, is neither final nor absolute; neither is it sacrosanct in its pattern, exclusiveness, or assurance of its content. The church is the Body of Christ. Any fellowship which forsakes the vitality of the Master or prostitutes his Body with materialism or covers his dynamic personality with superficial ritualism or limits his love and purpose with a self-centered separatism repudiates the right to claim the unique presence of Deity. The test is whether there are Spirit and Truth, releasing power. Jesus made this clear in his conversation with a woman of Samaria. She resented his implying that she could not find God in the "church" of her fathers. "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. . . . God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Paul Scherer writing on the nature of the church avers that "the church is a unique fellowship of grace called into being by a divine act and resting on the foundation of God's revelation in Christ." He continues, "We are able to speak of its uniqueness and its fellowship, of grace and act and revelation, because we are aware in ourselves of a calling and a deed, of a bond and a Presence and a re-



deeming power, which here as nowhere else came alive with meaning.”\*

Let me put it in another way, pointing more directly to the issue before us. The presence or absence of the Spirit and Truth of God as a vital phenomenon, expressed individually and corporately, determines the answer whether or not any given fellowship is a distinctive dwelling-place of God. Or again, the reality of the presence of God is to be known not by architecture or obeisance, by creed or ritual, by statistics or fervor, but by the evidence of His Spirit and Truth in individual lives and corporate experience being released into the life of the community, the nation, and the world.

This may be religious commonplace to those who stop to think about it. The trouble is, we do not, as average Christians, take time to think about it. In our habit of taking for granted the traditional place and activities of the local church or in our indifference to or enthusiasm for the promotion of an ecclesiastical institution, we seldom pause long enough to inquire and study whether or not the church itself, with its present content, structure, and program, is spiritually solvent, whether or not it is adequate to represent God in our time. It is the habit of taking the church for granted which hurts so. You will recall how Father Smith said, in *The World, The Flesh and Father Smith*, by Bruce Marshall, “Well, well, if trouble comes, it’ll keep our religion from getting rusty. That’s the great thing about persecution: it keeps you up to the mark. It’s habit, not hatred, that is the real enemy of the Church of God.”

Is God in the church today? Does the church have the power to save the world? The question is far from aca-

\**The Gospel, the Church and the World*, edited by Kenneth Scott Latourette. Harper and Brothers.

demic. Its implications are far-reaching. It is a throbbing, burning inquiry being put directly or indirectly by millions. It is disturbing the minds of our best thinkers. Here, for instance, is Elton Trueblood insisting that "the real enemy is not the Red organizer who openly opposes the church but the respectable citizen who adopts a patronizing attitude toward the church by the gesture of joining it, when he has no idea of a genuine commitment to its gospel. The person who needs most to be convinced is not the open sinner but the man to whom has never occurred the idea that true religion is always revolutionary in both individuals and societies."\* Farther along this same way Reinhold Niebuhr takes us: "It is not possible to present the Christian faith to our generation as the final answer to life's final problems if the proponents of the Christian faith do not understand in all humility that the false political religions of our day gained their ascendancy partly because the Christian faith, as historically presented in the various churches, failed so miserably in guiding mankind to a right answer for the immediate and proximate issues of human existence." There echoes and re-echoes, "Mister, is God in there?"

Take time to listen to the young men and women who have returned from fighting a war. They want to do something more than fighting a war toward making a better world, but many of them doubt honestly that it is in the church where they can do this most effectively. At Maryville College in Tennessee, shortly after the close of the war, a young returned "veteran," a student at the college, approached me after my address on the place of the church in the post-war world. He argued strenuously that the church had no concept of its place or obligation in

\* *Foundations for Reconstruction*, by Elton Trueblood, Harper and Brothers.

these post-war times. Before the war this young man had planned to study for the ministry and had kept hold of this purpose all through his war experiences. But now, having returned to resume his academic preparation, his contacts with the church had brought him to both disillusionment and despair. He had come to doubt that he was right in going into the ministry after all. The plans and activities of the church and the attitudes of its leaders, as well as church members in general, seemed far removed from the experiences and realities born of war.

More dramatically, a certain Jim Lucas, an ex-Marine who fought in the Pacific from Guadalcanal to Iwo Jima, indulges in some soul-searching and draws some perilous conclusions:

"On a recent Sunday in a small church in upstate New York the minister said: 'The men who fought this war don't glory in it. They hate war.'

"That's what we say. That's what we think we mean. But it isn't true. We are more war-minded than we know. I asked myself: 'Do I hate war?' And I had to answer: 'I don't.' I had to go on from there. I may secretly love war.

"Self-examination shocked me. I suddenly was aware of something I hadn't known about myself. I had always taken for granted I hated war. Now I don't know.

"War is ugliness. War is death. War is destruction. War is heartbreak and sorrow.

"The men who fight wars, when they fight them, hate war. They hate its blood and carnage. They hate its grime and filth. They hate its demands on their bodies. They hate its regimentation. They hate its separations. They hate its standing in line for chow, wearing its uniforms, taking its orders.

"But when wars are over, day after day, that's easier to forget. You don't forget the other side of war.

"You don't forget that in war you found the only Christian brotherhood you ever knew. You don't forget that in war you found complete selflessness. You don't forget learning in war that a man could love the other fellow more than himself, if

only for a minute, an hour, a day. You don't forget that in war you saw men who loved life give their lives for you.

"I didn't know that kind of living before I went to war. I haven't known it since. I miss it. The absence of it, the brutal contradiction of it in peace makes it the harder to forget.

"We have returned to a world at peace. It is a world of dog-eat-dog. Probably it has always been like this. Probably it hasn't changed much. Probably we haven't either."\*

What does the church have to say to Jim Lucas?

Look across the world to the youth of European lands. As an example of what is happening to more young men and women than one likes to think about, consider this incident. A friend of mine who is a Protestant minister was traveling on a train from Paris to Geneva about two years after the war. In the same compartment was an eager-looking young fellow who in conversation readily identified himself as an active Communist. On learning that my friend was a Protestant minister, the young Communist confessed that not long ago he himself had been a member of the Protestant church but because the church had been so vacillating and lethargic in the face of post-war issues he had entered the Communist party, believing that this movement had a stronger policy and a more definite and active program for the making of a better world. It so happens that my friend, the minister, is associated with the restoration movement of the Protestant churches. At length, he explained what the World Council of Churches is endeavoring to do through its Department of Reconstruction and Interchurch Aid, supported by funds and personnel primarily from the churches of America and Great Britain, and working with the churches on the Continent. My friend explained to the young European the significance, objectives, and achievements of the mission of the church. As they left each other, the Communist

\* *New York World-Telegram.*

turned to the Protestant and said feelingly, "Would to God I had known of this purpose and program of the church before I had left it. There might have been a place for me."

President Benes of Czechoslovakia is reported to have said that Communism is making its inroads in Czechoslovakia and may possibly become the dominant party in the future of his country because Communists know what they have, know where they are going, and demonstrate the discipline of sacrifice. Over against this, consider that in the fall of 1945 one read in a press dispatch that at a certain race track near New York City a world record in betting was established when 49,614 persons wagered \$5,016,745 in one afternoon. By mad coincidence at about the very same time the American secretary of the World Council of Churches asked the director of the Church Committee on Overseas Relief and Reconstruction whether the American Protestant churches could possibly raise \$5,000,000 for the Christian relief program in Europe that coming winter. The answer was, "Probably not." One wonders what the Communists thought of this. That the Protestant Church is now well on the way toward raising over 100 million for world relief and reconstruction is encouraging, but the Church Committee director's first reply remains ominously significant.

The Roman Catholic Church has recently confessed its own lag in discipline and sacrificial consecration by calling attention, surprisingly enough, to the advance of non-Catholic groups over Roman Catholicism in the matter of commitment of possessions toward specific spiritual ends. In the *Sunday Visitor*, a leading Roman Catholic paper of wide circulation, one reads:

"At an autumn, 1946, Council held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, it was reported that the Seventh Day Adventist membership throughout the world now totals 576,378. This total mem-

bership is equivalent to about one-third as many Catholics as there are in Chicago; to about one-half as many as there are Catholics in New York, Brooklyn or Boston; to about the number there are in the cities of Los Angeles and San Francisco and St. Louis. Yet these few people—and many of them live in countries where great poverty reigns—contributed towards Missions during the past year the extraordinary sum of \$7,837,868, which represents \$13.60 not per family, but per person. Contributions to the Missions by Catholics of the United States hardly averages \$1 per family, yet the chief purpose of the Church is missionary.

“At a meeting in Philadelphia on October 20, 1946, the Protestant Episcopal Church adopted a 1947 budget of \$3,386,887, 75 per cent of which will be allocated to missionary work. Since the membership in all the branches of the Episcopal Church is less than one-tenth that of the Catholic, the comparable amount of a Catholic budget for missions would be nearly \$25,000,000. Even though they have in recent years contributed better than any ever did in the past for Home and Foreign Missions, the sum total of their mission offerings would hardly exceed \$6,000,000.

“On December 21, newspapers in Indiana carried an item which revealed that the 72,000 members of the Presbyterian Church in the state had contributed \$701,340 to the National Presbyterian Restoration Fund. This contribution was, therefore, on the average, \$10 per member. The national goal for the Presbyterians, who number only some over 2,000,000 is \$27,000,000 or more than \$10 per member. If Catholics contributed to any fund in a like amount the sum total would be \$260,000,000. Catholics never have been asked to make any comparable effort towards any national fund.”

But Protestantism cannot be proud of its stewardship. We know, all too well, even in view of the Roman Catholic comparison, that the evangelical movement falls far behind what even a tithing commitment would be. Shame is upon us especially when we realize that \$1,000,000,000,000 and more is the monetary cost of a global war, not to mention the cost in precious lives and priceless possessions. As

Arthur Hood has written: "Man dreams of what could be done with a trillion dollars and two billion people in terms of co-operation based on good will instead of the tragic human and material waste of war." Christians—all Christians—must surely dream at times what the 650,000,000 of them could do for a better world—a world of peace and brotherhood—a Christian world—if the 650,000,000, or even a half or a quarter or a tenth of them, would give themselves and their possessions in a concerted, organized, sacrificial, courageous, and faithful commitment. Then Communism wouldn't have a chance.

To add more light to the limitations Christians put upon themselves, even though they are confronted with the increasing demand of the world that the church take the lead in a united effort for the building of spiritual foundations for a new world order, remember that in the United States alone 256 separate, distinct, and different church communions are listed and that after thirty-nine years of noble effort the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America has succeeded in co-ordinating only twenty-five of this number into any degree of united endeavor. To state that church federation and union have been progressing slowly is faint praise and meager satisfaction in the face of the rapidity of the unification of the social and political forces in this irrefutably *one* world. True, since 1910 the International Missionary Council has increased in its effectiveness as an international Christian agency so that now it brings together twenty-six national missionary organizations and Christian councils which conduct their work in over 6,000 mission centers in about 125 countries with a combined employed personnel of all kinds of approximately 250,000. The constitutional assembly of the World Council of Churches is to be held in 1948, which will provide a long desired and urgently needed pattern for world Christian

united action. The hope is that the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches may become consolidated in such a way that the world mission of the church may yet make a strong and constant united impact, well organized, with both long-range strategy and day-by-day tactics, before it is too late. Some day, God willing, we shall sing with realism, "Like a mighty army moves the church of God." May that day come soon. Time is running out.

Recently, I visited Hampton Institute, the famous Negro college in Virginia, as one of a group of representatives of the church to share in a religious emphasis week. A short while before we arrived, a Negro couple who had been appointed missionaries to Africa by the foreign missions board of a major denomination came to the Institute for a week-end visit. On Sunday morning the two missionaries decided to go to the only church of their communion in the town of Hampton. It happened to be a white congregation. Upon entering the church, the two Negroes were approached by an usher who suggested that no doubt they had made a mistake and had come to the wrong church. Surely, they would be happier in another church in the city, one of their own people. The missionary replied that he and his wife were of the people of this church, for they were being sent out by the church's mission board for foreign service. The usher called the preacher. The preacher said he was sorry but the officials had recently voted to welcome only white people in that church, so the Negro couple, no matter who they were, would have to leave. And, of course, the Negroes left. And I wonder if God did not leave too. That is, if He was there.

When I stood up to preach as a representative of the Christian church before the student body at Hampton, where practically all of the students and faculty had heard



of the incident in the church not many blocks from their campus—it was being talked about all over the campus—how terribly real was the question that company of young people hurled at me. “The church?” I felt them piercing me, “The church—is God in there?”

The appeal to the church to show whether or not it possesses the power and integrity to change things is being made not only by the younger generation that has fought one war; it is being urgently pressed by those of our time who have come through two wars. The challenge comes from the most unexpected places. Latterly, I have been culling quotations from various non-church sources which in one way or another express the conviction that at this crucial hour our only hope is for the church to be about its business. I have been amazed at the frequency of such an emphasis in all types of literature, including popular books and magazines. Those who claim no official identification with the church as such are now implying with mounting urgency that it is time for the church to fulfil the slogan which was first lifted in 1937 at the Oxford Conference of churchmen: “Let the church be the church!” As typical examples, consider four particularly striking statements, each one peculiarly significant because of both its source and its content:

“An enormous lot depends on the kind of eyes with which we look, and whether we comprehend that right now is perhaps the most urgent Time for Inventory since the birth of Christ. . . . It is you and I who still have the choice of a point of view, and the choice of direction. . . . If we fail spiritually . . . it is hopeless to assume that our world-wide political crisis can be solved, or solved in time to prevent an eventual atomic war. . . . No nation’s people can hereafter hope to save themselves from war without striving to save the entire world” (Leland Stowe in *While Time Remains*).

“Today we are making an historic choice, which, in the

end, will determine the fate of all mankind. By our words and our actions we are deciding irreparably for war or for peace. The problem is not posed by the atomic bomb, nor by the development of new weapons, nor in the elaboration of methods of control. The problem is implicit in the nature of man and in the history of nations. The solution lies in the clearing away of historic cobwebs which cloud and bedevil man's view of life and in taking a fresh view of man's predicament in the modern world. Such a view must confirm the age-old truth that 'we are members one of another!'" (Sumner Welles in a recent public letter).

"The only hope is a magnificent resurrection of spirituality and morality" (Whaley-Eaton Corporation *Weekly Financial Bulletin*).

"In such a moment a people may rise to the greatness of an opportunity, seizing its drama, perfecting its art, exploiting its adventure, mastering the network of relationships which form the very being of the epoch. Or they may collapse before the perplexities confronting them. At such a time it is our business as philosophers, students, and practical men to recreate a vision of the world, including those elements of reverence and order without which society lapses into riot" (Professor Alfred North Whitehead as quoted by Henry R. Luce in an address at Duke University).

There is no need to heap line upon line. The whole matter was powerfully and memorably epitomized at the hour of the Japanese surrender when General MacArthur, from the deck of the *U. S. Missouri* in the Bay of Tokyo, broadcast, for all the world to hear, his strong, experienced, and prophetic judgment that the basic issue which confronts mankind is a theological one. It does make a difference what a man believes. Faith in God is fundamental to brotherhood, justice, peace, and progress. Non-churchmen call for such faith. Church leaders by resolution affirm the necessity of Christian faith. The Commission on a Just and Durable Peace of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, of which John Foster Dulles is chair-

man, states boldly: "The people of the earth now have a new opportunity, under the Providence of God, to bring in an order of brotherhood, freedom, and justice. Such an order is the moral essential to enduring peace. To the creation of this order, the churches of Christ are committed by their origin, their history and practice, and the very nature of their faith." The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs created by the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council, at a meeting in 1946 at Cambridge, England, also under the chairmanship of Mr. Dulles, issued a call to all Christendom in which one finds these unusually incisive and relevant words: "The nations are faced with the necessity of political action of unprecedented gravity. Peace must be achieved. The chaos of war must be overcome. The economic and political life of the world must be reshaped. International law must be established. In what spirit shall this be done? Here the church has a word to say that no one else can say. It does not speak as the representative of any one nation, class, or group, but on behalf of the God who is no respecter of partial interests and is the Judge and Saviour of all. The church knows of a forgiveness which includes but also transcends justice and so makes possible a new beginning where international relations have broken down. To interpret the will of God in relation to the tangled problems of world politics and economics is a formidable task demanding accurate information and prudent judgment as well as spiritual insight. It is an inescapable duty of the church at the present hour to contribute to those who bear responsibility in these fields the aid of Christian perspectives and to remind them of Christian imperatives."

Thus non-churchmen and churchmen demand and affirm, respectively. But that is not enough. It is for Christians, separately and collectively, in the local community

and in the national and international framework of the church to act decisively and without delay. These days one understands the righteous impatience in the writings of St. Paul. When imprisoned in Rome, and looking back to the three years he had spent in Ephesus and thinking of the dormant potentiality of the church in that politically active and commercially busy city of idolatry, the apostle seems almost to cry out as he writes to the church of the Ephesians: "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light. See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

One finds that "awake" as a call to action is used in the Bible some twenty-five times. That may not be too significant on the basis of a mere mechanical count, but both biblical and church history reveal that religious leaders often have been tragically asleep on their jobs when the testing time called for alert wakefulness. Of course, the climax of this "dream symphony" is that in the setting of Gethsemane "he found them sleeping."

Tragedy and comedy being so closely aligned, one may be permitted to insert some delicious tidbits from the diary of Samuel Johnson, whose wasted New Year's resolutions may well illustrate too large a portion of church history:

- "1760. Resolved to rise as early as I can.
- "1761. My purpose is, To regulate my sleep.
- "1764. My purpose is from this time, To rise early.
- "1764. (September) I resolve, to rise early; not later than six, if I can; I hope sooner, but as soon as I can.
- "1765. My resolution, I purpose to rise at eight, because though I shall not yet rise early, it will be much earlier than I now rise, for I often lie till two.
- "1769. I purpose and hope to rise early in the morning, at eight, and by degrees at six.

"1772. I hope to rise by degrees more early in the morning.

"1774. I hope to rise at eight."

[A few years before his death he wrote:]

"I have now spent about fifty-five years in resolving: having from the earliest time almost that I can remember, been forming schemes of a better life. I have done nothing. . . . My life has from my earliest years been wasted in a morning bed."

Yes, both Dr. Samuel Johnson and the church have accomplished a great deal over the years, but how much more might have been done if both had not spent so much time sleeping. The church dare not sleep away its opportunity now. On the one hand, independent movements, such as "Moral Rearmament," believe that they now find God best in their own fellowships and programs, that the church is not awake and has lost its power. On the other hand, Marxism continues to win adherents on the ground that religion is an opiate to the people.

The church must recapture the excitement of God. Surprise and exhilaration are uninhibited in the New Testament "Behold!" "Watch ye!" "Rejoice!" "They were amazed." "They were astonished." "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." "He is beside himself." "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." These records of spiritual vitality point up that climactic announcement: "The same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

A young man returns from the exciting, consuming purpose of war. He is conscious of throbbing power in himself and of the great and terrible potentiality within the world. What of the church for him and others like him? Winston King, returning from the war, wrote: "Certainly, if it is not much more than a church of pleasant

social clubs, the place where 'our gang' goes, whose main concern as an organization is redecoration of the vestry now that that horrible war-which-caused-us-so-many-privations is over, and a place where they hear beautiful sentiments which have nothing at all to do with this present world of grim reality, they will not find it a place they care for, though they might not be able to tell you why in so many words."

At the close of the first post-war year, the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce selected as the nation's ten outstanding young men of the year, a leader in veterans' affairs, an assistant attorney general, a congressman, a prize-fighter, a cartoonist, a physicist, a management engineer, an author, and a sports director of a broadcasting company. Each deserved the honor, but please note that not one young religious leader, *per se*, was chosen. Yet the requirement for selection was that one be between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-six and that he have "made an outstanding success in his field of endeavor and contributed unusually to the general welfare of the American people." It is reported that nominations were invited from 1350 Junior Chambers of Commerce, from newspaper publishers and editors, cartoonists, governors, congressmen, senators, commentators, artists, and other representative persons in American life. Perhaps a similar vote would not have chosen Jesus in his time. But that is hardly to the point here. It is a fair question now whether there is not something wrong with organized religion when a country which has as its motto, "In God We Trust," fails to recognize at least one young leader of the church as being certainly as successful as a young boxer in the prize-fight ring in contributing "unusually to the welfare of the American people."

The church needs to become so excited about God that the United States Chamber of Commerce and its adherents

and counselors will become excited about Him too. It is not the method of the prize-fight ring that we plead for, but we do call for its courage. In talking to a young preacher one day, I urged him to become a fearless crusader. He replied that it was not the prophetic but the priestly function of the ministry for which he had aptitude. There you have, in epitome "the wretchedness and the greatness of the church." There you have what Paul Scherer means when he declares that "the Christian church cannot snub Time in some apocalyptic frenzy for Eternity."

The desperate search for God, in which the church must give clear and certain guidance or it is lost, is being forcefully portrayed also in contemporary drama. The church dare not ignore the tremendous influence of modern drama, both on the stage and on the screen. The church gave birth to drama. It must seek to rediscover why. It must attempt to reclaim the best in drama for the enlightenment and inspiration of the God-seeking masses. My opportunity is limited, but I endeavor to see a few really good plays each year. They help one, in the larger perspective, to understand and interpret more clearly both the aspirations and frustrations of our time. I often recall that at a convocation at Johns Hopkins University years ago Dean Inge declared the next great prophet would be a dramatist.

*No Exit*, by Jean Paul Sartre, which won high honors in France just after the war and was translated from the French by Paul Bowles to be played in the United States, is a terrific presentation of three souls lost in hell. Sartre is the outstanding proponent of the post-war philosophy of Existentialism. *The Iceman Cometh*, by the American playwright Eugene O'Neill, which has made theater history, is the depressing yet fascinating and haunting problem of lost men seeking salvation. *Harvey*, by Margaret Chase, the Pulitzer Prize winner, is a confession of the low estate of

human life, an attempt to escape from reality and a cynical gesture toward humanity's craving for something better. These three star productions, though many of their scenes are revolting and often their lines are inexcusably blasphemous and obscene, interpret vividly the sometimes mad but always sincere search for God. But in each instance the playwright stops short of any affirmation of faith in God or acknowledgement of Christ. Oh, for the ability to write another last act for each of these plays, to lead from modern Existentialism to Christian realism. The church must write new last acts, both for the stage and for life. For it still is true as Shakespeare's Jaques said:

"All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players.  
They have their exits and their entrances;  
And one man in his time plays many parts. . . ."

And it still remains as Thomas Heywood wrote over three hundred years ago:

"The world's a theater, the earth a stage,  
Which God and Nature do with actors fill."

And in the light of Jesus Christ, it is still untrue, as false as the spirit of Macbeth, that

"Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage  
And then is heard no more: it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing."

And, further, let Christian faith continue to insist that Montaigne was wrong in this: "A noble farce, wherein kings, republics and emperors have for so many ages played their parts, and to which the whole vast universe serves for a theater."

The church dare not close its eyes to the fact that people



are crowding to see modern plays with the last acts just as they are. However, it is more than a question of comparative figures. Because the theater has crowds and the church has not, it does not follow that mechanical devices must be thought up merely to fill the churches. One realizes that for the Christian community ever to remain a minority is not to fulfil the purpose of God in Christ. But the answer is not in a hectic rush for numbers in the belief that crowded churches or "large ingatherings" will bring the millennium. One denomination announces proudly it has gained a million new members in a year. Another denomination sets out for a million new members in three years. A prophet speaks: "The cause of true religion is advanced not by churches becoming full of men but by men becoming full of God."

Yes, it is a deeper question than numbers. The matter is one of reality. We are prone to use "reality" loosely, but literally it means "that which is not imagination, fiction or pretense." One of the results of churchmen superficially dealing with reality is the attack by such modern philosophers as F.S.C. Northrop of Yale, wherein he accuses both the Roman Catholic and Protestant clergy of repeating the old Christian doctrines in the supposition "that their statements will take on meaning if they merely repeat them often enough, without going on to develop a theology and an empirically grounded scientific philosophy which gives them content and meaning in terms of present-day knowledge." Professor Northrop claims further that this is "hocus-pocus" and "idolatry" because "they are giving us the symbols without specifying anything for them to symbolize." This unreal handling of religious truth the professor asserts is producing "confusion and skepticism of an arbitrary dogmatism rather than salvation and faith." We cannot brush this aside easily by arguing that philoso-

phy and science have always had this quarrel with the church. A terrifying age of atomic explosion is upon us, and piercing, seeking minds, as well as prostrated minds, bodies, and souls are all about us demanding facts that will save now as well as eternally. This requires that the church urgently re-examine its content and procedure in evangelism and religious education and that with concern and passion and realism there be preached God *in Christ* "reconciling the world unto himself." The Existentialists dodge Jesus Christ. They are afraid to let him in. Their modern treatises and dramas shy away from him. They are haunted by his personality, yet they dread to face his Face. Their pathway is strewn with crosses, yet they will not look up to his Cross. The one and only hope of unveiling the reality of God to this lost world is for the church to concentrate completely upon: "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." For the salvation of mankind, O church of God, by word and *by deed* let there be the preaching of the Cross, even though that may still be "to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness." Therein alone is the supreme and sufficient evidence that God *is* there!

One is impressed that the Roman Catholic Church is keenly aware of this modern search for reality and the related danger in the present development and spread of Existentialism, particularly in Europe. Barrett McGurn, writing from Rome during the winter of 1947, reports that "the importance which the Vatican, as custodián of one of the world's oldest creeds, attaches to the gloomy, young post-war philosophy of Existentialism was revealed today when it was announced that the Catholic Church's most important group for the study of religion and philosophy will conduct a public examination of Existentialism in Rome during Easter week." Emphasis should be given to the

"public examination" to be conducted. This is no time for religious "retreats." Techniques must be found by Protestants, as well as by Roman Catholics, for not merely stimulating the minds of the intelligentsia and appraising the needs of the masses by preachments, but, rather, for vigorous and able preaching; not merely for academic teaching of the select few but, also, for "town-hall" mind-to-mind presentations and "give-and-take" thorough-going forum discussions, in order to meet the people where they are. Instead of building overawing church buildings, let the churchmen release their wealth to buy large segments of radio time and produce vital Christian plays and moving pictures which will speak and portray realistically, to people where they are and as they are, the Truth which will make men free. Christians need have no fear of any attack by modern pseudo-realists if only the church will meet the attack with a counter-attack by the true realism which is in Jesus Christ.

The teachings of Jesus are the most realistic in history. The living of Jesus was such sheer realism that it disturbed the churchmen of his day as well as the masses. Jesus disturbed the churchmen so violently that they succeeded in killing him. But they did not get rid of him. He lives and disturbs and warns the church today that it must live nearer to, and more closely with, the people. For when we lament that the world is passing by the church and fear that the church is losing spiritual vitality, maybe we should listen again to this: "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment." Furthermore, there is something alarmingly pertinent in what Jesus had

to say to certain churchmen of his time, "The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you," and, even more to the point, "Ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in."

For many a New Year's Eve I have been either a preacher or a member of the congregation at a "watch-night" service. This past New Year's Eve, however, because of certain peculiar circumstances, I found myself at midnight on Times Square in the heart of New York. There were such crowds that all traffic was stopped. The police seemed everywhere. Fire apparatus and an ambulance stood by for any emergency. There were little disorder and surprisingly little drunkenness. As the hour approached midnight all eyes turned toward the time ball on top of the *New York Times* building. When the great ball dropped and the tremendous electric sign below flashed "It's now nineteen forty-seven!" horns and whistles blew, sirens sounded, people cheered. Everyone shouted, "Happy New Year!" Tears came to my eyes. A lump was in my throat. I found myself praying. I gripped the hand of my young son standing by me and wished for him and prayed for him a Happy New Year. I prayed for his mother and brother and sister and friends. I prayed for the wildly hoping people about us. I prayed for the teeming, vast sea of humanity, the throng in which my son and I found ourselves being an infinitesimal part. I worshiped at that midnight hour—there in the midst of the tumult of life. God seemed very near. I felt Him trying to answer humanity's cry. I heard, as I believe Isaiah heard, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God." I believe I saw Jesus again weeping over Jerusalem. I walked away somewhat saddened and burdened and yet, paradoxically, uplifted and resolute and grateful and strangely close to God.

I have not always felt that way when in church at New Year midnights. Why? And why were not more people in church that night?

Why? Well, in part, the answer is: The doors of the church must be closer to the sidewalks. The preaching of the church must go deeper. The sacrifice of the church must be more Christlike. The worship of the church must mean more actual commitment. The life of the church must re-discover a sense of mission. The ministry of the church must give more upholding comfort. The experience of the church must be more re-creative. The fellowship of the church must be more inclusive. The objectives of the church must be bolder and clearer. The branches of the church must be brought into more dynamic unity. The windows of the church must be opened wider. The sin of the world must walk more freely down church aisles. The pain of mankind must be more evident on church altars. Until such things shall be, this will be the verdict: "There is no world-wide and august rallying place for the many who are deeply troubled by the way in which the currents of life are hurrying at a pace which accelerates with the passing of these mechanically inventive years towards the thunder of the black cataracts of death."\*

A deputation sent to China to study the post-war Christian mission returned to report, among many encouraging things, the discouraging fact that most Christian leaders in China were not active in the church. The suggestion was made that specially trained missionaries be sent to win these leaders to an appreciation of, and leadership in, the church. As important as this may be, there is a previous question. Ought not missionaries and Chinese Christian leaders examine the church, free it from its warped Western structure, and, with spiritual genius compatible with

\* *And Another Thing*, by Howard Spring. Harper and Brothers.

the Orient, create a new structure of organization and program and develop a content which shall meet the need and desire of both the intelligentsia and the masses?

A young Christian of India once told me, with strong conviction, that he believed the church was doomed if it continued its policy and practice of limiting corporate worship to an hour near noon on Sunday, sometimes an hour on Sunday evening, and less often an hour on some weekday evening. He hoped earnestly the day would come when a Christian "ashram" would be the accepted and prevailing church worship fellowship, when in America, India and other lands Christians would live together for a day or more, weekly or monthly, in varied disciplines of worship. The practicalities of this are difficult but they are not insurmountable. I wish he would lead the way. When will we American Christians learn that an hour of restrained worship now and then is not sufficient to bring a company of church people to an adequate understanding of God in Christ or into a vital and productive Christian experience? In addition to the cultivation of one's own soul, think what Christian "ashrams" would mean in determining principles and demonstrating solutions with regard to inter-class, interracial and international relationships, if the "ashrams" were as representative as the church should be.

There was a popular play during the latter part of the war, entitled *Foxhole in the Parlor*. It told the story of a young soldier on leave who had come to find the worst "foxhole" of all in his own parlor. That is, he discovered the deeper conflict determining the future of the world among the folks in his own home town. The stage scene is set so as to show you both the soldier's bedroom and the family's living-room simultaneously, one-half of the stage given to the former, the other half to the latter. At one point in the play the young G.I. can be seen pounding away on a

typewriter in his bedroom, trying to put down the thoughts which had so sorely troubled him since returning from the front. He is a serious lad. His seriousness concerns his family so that they frankly admit they do not understand him. They fear that he has become psychopathic. The young fellow's father, mother, and sister are seen in the living-room, or parlor, with some visiting town folk, chatting aimlessly about the petty problems of their social whirl. An elderly man enters. He is an old friend who turns out to be a United States senator en route to the United Nations Conference in San Francisco. After a while, the boy recognizes the senator's voice, pauses in a brooding silence, and then abruptly enters the living-room, startling everyone with this greeting: "Senator, when you go to the United Nations Conference, be sure to leave a vacant chair so that God will have a place to come in and sit down." The actors laughed. But the audience did not. Yes, when the players on the stage laughed at the suggestion of God sitting in on the United Nations Conference, not one person in that large cosmopolitan audience laughed, giggled or tittered. The playwright had missed the mark. He thought he knew life, but he did not. He was not sufficiently aware of the deep longing in human hearts. Men and women are not laughing at the thought of God in this bewildered and betrayed world. A keener mind and more understanding spirit than the playwright, a preacher of our times, has sensed it: "To those who feel compassion for mankind in its confusions and struggles, and to all who experience failure and frustration, the problem of anchoring authority is the ultimate of first-line importance."

"O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!"

## The Call of Human Suffering

THERE IS A POIGNANT little story in the book, *Rebuilding Our World*, by Dean Sperry of Harvard. The good dean tells us that the most profound word he has read during the past years was written by a schoolboy on an examination paper. The lad was faced with a crisis. The questions before him were most disturbing. After long meditation, the perplexed youngster put down one sentence on the paper and then handed it in. This is what he wrote: "It is very difficult to express to other people ideas which one does not have himself."

The schoolboy wrote more wisely than he knew. He gives much needed counsel to our day. His admission, unfortunately, might well be written across a surprising number of articles and books which have been produced recently. It could be heard after many broadcasts. And (God forgive us!) too many sermons also carry this trademark.

Our testing times have forced thoughtful, and now fearful, men to admit the necessity of a global philosophy. And more, that any comprehensive world view is shallow and meaningless unless it is interpreted with insight and understanding deeper and greater than man's wisdom provides. By this time even the superficial are beginning to see that the ideas of man cannot be trusted except they emanate from basic principles and guiding procedures "which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the



will of man, but of God." Or, to put it in the manner of a modern prophet, "No longer dare we substitute our own experiments for the appalling certainties of Almighty God."

Consider an incident in the narrative of the Gospel according to St. Luke. Remember that here was a man named John. He was imprisoned and he was suffering. There is amazing relevancy to our present situation in this record. John, in his suffering, called to him two of his disciples and sent them to Jesus, saying, "Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?" Immediately the challenge is met. "In that same hour, he cured many of their infirmities and plagues and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight." And then Jesus sent this answer to him who was suffering: "Tell John what things ye have seen and heard: how the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached."

Keep before you amid world misery such revelation of truth. The call of human suffering comes today to him who seeks to follow Christ as it once came to Christ himself: "Are you the one who will come and heal this suffering world or should we look for another?" Let us not be blind to this inescapable fact. If the church of Christ does not meet positively the issue of suffering humanity, others will. An atheistic Communism claims to have the answer. Fascism, Nazism, and rampant militarism are not dead. They threaten to emerge in this post-war era, just as they evolved in the years following the First World War and were made viable because of suffering. The precarious issue is before us. The people are not only in pain. They are expectant and in danger. The problem is far deeper than the benevolent or philanthropic gestures by the "haves" toward the "have-nots." The most creative periods in human history have been those of great tribulation. Take it in the

life of the individual, in the growth of nations, or in the so-called "dark ages" of history—from out of the abyss of human suffering man has arisen into one or another expression of creativity. Let not anyone believe that the suffering in Europe and Asia will mean the destruction of the human race. There is creative power latent within this torment. We dare not be callous or indifferent. Self-interest alone, even "enlightened," summons disaster. Human suffering is calling and it will have an answer. It demands of the church: "Art thou he that cometh or look we for another?"

There are at least three ways to deal with the call of the suffering. The first is to run away from it. Cases of such escapism are scattered every day on the pages of the press. The news of those who kill themselves is almost too familiar to make the headlines. In reports from emissaries to Europe we are told that it has become commonplace to find dangling from lampposts at dawn the bodies of those who have hung themselves during the night. Dispatches from China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and our own press furnish further suicidal evidence. When I was in San Francisco, I found the suicides were being counted. Fifty-seven people had jumped off the Golden Gate Bridge. That is one way to answer the call.

There is also another way. Some years ago I heard a story which lately has returned in vivid remembrance. It was of a man who had worked long years under exceedingly racking circumstances. He had suffered under unfair labor conditions. He was sickly, and his large family was in continual need. Then came a miracle. He inherited a lot of money. He bought a home in a lovely suburb. He opened an office in the city in order to handle his investments. Now a wealthy tycoon the former workman joined the privileged ranks of the suburban commuters. A

friend who traveled with him daily on the train noticed that each day when they reached a certain point on the journey the financier pulled down the window shade. As the train moved on, he put it up again. It happened rain or shine.

One day at the railroad station, the second man said to the first, "Forgive me for asking, but why do you pull down the shade each day, and then, quite regularly, put it up again?"

"Watch today and I'll tell you," was the reply.

As they rode along, the man who had inherited the money exclaimed suddenly, "Do you see that building?" Then he pulled down the shade. A few moments later he put up the shade. They had passed the building.

"What's it all about?" pressed the second man.

"It means that for years I worked under terrific conditions back there. Those were my suffering years. I am haunted by them day and night. So much so that now I pull down the shade as I reach the place where I can see that building. I don't want to look at it. The sight of it is too terrible."

"But, back there men and women are still suffering. Some of them were your comrades. Why don't you do something about it?"

"What can I do?"

"I don't know all you might do, but I know one thing you can do, *you can leave up the shade!*"

To look unwaveringly in the direction from which the plea of the suffering comes and to respond with courage and sacrifice to that desperate appeal for help from almost every part of the world are an obligation of first order upon the Christian church. We may attempt to dodge the issue and be busy with many other valid duties and opportunities, but the most impelling imperative of the hour for

those who consider themselves Christians is to pay extensive and intensive heed to the universal call of human suffering. We dare not pull down the shade. When we do, we cover up the Cross. In this there is threatened oblivion for the church in our time. Do not let us fool ourselves. The permanence of the kingdom of God does not depend on the ecclesiastical organization which we have inherited. If the church dares to pull down the shade, some other God-given fellowship with bold vision and brave compassion will win this world.

There is, however, a more excellent way. It is that which God has revealed in Jesus Christ. Here are the determinative questions: What is the deepest significance of the world mission of the church at this hour? What is the fundamental meaningfulness of the restoration effort which is stirring within the life of the church of our own and other lands? Is it not that the church hears and is attempting to answer in a Christlike way this question: Have you the power to heal and lift this world from its tragedy, or must mankind look for another? The historic purpose of the world mission of the church—the sending forth of healers in the name of Christ to the ends of the earth—is today a clear and hopeful priority.

The Christian mission, as it endeavors to face and answer humanity's suffering, hears, first, the call from the starving, the wounded, the destitute. Never in the history of the world have physical pain and deterioration been so widespread. I invite you to my office at any time to see the accumulating evidence in cables and letters telling of the pitiful men, women, and children who look to the church in America for relief. Or listen to voices out of Europe and Asia as they relate stories of human need and appeal beyond the average American's comprehension. Who will ever be able to tabulate what bombs have destroyed?

Perhaps no documentation of the physical need of a people was ever more drastic or startling than the report, "German Agriculture and Food Requirements," issued February 28, 1947, by former President Herbert Hoover, being Report No. 1 of the Economic Mission to Germany and Austria undertaken at the request of President Truman. This lengthy and comprehensive statement, which urges the American government to help substantially in the feeding of Germany's people, contains a paragraph obviously colored in exquisite and tragic irony with a touch of Mr. Hoover's Quaker faith:

"But those who believe in vengeance and the punishment of a great mass of Germans not concerned in the Nazi conspiracy can now have no misgivings, for all of them—in food, warmth and shelter—have been sunk to the lowest level known in a hundred years of Western history."

Mr. Hoover's closing paragraph is a magnificent masterpiece in epitome which America and the American church, in particular, need to ponder over for a long, long time: "After all, our flag flies over these people. That flag means something besides military power."

A chaplain knelt by a soldier after the devastating terror of battle. From his pocket the chaplain took a New Testament. "Soldier, let me read you a few words," he whispered. The lad responded weakly, "I'm cold." The chaplain took off his coat. He wrapped it around the boy, "Now, please let me read you from this Book." The soldier sobbed, "My head hurts." The chaplain removed his jacket. Gently, he put it under the youngster's head. "Do let me read this to you," he pleaded. Came the reply, "I'm hungry." From his meager K-rations the chaplain took food and shared. Again the plea, "Now let me read to you from this Book, won't you?" "I'm thirsty." From an almost empty canteen the chaplain gave his last drop of water. "Now, boy,"—

and the chaplain bent closer—"won't you let me read to you from this Book?" "Sir," and the voice was quieted but stronger, "if there is anything in that Book which made you do what you just did for me, yes, yes, do read. I'll listen."

That is not a mere sentimental tale. Preach? Declare that the world must be saved, that it is the Christian faith which will make men free? Then come, church of Christ, here point your mission: answer first the call of human suffer-

Not only do the bodies of the sufferers cry to us. Their tortured minds are calling. Greater is the agony of mind than the pain of body. If there is peace of mind, one can stand physical punishment. Try to imagine yourself as one of the unnumbered multitudes of men and women who have been driven from their spiritual foundations and are wandering aimlessly, their minds frantically seeking to trust an uninhibited comfort, to find sure values, to discover some truth on which to build with certainty. What terrific obligation there is upon the immediate mission of the church! It is not a spiritual revival, a moral crusade, a scientific analysis, or a political diagnosis that is needed primarily and fundamentally. It is revelation. To unveil and interpret to the suffering mind of man the Truth that is Jesus Christ is to answer the most agonizing and urgent call. Not to know God—that is hell.

Elsewhere I have told of an incident in Japan when I was there before the war, speaking one day at the Women's Christian College in Tokyo.\* It bears repeating because of a sequel. For an interpreter I had a Japanese woman who, after graduating from Wellesley, had become the professor of Bible and English literature at the Tokyo College. When I thanked the charming lady for her able assistance, she remarked, "I shall be with you tomorrow. We shall be at the high school which your church helped place in

\* *The Church Must Win*, by the author. Fleming H. Revell Company.

Tokyo." The next day, after the school luncheon, my new Japanese friend suggested that she show me around the grounds and buildings. When we were almost through our visit, we paused at the door of the high school assembly hall. "This brings back memories," my companion reminisced. "With 'pigtales' hanging down my back, many years ago, I came from the hills and sat in this room for the first time. Then I thought this was the largest room in all the world. My seat was right there." She pointed to a near-by chair. "The room was in great hubbub that first day. A man stood up on the platform and everyone was still. The man closed his eyes. He began to talk to someone who wasn't there. I thought that was such a strange thing to see a man with his eyes closed, talking to someone who wasn't there. It made me almost afraid.

"That night those years ago," she continued, "a missionary stopped by my dormitory bed and asked how I had gotten along my first day in school. 'Oh, all right,' I replied, 'but tell me, what was that man doing in the assembly hall, standing with his eyes closed, talking to someone who wasn't there? I've been troubled about him.' Instantly and convincingly the missionary said to me, 'But, my dear, *Someone was there!*'"

Then looking up into my face, tears in her eyes, the Japanese woman said, "Good friend, that night as the missionary spoke to me of the meaning of prayer, of the reality of God and of the presence of Jesus Christ, I became a Christian. Christ came into my heart. He has been with me ever since."

Lately, I have been thinking anew of my Japanese friend and interpreter. I have been wondering, as bombs fell over Japan, China, the Philippines, and Europe, and also during the bewildering aftermath, if she was driven again into a confused and fearful state of mind. Has she been watching

other men with their eyes closed, crying out? Has she been asking once more if they were calling to someone who wasn't there?

Do you not see what restoration means in this time of destruction? It is in our revealing the love of God in Jesus Christ that we give adequate answer to the call of human suffering—convincing the world that Someone is really there.

But, further still, we are not only sufferers together because of the pain in our bodies and the torture of our minds—there are stains, such terrible stains on our souls.

I was taught a lesson, while in South America, which applies not only to that continent but to you and to me and to all the world. One evening I entered a beautiful Protestant church. Almost four hundred persons were at a prayer meeting. The next morning, on the veranda of the missionary's home, the staff members of the church met for conference. The last person to arrive was an attractive, dark-skinned woman, dressed in a nurse's garb. The following day, while I was waiting at the airport, and discussing the personnel of the conference group of the day before, a friend asked, "Did you notice the striking looking woman who came late yesterday?" "Yes," I answered. "They tell me she is the social welfare worker of the church, a tower of spiritual strength." "She certainly is. Do you know her story?" I did not. And this is what I was told:

Just a few years before, this social welfare worker was a notorious prostitute. Loitering one night on a street corner, she saw a funeral procession pass by. In it were men and women singing songs of faith and victory. She was amazed. She had known only fear and horror in the presence of death. But these people were singing as they marched along with a coffin. Fascinated, she followed them into a



church. Well, the story is obvious. Sitting there in the rear of the sanctuary, someone spoke to her. She asked questions. New friends were made. Shortly afterwards she became a Christian—such a dynamic Christian that before long she was offered a position on the staff of the church.

"I'll take your offer," she told the church leaders, "but I must do something else first." In a day or so she returned, saying, "I have just finished the hardest thing I ever had to do." And then came this startling testimony: "I have called on every man with whom I lived in past months. Holding before me a New Testament, with much inner hesitancy but with what boldness I could muster, to each of these men, I declared, 'Listen! I want you to know I have found Power here which has made me new.'" The church leaders were silent. "But that is not the greatest part of my story," she continued, "Here is the wonderful thing. As I stood before each one of those men and told of the healing, redeeming power of Jesus Christ—not one man laughed!"

No one laughed! Again there comes evidence that today a real faith in God is no laughing matter. Our suffering humanity which has prostituted its ideals and stained its soul is giving cogent and irrefutable testimony to that.

A group of leaders of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, well aware that certain modern minds challenge the church's diagnosis when the church makes general statements on world suffering and the necessity for Christian healing, made a scientific analysis of the present world sickness, combining it with a spiritual inventory. To describe a patient's condition in general terms is not sufficient to gain the confidence and the required action on the part of the patient and his family. Consequently, in the manner of proficient physicians, these missionary statesmen took the following scientific as well as spiritual look at the facts and underlying causes of the world sickness:

*Famine (or near-famine: "sub-subsistence") conditions.* China, Japan, India, Central, Southern and Eastern Europe; Eastern Africa, many parts of Latin America.

*Depression areas as to health conditions.* Practically all Asia, the Island World, Africa, much of Latin America, Europe, the tropical areas generally—with special recognition of the prevalence of malaria, tuberculosis, etc.

*Agricultural primitiveness,* with consequent meager output and low standard of living. Most of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Island World; much of Europe, and parts of U.S.A.

*Overpopulation,* increasing and with no prospect of controls, neutralizing gains from improved agriculture. India, Java, China, certain areas of Africa, Puerto Ricó, Barbados, etc.

*Depression areas as to educational facilities, standards and conditions,* including mass illiteracy. Practically all of Asia (except Japan) much of the Island World, Africa, much of Latin America, and parts of Europe (because of both pre-war low standards and post-war educational breakdown).

*Constantly increasing secularism,* the trend toward trying to solve all problems without religious reference or sanctions. Universally present.

*Political lag and immaturity.* Most of the colonial areas of the world, China, Korea, U.S.S.R., etc.

*Exploitation of backward groups.* Portuguese East Africa, Angola, mines and farms of South Africa, and measurably in certain other sections of colonial Africa, India (Untouchables), Indian groups of Latin America—not always by whites cf. India, Liberia, Ethiopia.

*Political dictatorships.* Spain, Portugal, Latin America in general, U.S.S.R.

*Nationalism.* Unimaginative and selfish insistence on an

immediate preferred position for one's nation and fellow countrymen, regardless of effect on other nations, or long-range effects on one's own nation. In varying degrees practically everywhere.

*Lack of common world ethos*, no commonly accepted greatest common ethical denominator, or common ethical frame of reference, either individual or national.

*Racial (or racial-political) tensions*. Palestine (Jew, Arabs, and British); South Africa (Whites-East Indians; Whites-Bantus); U.S.A. (Whites, Negroes, Japanese, and Christians-Jews).

*Homelessness (due to war)*. Millions of people physically uprooted in Japan, Korea, China, the Philippines, Malaya, Indonesia, Burma, much of continental Europe, (including Western Russia), Great Britain, and of spiritually uprooted people in the United States.

*Revolutions or near revolutions*. India, Indonesia, China, Latin America, Iran, Palestine, etc.

*Mass fear, cynicism, and/or desperation and despair*. The incidence of this condition varies, the worst spots being where war's destruction has included the basic social and economic order of an area as well as many of the lesser facilities for living.

*Reciprocal overarching present fears and prospective challenges*. On one side, fear of Russia's thrust eastward and southward in Asia, westward and southward in Europe, with infiltrating processes reaching out to the rest of the world and with the possibility that practically all the people of Eurasia may come to be under Sovietized régimes; and, on the other, fear of Anglo-American domination (largely economic in the case of the U.S.A., but cf. U.S.A. proposed trusteeship agreement for the Pacific Islands) both *vis-à-vis* the U.S.S.R. and *vis-à-vis* Latin America.

*Power politics*, including even distortion and misrepre-

sentation as habitual public policy, rather than a search for social, economic, and political justice. South Africa in relation to Southwest Africa, the controversies over Trieste, Italian colonies, and the Dardanelles, the strategic position of the U.S.A. in the Pacific; the U.S.S.R., in Dairen and Port Arthur, etc.

*Acute religious tensions.* India (Hindu-Moslem), South-eastern Europe (Roman Catholic-Eastern Orthodox Churches), Canada (Roman-Protestant), parts of Latin America (Roman-Protestant), U.S.A. (Roman-Protestant and Christian-Jewish), Near East (Moslem-Christian).

*Inflexible rigidity in religious organizations and formulae.* Within the Christian groups: all Europe, North and South America, and in Asia and Africa where Christianity has taken root. Among non-Christian religions: wherever Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, or Shintoism is supreme, or where the pagan cults of Animism reign unchallenged.

*Limited or little religious liberty.* Portugal and Portuguese African colonies; Southern, Central and Eastern Europe, Near East (except parts of North Africa), Afghanistan.

*Divisive sectarianism among Protestant Christians.* U.S.A., South Africa, and other mission fields. While there is a trend toward reunion among the older and more established groups, the processes of fission continue among the newer groups and also within established groups because of resistance to reuniting trends.

*Failure in Christian churches to "maintain the spiritual glow."* Tends to be true of "second-generation Christians" everywhere. Intellectual and ethical comprehension of Christianity seems to dull the edge of emotional enthusiasm and spiritual contagion, so that "better informed" Christians with more sensitive ethical insights are often less effective in evangelism.

Read the above diagnosis with any degree of Christian insight and one cannot escape the conclusion and concern that each ailment designated, though scientifically considered, has a spiritual base. Moreover, each element has within it a human situation composed of people who, by the nature of these ailments, daily and hourly suffer in body and mind and soul. The toll of war is deep and intense in its painful and far-reaching effects in the body politic and in the involvements of all human relationships. The suffering are calling. Both consciously and unconsciously, a sick world calls to the church not only to render "first aid" on the surface of things, important as that may be, but also to operate with deep incision on the causes of human impotency, conflict, confusion and need, and thus give permanent healing to the nations.

When, after the war, Martin Niemoeller visited the United States under the auspices of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, his major address was given at a large mass meeting in a church in Seattle, where the Federal Council was holding its biennial meeting. The church was packed to the doors. The people were eager to hear this sufferer. After the meeting a friend of mine overheard two men discussing Pastor Niemoeller's address. Said one to the other, with a tone of cynical disappointment, "Eight years in a concentration camp and all he could talk about was Jesus Christ." What a commentary! Did not that naïve church attendant know that today suffering humanity talks primarily of Christ and calls to his church?

I first met Francis B. Sayre, now a United States delegate to the United Nations, when he was the High Commissioner to the Philippines. Vividly I recall my visit in his office in Manila just before the Japanese invasion, when neither of us suspected that tragedy was so imminent. Since

that time Mr. Sayre has seen much suffering, first as he escaped tortuously to America and later when he took up the assignment as Special Assistant to the Secretary of State, with responsibility for investigation and co-ordination in the field of relief and reconstruction. Recently Mr. Sayre has written out of his knowledge and experience of the suffering: "During the past two years I have traveled up and down the world visiting the destitute people of many countries. Never in all my life have I seen such deep-seated misery, such suffering, such illimitable woe. . . . The only possible foundations for stable institutions or nations or civilizations are the fundamentals taught by Jesus Christ—the inescapable power of a ruling God, the ultimately conquering force of love, the superlative and transcending value of human personality. Puny man cannot change the tremendous and eternal fact that this is God's world."

Elsie Thomas Culver of the Church World Service staff has seen suffering too. And that others do not see it and do something about it gave her the sensitiveness of insight to uncover the brutality of much of our American scene in a dramatic and forceful way. Because this vivid description from her pen constitutes a call of the suffering which must break through the hard shell of American indifference to the conscience of American decency as well as to the soul of the American church, I present it here:

"A recent issue of *Life* magazine carried a story of a young woman's dream—what a glorious time she had "naked with a checkbook" in one of New York's exclusive stores where, for a paltry \$20,400 she got herself up in quite dazzling fashion.

"I, too, have an oft-recurring dream of nakedness which needs clothing, but my dream is more of a nightmare. I am back again in a children's home in the north of Holland, which I visited one cold, wintry day last November. My nostrils cringe at the odor of the musty gruel that is the children's midday meal, and I see them dressed in their scanty little garments,

filing into the dining room. Some have no shoes at all and their feet are red and raw from the cold floors, for there is no heat in the old building, and only thin isinglass for windows. Others have wooden soles tied to the bottom of their feet by string. Bits of paper are tucked in to protect their ankles where the strings have cut into them and left them raw and bleeding.

"I visit the girls' dormitory, where some of the girls are having their lunch in bed because they have loaned their clothes to a friend who is washing hers.

"In another part of the building the littlest ones are being put down for their naps without benefit of nightclothes. They sleep two to a rough bunk-bed—one head at each end of the bed, on burlap, straw-stuffed mattresses. There is one little fellow, his scrawny body wracked with spasms of coughing, and with a single garment—a little knit sweater sent from America—between him and utter nakedness. I think that surely that child must be dead by now, and that another is wearing the sweater. One cannot stand on sentiment, for the living need garments worse than the dead.

"Nor are these the only children who haunt my dreams. They pass before me in a crowding throng, with outstretched hands and pleading eyes—the children of France, of Czechoslovakia, of Germany. They are the children I talked to as they played listlessly in the rubble-piled streets, or chased the rats away from the baby's bed in the makeshift shelter they called home, or waited outside the soldiers' mess hall for bits of food.

"\$20,400—which is what our friend pictured in *Life* is worth as she stands, on the hoof—would buy:

"20 tons of dried milk—each pound makes 18 to 20 cups. (There is another dream remembering a little dead baby, in Czechoslovakia, who just hadn't been able to survive on one-sixth of a liter of milk a day.)

"Or \$20,400 would buy 13,000 pairs of shoes for children who cannot leave their homes this winter because they have no footwear.

"Or, perhaps best of all, it would send 204,000 pounds of donated clothing overseas.

"Anyone interested in clearing his conscience can send a check designated for overseas relief to the church."

Three most devastating yet revealing questions were put recently by Archibald MacLeish, which Christians, particularly, need to ponder: "Why, having won the greatest and most brilliant victory of human record, do we feel no sense of triumph? Why, having dictated to our enemies the terms of a most abject surrender, do we lack the sense of security? Why, having joined with the nations which want peace in a great and potentially powerful world organization for the maintenance of the peace, do we have so little sense of peace?" It would be interesting to conduct a political forum on these questions. There would be many different and conflicting answers. I do believe, however, that if these questions were discussed at a church forum, by the very nature of the painful and guilty conscience at the heart of the church today the answer to each would be: because of human suffering. So long as the war-cursed millions continue to wander homelessly, freeze pitifully, starve horribly, and in body, mind, and spirit live tragically in disease and fear, there will not be a sense of triumph, or a sense of security, or a sense of peace for any people of any nation on this earth. The requirement of the church's responsibility and opportunity is, first, to answer the call of suffering humanity with acts of love and mercy through its channels of service across the world, and, secondly, to deal with basic causes by teaching and demonstrating Christian social principles. Thus the church is able to break through the prohibitions and inhibitions on citizens of one country who desire to reach the needs of citizens of other lands. This is made clear by Professor John Bennett in his observation that by Christian faith and ethics in action in a suffering and entangled world, where political action is often indifferent to, or causes more, suffering, there "is the attempt to counteract some of the consequences of what we must do as citizens or in some official capacity by action of another kind."



We are entangled so viciously in world problems that as citizens who may passionately desire to relieve suffering we must, for the most part, remain impotent before political processes which increase suffering. UNRRA fails and we can do little about it. Jews continue to be herded as beasts and beaten as animals and we can do little more than stand on the side lines and listen to the sufferers cry and watch politicians fight it out. And, most terrifying of all, in dealing with the enemies of society who have caused such terrible world agony, in bringing them to justice and in attempting to create order, we are in danger of falling victim to the very attitudes and the very processes by which our former enemies caused such diabolical suffering. Reinhold Niebuhr, in *Christianity and Crisis*, puts it dramatically in a dire warning and much needed lesson:

"The French Catholic philosopher Maritain, tells the story of a group of French underground fighters catching a Gestapo agent who had made it a practice to torture prisoners by tearing out their fingernails. The Frenchmen proceeded to repay the Gestapo agent in kind until one member of the group was overcome by a form of hysterical revulsion. With a cry he cut the rope which held the Gestapo criminal, lectured his comrades on the danger of becoming a Nazi in the procedure of avenging Nazi crime, and set the criminal free. Something like that cry of revulsion will have to pass through the victorious world. It need not be hysterical and the prisoner need not be set free. But the danger of becoming infected with the evil which we seek to eradicate must be more fully recognized."

It is the holy privilege and solemn duty of the Christian church, by its nature, content, and organization, to be about "action of another kind." By the grace of God, in the development of the ecumenical movement, in the growth and present status of the world Christian church, functioning in every land either through the World Council of Churches or the International Missionary Council, the

Christian churchman is able to reach out and touch, in Christ's name and with his healing power, a sufferer anywhere. Contemporary history is pregnant with great evidence of the healing ministry of the church through the consecrated living of individual Christians. Some day there will be communities of grateful persons who once having suffered as displaced persons will pay homage to the quiet but potent service rendered, without trumpets, fanfare, or headline publicity, by those who believed and practiced "even as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

And the comfort of the "mystery of the gospel" extends not only to friend but also to foe. For "not as the world giveth, give I unto you" is not only scriptural beauty, it is a present-day fact. As difficult as it is for a world of hard facts to comprehend, there is "the peace of God which passeth understanding." Servants of the Christ have emerged from imprisonment and internment, and as released captives, without hesitation or delay, have set about ministering to the physical and spiritual needs of those who had held them so long in torturous captivity. Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Japanese, German, British, American, and other Christians have turned to relieve the suffering of those who caused them to suffer. The World Council of Churches in Geneva received this request from its Dutch representatives, "We, the Protestants of Holland, request the World Council to divert a promised shipload of grain from us to our starving brethren in Germany. We grew a surplus of green vegetables in Holland but were forbidden by our government to send the surplus to Germany. As Christians we cannot rest under this condition; hence our request that the grain, which we ourselves need, be sent to those brethren, who have greater need." The Christian religion not only has demonstrated its achievement in being uncon-

querable during war, it has revealed a far greater and superhuman achievement by blessing "them that curse you," by doing good "to them that hate you," and by praying "for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

From out of innumerable and inspiring other examples which could be cited, I choose but one, one that is so miraculously Christian that when it was discovered it even made the public press. It is the story of Father Roth of Dachau. Leo Roth is a forty-two-year-old Catholic priest of the Dominican Order. He is a German who refused to join the German army and consequently spent two years as an inmate in the dreadful concentration camp at Dachau. Often he was at the point of death as the result of inhuman suffering. Constantly he was an eyewitness to brutality and bestiality, once watching two of his fellow priests beaten to death.

When the American troops freed the pitiful crowd of prisoners at Dachau, Father Roth remained. Though he had known such extreme suffering, yet he decided there was no more needful ministry to render than to serve his former captors who would now themselves be the sufferers. It is reported in an Associated Press dispatch that on learning this the American commanders "shook their heads in wonderment." Said Father Roth in a later interview: "It was very difficult at first to forget everything here. But Christ taught us to turn the other cheek and I felt I was needed here." A recent visitor to the priest of Dachau has reported: "Today he has a congregation of almost seven thousand—many times greater than his first flock of about one hundred and seventy. Few clerics have ever seen a congregation like Father Roth's. These men have done about everything in the Book of Cruelty, and some have added new chapters of their own. But he has them going to church fairly regularly now, and he hears about a thou-

sand confessions a week. His day is long, and when he is finished at night the rest of the camp is usually long since darkened."

Hugh Bousman was and is a Protestant missionary to the Philippines. The Japanese interned him and his family. They suffered much. After his release, the family returned to the United States. Bousman remained in Manila. He immediately resumed his former duties as preacher of the Ellinwood Church. The services became crowded with both Filipinos and G.I.'s. As a sufferer, he spoke with authority to fellow sufferers. A lieutenant in the WACS, about to give up a lonely struggle with herself after months of mental and spiritual torment, landed from China in Manila one Sunday morning. Aimlessly and hopelessly wandering through the rubble, she heard singing. Surprised to see a church building standing amid such wanton destruction, she went in to satisfy her curiosity. She found satisfaction for her soul. Hugh Bousman was preaching. Later the WAC wrote her American bishop—with whom she had been corresponding about her losing spiritual battle—"I have won now. In that dilapidated but crowded church that Sunday morning I found God. A man who knew Him revealed Him to me."

It was this same Hugh Bousman who, when he returned to America, interpreted, as few others have been able to do, the suffering of the war years and the call of the suffering for Christian healing. One thing in particular I remember Bousman telling us. Just before he sailed for home he visited the military court in Manila at the time of the war criminal trials. He saw a Japanese general before his judges, and then, because of certain unexpected circumstances, saw this same general twisting on the rope that hanged him. Not that Bousman was opposed to the military tribunal or to the execution of war criminals, but this he did say as

he recalled the court's ruling that the hanging was "for humanity's sake." "For humanity's sake," he repeated, "but retribution is not enough. Let the church release Christ's redeeming, healing power for humanity's sake." For friend and for foe, the alleviation of human suffering is in him who alone is able to break down the wall of partition and become for all sad, lonely, bruised hearts a Comforter, a Healer, a Saviour.

If a stricken, suffering world is to be restored, it will be only by the church of Christ bringing mankind to comprehend that there are five "R's" in Restoration, namely, Relief, Reconstruction, Reconciliation, Redemption and Resurrection!

The suffering are calling. They are calling to you and to me, if we dare to claim the name Christian. "Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?" Christians of the church of Christ, what is the answer to be?

## What Bombs Have not Destroyed

A COLLEAGUE OF MINE returned from China with a very pointed story. It seems that on arriving in China for his first term of service, an eager and enthusiastic young missionary exclaimed, "How thankful I am to have arrived in the nick of time!" An older missionary standing by hearing this remarked to a friend, "That brings back memories. Thirty years ago I arrived in China giving thanks I had arrived in the nick of time. And I was as sure of it as that young missionary is now." Then, after a meditative pause, the veteran missionary added, "It appears that time is getting nicker and nicker!" Many a truth is spoken in jest.

Precarious is the day and ominous is the outlook for tomorrow. Out of the troubled waters of the past we plunge ahead through encircling and increasing storm. We trusted in bombs. They were violent and virulent. They inflicted destruction and defeat. They turned back the enemy. They were paramount in the winning of the war. But bombs did not do the job so many thought they would do. Our future hangs on what bombs have *not* destroyed. *For bombs have not destroyed the enemy!*

Yes, bombs have destroyed Nazi generals and Nazi soldiers and Nazi civilians and Nazi buildings; but bombs have not destroyed the *idea* of Nazism. Very true, bombs have destroyed Fascist armies, properties, and civilians; but bombs have not destroyed the *idea* of Fascism. More-

over, bombs have destroyed the Japanese military, Japanese cities and Japanese civilians; but bombs have not destroyed Shintoism, which propagated and preserves the *idea* basic to Japanese militarism.

No bomb or gun or any other physical weapon is strong enough to kill an idea. The totalitarian robots were bravely opposed, courageously turned back, and mostly destroyed at the price of many dear lives and precious possessions—but the ideas inherent within totalitarianism still march on. Totalitarian automatons were destroyed to give mankind a chance to overcome false, wicked, and death-dealing ideas. How shall we take advantage of this sacred, blood-bought opportunity? The profound simplicity of the answer seems too difficult for our complex minds to grasp. But here it is: "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

Governments themselves are keenly aware that bombs have not destroyed the enemy. The "war of ideas" continues. This is true in the United States. This is particularly true in Asia, alarmingly evident in Europe, especially in Germany, and increasingly and perhaps most significantly apparent in Latin America. Let us amplify the latter. For it is imperative that we heed and understand the implications in such incisive and capacious utterances arising out of Latin America today, as, for instance, this by Enrique Gonzalez Martinez, Mexican poet and diplomat; "Yesterday, the Latin-American peoples were only a hope, hardly a presentment. Branches of two strong trees injected in 'a primitive trunk' of the aborigines, we represented an unknown power, silent, without voice, largely hidden from the directive forces of the world. Today we are emerging a real power, a concrete affirmation. Yesterday the peoples who possessed ancient culture could eliminate us from the class table of their complicated political combinations and their refined diplomacy. Today they need to count on us,

risking, if inadvertently they pass us by, a real limitation on their future. . . . They need to count on us." This is not a vain statement. World forces striving for world domination or security are keenly aware that Latin America they dare not "pass by."

South of the Rio Grande there is war far more violent and determinative than the average world citizen comprehends. Latin America is an explosive tinder box. Because of the increasingly stubborn conflict of ideas in Mexico, the West Indies, and every country of Central and South America, these intriguing and challenging lands and islands present one of, if not the most, hazardous obstacles on earth to the prevention of another world war and the building of a just and durable peace. Latin America is a turbulent battle ground where the ideas of an arrogant Fascism, an underground Nazism, an insidious clericalism, a stubborn militarism, an atheistic Communism, and British and American imperialism, contending with persistent forces of democracy born of and fed by Protestantism, are struggling for both the minds and wills of the masses and the intelligentsia, thus determining not only Hispanic destiny, but, indeed, the destiny of all mankind. This observation became a conviction, when, with my warm friend and good companion, Walter J. K. Clothier, M. D., I made a recent four-months' trip by plane through seventeen of the twenty-one Latin American republics.

The South American scene is beautiful; its mountains are tremendous, its lakes glorious, its forests and plains entrancing and productive. The Latin American people themselves are kind, cordial, able, accomplished, sensitive, and idealistic. The deeper life of our Latin neighbors, however, is sorely troubled by political and social tensions and significant spiritual disturbances. These "other Americans" are determined to win against dictatorship, foreign impe-



rialism, religious exploitation, ignorance, superstition, poverty, and sin. And a fact not admitted by those who do not want to see it, but known to those who look honestly and do see it, is that these restless Latin people are increasingly finding and accepting the truth and freedom which Christ alone brings. With regard to the Protestant church in Latin America, as we saw it, there are many evidences of the increasing influence which the steadily growing evangelical church has attained in the dominant ideological warfare. Too often to the casual observer the evangelical movement is not seen in its true position and creative power. But when one takes time to examine the facts he may even dare speak of Protestantism as the most powerful force in the "war of ideas" surging beneath the flood-tide of that heterogeneous sea of life spreading inexorably from the coastal cities to the interior plains and mountains of the vast "green continent."

Let us examine certain facts and also look somewhat intimately and informally at some projects, personalities, and incidents which, when their interrelationships and intrinsic potencies are understood, will be recognized as power both for overcoming the evil which bombs have not destroyed and also for creating the good which, God grant, will soon make bombs unnecessary. As W. Stanley Rycroft, the General Secretary of the Committee on Co-operation in Latin America, has stated: "Thoughtful people are coming to realize that it is not enough to carry on trade with the Latin American nations, promote the interchange of teachers and students, and send good-will messengers to these countries. These are all good in themselves and should not be neglected. But they are not sufficient. . . . The approach must be a spiritual one."

Picture a typical Latin American city. Streets are crowded with people and vehicles. The primitive and the modern

mix noisily as streamlined motor cars push out of their way horse-drawn carts and the burden-bearing peasantry. Indians from the interior, with their blankets and straw baskets, trudge along the sidewalks or loll around the plazas unnoticed by the listless, carelessly attired, never-too-much-bothered common citizenry (who must be working somewhere but never seem to be there) as well as by the smartly-dressed, proud and ambitious government, business, and professional men and women, the socially élite. Stores are modern; theaters are plastered with cheap, screaming posters; hotels imitate those of North America; churches are predominantly of ancient Spanish architecture—massive, unkempt, and gloomy; government buildings once palatial and beautiful now are a decaying attempt to hold that memory. Frequently, a detachment of shabbily uniformed troops marches by. There is the sound of a bugle, the roll of a drum. The people look sullenly at the soldiers and at each other, seeming to be wondering just when again “the lid will blow off” and another revolution will be bloodying the streets—as it most certainly will.

On one of the busiest of streets, in the middle of a block of commercial houses, jammed in between two dark weather-beaten buildings, stands an even darker gray-stone Protestant church, with an iron fence strongly built across its unwelcoming entrance. This is perhaps one of the few, and most likely the largest, of the evangelical churches in the city. How often have I thought, Who would ever go into that church unless some friend or duty or curiosity or inner desire took him there? I asked myself again, what power or influence or creativity is here? And yet, “by their fruits ye shall know them.”

When a labor union in a large Latin American city makes a Protestant missionary honorary president; when Latin American governments accept Protestant leaders for

nation-wide literacy programs; when commencements of certain Protestant schools pack the largest theater auditorium in the city and turn hundreds away; when seven hundred young people in one Latin American local Protestant church can be gathered together on four days' notice for a meeting on world Christianity; when evangelical schools and colleges in Latin America are not only turning away students but are being pressed to accept registrations two years ahead; when at least one individual Protestant church received one hundred and thirty-seven new members at a single service; when an American consul in one of the Latin American cities agrees to sponsor a series of meetings to be addressed by an internationally known Protestant missionary; when the wife of the pastor of a leading and very large Protestant church in one Latin American city is invited by the non-Protestant mayor of the city to be a member of a commission to study social conditions in Russia and then to return to be the head of a government sponsored hostel for girls; when the president of a Latin American country not only promises religious freedom, but assures Protestant missionaries he considers them his allies in improving the conditions of his country—when these and other similar indications of the trends of the times in Latin America emerge above the headlines of religious controversy, there is no need to argue the fact that the duty and privilege of Protestants in North, Central, and South America now are to unite more closely than ever before, and with bolder strategy and unprecedented devotion propagate the Christian gospel. Herein is power more powerful than bombs!

I entered Brazil by plane from Buenos Aires. The first stop was Sao Paulo, a growing metropolis, a teeming center of Brazilian life. I confess I had not realized its magnitude and modernity. The fact is, it is the fastest growing

city in the world. A reputable journalist writes that "so fast is it growing and such is the potential for further growth, that it may well be the greatest city in South America by the end of the century." It has been estimated that in 1940 new buildings were erected in Sao Paulo on the average of one every fifteen minutes of each working day. And, further, "this city indeed represents that solid core of well-based economy, industry, agriculture, export and import which lies behind the façade of romance which is usually associated in the visitor's mind with Brazil."

It will be remembered that Brazil was discovered and claimed for the Portuguese by Pedro Alvares Cabral in 1500. Three hundred years of easy-going colonial life followed. Then, toward the end of the eighteenth century, Brazil became an autonomous state. For over a century the life of the "Old Republic" was relatively eventless, a time of expansion and comparative prosperity. The history is fascinating to read. Let us step down to 1930. At that time Getulio Vargas, Governor of Rio Grande de Sul, deposed the president and assumed power as dictator. He was the dictatorial president of Brazil for fifteen years, after which, in 1945, he permitted an election, when Eurico Gaspar Dutra succeeded him. Brazil is one of the great countries of the world and it promises to become much greater. Look at it this way: "Larger than our own United States—plus another Texas—the Estados Unidos do Brazil (United States of Brazil) is the largest of all the American republics. It occupies about 45 percent of the Southern Continent. Politically, it has been carved into twenty separate states. . . . It borders every other South American country except Ecuador and Chile. Its population numbers about 47,000,000; its area is 3,286,170 square miles. . . . It is crisscrossed by 40,000 miles of navigable streams. Large ocean-going steamers sail more than 2,000 miles up the Amazon. . . ."

[The mouth of the Amazon is 250 miles nearer to New York than to Rio de Janeiro.] Two-thirds of Brazil is forested. . . . Brazil's waterfalls make Niagara appear adolescent. . . . [Brazil] has scenery to match anything in the world. . . . But somehow most of these facts fail to register until Brazil is met face to face."\*

All of the above emphasizes the fact that when one talks of the church in Brazil he is dealing with a force in a mighty land. And the force of the Protestant Church is mighty also. Of course, the Roman Catholic Church is in the majority, but remember this: there are more native *Brazilian* Protestant ministers than there are native *Brazilian* Roman Catholic priests. For the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church in Brazil are chiefly Spanish, French, Italian, and North American. Foreign missionaries of the evangelical persuasion are in Brazil in large numbers and are rendering a great service, but they are not more numerous, nor do they have more influence, than the Brazilian ministry of the Protestant Church.

Consider a few touches of personal experience which are indicative of the temper and strength of the evangelical movement in Brazil. In Sao Paulo we met three days with the Executive Committee of a Protestant Mission. All major plans were made with the understanding that they would be cleared with national leaders of the related Protestant Church in Brazil. One Sunday we visited great churches in Sao Paulo, the most striking of which was the United Presbyterian Church, whose pastor, Dr. Miguel Rizzo, led an inspiring congregation of over a thousand in a beautiful and unique worship service. In addition to his leadership as minister of this splendid church, Miguel Rizzo is director of the Instituto de Cultura Religiosa, which he founded in 1938 to interpret evangelical truth to

\* *The Other Americans*, by Edward Tomlinson. Charles Scribner's Sons.

the intelligentsia of his country. We spent a morning at the headquarters of this project, finding a staff of secretaries arranging radio broadcasts, phonograph recordings, theater forum meetings, the publication of books and pamphlets, and answering some three to five hundred letters of inquiry which come in daily. And Dr. Rizzo, in addition to his church work, in which two assistant pastors help him, gives all the radio addresses, makes all the phonograph recordings, speaks at the forums, and writes the books and pamphlets! The man is a prophet. To show the further depth and breadth of his ministry, I returned to Sao Paulo after an inland journey and at his church addressed one of the largest gatherings of young people, all from his parish, which I have faced anywhere in the world.

In Sao Paulo and its vicinity we found also the work of the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church of Brazil at Campinas and the Curso Jose Manoel da Conceicao, a preparatory school for Christian workers which has produced, among other things, a really wonderful choir that travels around the country, broadcasts regularly, and makes phonograph recordings, all of which is done in a fashion similar to that of the Westminster Choir of Princeton. In fact the missionary leader, who is also co-director of the school and conductor of the choir, was trained at the Westminster Choir College. In Sao Paulo, too, we interviewed executives of the Brazil unit of the World Student Christian Federation, and were encouraged to discover that the evangelical approach to students is growing all over the country in numerous schools and universities. We spent an evening at McKenzie College, a Protestant institution of over two thousand students, whose president, Benjamin Hunnicutt, was highly honored recently with a citation by the Brazilian government, being made a member of the famous Ordem do Conzihero do Sul.

These and many other similar contacts, in addition to long hours spent in church and mission meetings of various denominations, contributed to an appreciation of the Brazilian evangelical movement as being an impressive and productive influence in the life of the country. "The Protestant Church is now a well-established, growing, vital part of the national life of my country with which all conditions of men must reckon when plans are made for Brazilian economy, education, politics, or any other aspect of our society," said a leading Brazilian pastor to me as we visited together in his study.

A five-days' auto trip through the picturesque state of Santa Catharina gave a memorable picture of the thousands of Germans who have by many years' residence turned this large area of Brazil into scenes of southern Europe. Cities and farms are without a trace of native Brazilian culture, except that all these fair-skinned, blond-haired immigrants, by a law strictly enforced, now must speak only Portuguese. They face a severe ideological problem. The majority of their pastors were interned during the war. The people themselves, for the most part, gave evidence of being loyal to their adopted country. But church life had reached a low ebb. It was very interesting to observe an experiment in spiritual reconstruction in process, being worked out jointly by German, Brazilian and American Christians. It may well be an enlightening example of spiritual rehabilitation and democratization in the post-war world.

Back from the south en route through the charming sea-coast town of Florianopolis, we flew past Sao Paulo to Rio de Janeiro, where our time was taken by sessions of the *Modus Operandi*. This is a commission composed of the representatives from the Presbyterian Church in Brazil and from the Missions of the Presbyterian U.S. and U.S.A. churches. These groups work together in splendid har-

mony, bringing about united planning by a strongly nationalistic church and highly respected and historic Missions. I cite this as an example of evangelical church-mission development. A Brazilian church leader, Jose Carlos Nogueira, presided. The able chairman of the Modus Operandi is Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Brazil and executive of the Home Mission Board of this Brazilian church. The hours of a full day were spent in discussing (through interpreters for the benefit of those of us who could not speak Portuguese) new evangelistic ventures in the Amazon Valley, the needs of the theological seminaries, the plans for Santa Catharina, scholarship aid for the training of evangelical students in Brazil, the prospect of sending evangelicals for further training in America, and a joint evangelical mission to Portugal. Personnel, support, policies, strategy—on these the Brazilian pastors and American missionaries put their minds and worked through to action. Thus one shared in the mutual creativity of church and Mission in carrying on the processes of the propagation of the Christian idea and in the building of the Brazilian and world Christian community. This is an example of the necessary administrative discipline behind the romance, drama, and power of the world mission of the church.

After such crowded days of business, we took a plane for the "Chicago of Brazil," the magnificent inland city of Béilo Horizonte. And a "beautiful horizon" the city has indeed, settled in the loveliest of green, rolling country, surrounded by glorious blue-ridged mountains. The fine Methodist girls' school—Colegio Isabela Hendrix—was our host, and its teachers not only reported to us on their impressive work in Christian education but guided us through the busy avenues of the city, giving us insight into how the new Brazil is being built. We were introduced to leading



government officials, business men, lawyers, doctors, and evangelical church leaders. Here the cosmopolitan life of Brazil was most evident. We were told that the ratio of races runs approximately thus: 51 per cent pure white; 40 per cent, either of African descent or mulatto; 9 per cent, Indian or mixed Indian and Portuguese.

Brazil has prided itself on its racial mixture. As a whole, the people resent our race discrimination, which they know about all too well. The tragedy of it is that race discrimination has come to, and is increasing, in Brazil. Certain hotels are discouraging or are even refusing entrance to guests of dark skin. Positions of influence are being kept from the darker-skinned Brazilians. When I asked a student leader, while we were discussing social issues, what the major reason was for the appearance of the race problem in his country, he said he would rather not answer that question. He was too polite to tell me. I was his guest. But I knew the answer before I asked it. I wanted his confirmation, which reluctantly he gave me. "Is it the influence of North Americans in South America?" I pressed. He would not answer audibly; but, by the way he looked at me, I knew the answer was, "Yes."

It was in Bello Horizonte that I took a train for Montes Clares, an inland boom town. The city is one of our old Western frontier town varieties. Here a young missionary couple met me, the only missionaries in a vast extent of hinterland. In their little Brazilian home on a muddy side street they live with their baby daughter. And they live happily, fearlessly, inspiringly. As we walked the streets the young missionaries were greeted by friends everywhere. Sunday and Monday nights the warehouse rented for church services was filled to overflowing. Homes of sick and underprivileged were visited, and the eager welcome was moving. Then, one beautiful sunny day, with a Brazilian

friend and the missionary, I rode horseback far across the country to see real *fazenda* life in Brazil. The horses were fast, and the ride was thrilling, and we rode hard and long. We stopped at a Brazilian farmhouse for rest and refreshment. The table was set with heaps of fresh pineapple, mangoes, cake and coffee. Duly renewed, we rode on and on, until I began to feel a part of the Brazil I had long read about. These interior rides are the almost daily task of many of our itinerating missionaries. Each one has a score or more of places to visit regularly for nurturing and developing unorganized congregations or little churches. It is estimated that it takes twenty years for a missionary to establish an evangelical group and build it into a self-supporting church. In the urban centers the church has been well started. Into the untouched country areas the missionaries ride—to preach in the name of Christ, to minister, to build the church and then elsewhere to pioneer.

I was fortunate to get a seat on the weekly plane from Montes Clares back to Rio de Janeiro. By train the trip is thirty-three hours. By plane the trip is three hours. Now there was opportunity for me to really visit Rio and not spend all my time in a committee-room as I had done previously with the Modus Operandi and other groups. And what a place Rio is to visit. The Avenida Rio Branco (over a mile long and 108 feet wide), the magnificent government buildings, the museums, the banks, the stores, the imposing villas, Copacabana Beach, historic churches, Pao de Assucar (Sugar Loaf Mountain), Corcovado (where stands the giant figure of Christ, the fingers of his hands some six feet long)—these and more I enjoyed tremendously for two free days. I am grateful, not only for the privilege of having had such a glimpse of Brazilian achievements, but for what they taught me of the potentiality of Latin American life. If such imagination, artistry, and creativity can be

captured for the propagation of the truth of Christ, a startling dynamic will bring new life to this country. And Brazil needs new life. With all of its achievements and grandeur, Brazil has grievous need. As Hubert Herring indicates, "widespread poverty and crippling disease have created a submerged citizenry largely ineffective in agriculture, industry and public service. The toll of disease is appalling." Young missionaries believe there is a way for a new life for Brazil and are giving their lives to that end. Young Brazilian Christians believe this and are attempting great things for the building of their tomorrow.

Rio de Janeiro introduced me to many unforgettable Christian personalities, not the least of whom was the inimitable Dr. H. C. Tucker. What an amazing person! Fifty-two years ago he entered Brazil for the American Bible Society. During his first years five thousand Bibles or portions of Scriptures were distributed annually. Now the Society distributes over a million copies each year. The spiritual power inherent in the personality of this unusual little eighty-seven-year-old man is astounding. He is the confidant of almost every evangelical leader in Brazil. He is the chief figure to whom the Brazilian government turns on Protestant church affairs and relationships. Dr. Tucker has led the way in social reform in Brazil. He is the founder and one-time director of a community institute located in a settlement area of Rio, in which, on the average, one thousand people enter daily for classes and clinics. He has relentlessly fought prostitution so that now the notorious open red-light districts of Rio, though not entirely eliminated, have been partially closed or forced under cover. Dr. Tucker has been counselor to countless churches in Rio. He has established and still directs a Brazil-United States Cultural Society and laments the fact that more missionaries have not taken the time for such cultural contacts through which they might

exert considerable Christian influence. He, too, is a member of the *Ordem do Conzeiro do Sul*.

Much time in Rio was spent visiting the churches. The Methodist, Congregational, Baptist, Episcopal, and Presbyterian congregations are large and numerous. A high-light experience came to me one Sunday morning in Rio when I preached in the great "White Temple," the First Presbyterian Church, having as my interpreter the able Secretary of the American Bible Society in Rio, Dr. Charles Turner. As Dr. Mattathias Gomes Los Santos, the brilliant pastor of the church, had given me two visits with him previous to that Sunday, I was both prepared and unprepared for the worship service. Prepared, because I had expected a fine congregation, having heard of its historic development through the remarkable ministry of its pastor who has made his church one of the most outstanding in all South America. But unprepared, because even my highest imagination had not pictured the vast sanctuary of white marble crowded with people of the "upper brackets" as well as common folk. Here was a congregation unequaled anywhere—all colors, all types, all classes, eagerly interested. One was awed by such a demonstration of Christian achievement and potentiality. Indeed, the Protestant movement has become an integral part of the national life of Brazil. It was a memorable moment for me as in silent invocation we stood in that great, quiet church and the large, well-trained choir sang as the opening call to worship, softly and impressively, yet with strong, wide-sweeping cadence, "Nearer, my God, to Thee."

I sat in the pulpit as the guest preacher. The pastor conducted the service with a gracious dignity. The interpreter was by me. "Now comes the offertory," he said. I looked for the ushers to take up the "collection." I saw no plates or baskets. In fact, I saw no ushers marching down the

aisles. Suddenly, the choir sang. Then there was silence. The people all stood up and there was prayer. "What do you mean, offertory?" I asked. "In this church," was the reply, "material contributions are put in baskets at the door as the congregation leaves. At the time of the offertory the people rise and stand in prayer and offer *themselves* to the Lord." Many times I remember this dedication.

It took me two full days of hard work in Rio to secure a visa for Venezuela. I had to send four cables applying to various officials in Venezuela for permission to enter their country. The trouble was that I was a preacher. The consul showed me his instructions. Criminals, Jews, actors, and clergymen (which is pretty tough company for the Jews and actors!) could not enter Venezuela, nor were they allowed even a transit visa, unless cabled permission was secured from the foreign minister in Caracas stating that there was official clearance. However, the consul told me on my third visit that there was really no anti-religious aspect to this ruling. He explained, frankly, that as clergymen we were where we were in the eyes of his government because of the Fascist activities of certain men claiming to be Spanish priests and certain other men calling themselves Protestant missionaries and turning out to be Nazi agents who had slipped into Venezuela, both causing much trouble among his countrymen. The consul emphasized that there was a war on in his country, a "war of ideas." And subsequent events have proven how right he was.

The visa arrived at last, and I flew on to Venezuela, stopping en route first for a brief but delightful and profitable stay in beautiful Bahia, on the north sea coast of Brazil. The flight from Brazil to Venezuela was a little Baedeker in itself, for the plane stops long enough for one to catch a glimpse of French Guiana, Surinam, and Trinidad. Then came the picturesque port of La Guaira and the breath-tak-

ing automobile trip over the historic mountain highway to Caracas.

Caracas is a thriving city. The Colegio Americana, a Protestant Mission School, had just moved into its new building, well located as a "light set upon a hill." I stood on that hill early one morning and counted fifteen modern apartment buildings being erected within a short distance from the school. New homes are to be seen in all directions. The new site of the University of Venezuela is near-by. Here is a great location for a Christian institution. There is a bright future for this arsenal of spiritual power.

Caracas is the birthplace of Simon Bolivar. Here too he is buried. As I walked through his early home and stopped by his lofty tomb in the Parthenon, I knew that he still lived vividly and vitally in Venezuela. I recalled a line by one of his biographers: "His dreams may have been extravagant but they were glorious; they may have been mad, but they were beautiful." I found a spirit greater than that of Bolivar in a youth meeting in a Protestant church in Caracas one Sunday evening. Fiery addresses by young men of Venezuela pled for freedom, unity and Christian advance. The crowded church gave evidence that increasingly Venezuelans are coming to understand what General Gomez, the old dictator of the country who died but a few years ago, meant when he said to a missionary who boldly approached him with a Bible, "It is true, I know, that if my people knew the gospel you teach I would not need my ever-present armed bodyguard."

An evening with the American and British colony in Caracas revealed a great need and opportunity, which is to be found also in many other places in South America. At the Sunday vesper hour I shared in the installation of an American missionary as pastor of the American-English Church. Here is a long neglected field rising in importance. Thou-

sands of American and British have migrated to South American countries for government, business, and professional purposes. Church groups among these English-speaking people are to be found in Mexico City, Guatemala City, Bogota, Lima, La Paz, Santiago, Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and elsewhere. But the best of these churches is relatively small and weak in comparison with the size and strength of their respective foreign communities. Fifty thousand British and some ten thousand Americans are in Buenos Aires alone. What spiritual potential there is here for international understanding and for strengthening and enlarging world Christian fellowship.

I stood on another hilltop in Caracas—a city of many hills, rich in history, wealthy in oil, and turbulent politically—against the background of the lower Andes, where they start their far-flung, massive, continent-long chain from the borders of the Caribbean on the northern coast of South America. I looked southward across the city and beyond the glorious mountains, realizing that in a day or two I was to leave this panorama of Columbus, Vespucci, Sucre, San Martin, and Bolivar. I pledged myself to carry what I could of this beauty and opportunity to friends and co-workers across the Caribbean to the north. With a prayer of thanksgiving, I recalled the recent experiences with old and new-found Christian friends, who so valiantly carry on in demonstrating the Christian idea of God and man to a people of great expectation. I shall not forget them there beneath the grandeur and promise of the Southern Cross. In spirit, I listened and heard and knew again the secret of Christian victory, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel!”

On my return to the United States, my colleague and I proposed a conference on Protestant advance in Latin America. One of our friends met the suggestion with the

comment that if the matters involved were as critical and called for such urgent consideration and immediate action as we had indicated, the topics on the tentative conference agenda certainly did not give this evidence. These were the topics: literacy and literature, student work, evangelical approach to the intelligentsia, leadership for the churches, evangelism, evangelical co-operation.

Our skeptical friend had never been in Latin America. He did not understand the issues which lay behind such apparently prosaic terms. When we took time to explain the suggested subjects in their Latin American setting, there came about understanding, agreement, and immediate conference arrangements. The clarification of the points at issue ran something like this:

There is a war on in Latin America for the minds of men. At the Inter-American Conference on the problems of war and peace in Mexico City in 1946, Mr. Stettinius, then Secretary of State, having come directly from the Crimea Conference, declared that the most dangerous force threatening the Western hemisphere is the infiltration of Nazi ideas into the South American countries. South of the Rio Grande, a Fascist ideology championed by a hidebound clericalism is potent and destructive. Atheistic Communism is increasing. With illiteracy widespread, exploitation of the masses by materialism and imperialism runs rampant. Unless one of these paganisms is to control the future of the countries south of us, endanger our own land, and, indeed, set the world on fire again, Christian forces must proceed into this conflict with increasing power and a bold vital program of literacy and Christian literature. Herein are the challenge and the means to teach millions to read and then to put into their hands and minds the Truth which will make them free.

But it is not among the masses alone. The students of



these southern countries are a powerful force—for good or for evil. Arriving in Guatemala, we found a student revolution had taken place. The student movement had actually overthrown the government. In Brazil the long, silent processions of great student bodies, each student marching with his handkerchief tied over his mouth, dramatizing that he was being gagged, presented fearful protest against a totalitarianism which was not permitting the people freedom of speech. The Latin students are restless, seeking, eager, and open-minded. In them is leadership for the future of the world. What will be their ideas and ideals? There is urgent necessity for Christian education. As a matter of fact, there is only a meager pathetically limited evangelical approach to the students of Latin America. Yet these young men and women must find and become committed to the teachings of Jesus Christ or they and we and their nations and our nation are lost.

Note the place of Latin America in the United Nations. Think of the influence of the Latin American representatives and the concern of the United States, Great Britain, and Russia in their voting strength. What principles will guide the men and women of the upper stratum of Latin American life in the far-reaching decisions before them? Wrote Anne O'Hare McCormick when reporting the San Francisco United Nations Conference: "An air of unreality clouds the discussions. One sees here submerged nations rising up again, talking, bargaining, combining, jockeying for place exactly as they did in Geneva." Remember how St. Paul stressed his eagerness to preach the gospel "to you that are at Rome also?" In like manner, must not Protestantism present, with statesmanlike strategy, the claims and imperatives of the kingdom of God to the intelligentsia and governments of Latin America? How shall they hear without a preacher? Obviously, the response will be ac-

according to the effort made. Civic and government leaders, as well as educators and evangelical churchmen, all over South America urged us to press upon Protestant preachers and teachers of North America to come to the various southern countries on preaching and teaching missions and also to urge outstanding Protestant laymen to visit their Latin American brethren in order that they might think through and build together toward a Christian world order.

The rise of Protestantism in Latin America is the reason for the opposition to Protestantism. For instance, the evangelical churches in Mexico alone have increased in membership forty-five percent in the past three years. In a recent press interview the Archbishop of Mexico expressed wonder as to why the Mexican magazine *Tiempo* should give more space to news from Protestant sources than from Catholic ones. Dr. Rycroft, in the annual report of the Committee on Co-operation in Latin America, writes that data received from all over the southern lands indicate "the time is ripe for an advance of the evangelical forces."

This means more Christian leaders are needed that the church may adequately match the hour. To this end, more schools, colleges, and theological seminaries founded upon evangelical foundations must be established. We were in Colombia at commencement time. The great assemblies of Protestant schools testified to the leadership being produced and to the enthusiastic response of the communities. But Latin American Protestant educational institutions are too few. Theological seminaries especially are limited both in number, size, and quality. More such institutions as the evangelical seminaries in Buenos Aires, Campinas, and Recife are desperately needed at other strategic locations to recruit and train adequate leadership for the rapidly growing Protestant movement. As President Mackay of Princeton Theological Seminary has declared so forcefully: "The

evangelical movement [in Latin America] may always be a minority: it has always been so. All sorts of revolutionary movements may take place but we should be filled with hope that there are things happening which offer greater challenge to evangelical Christianity than ever before."

The urgent responsibility of the church is not in Latin America alone nor in North America alone nor in any one nation alone. It is the ecumenical movement, in which each vital national church shares as a component and essential part, which must move forward in dynamic fellowship and service. The Committee on Co-operation in Latin America is co-ordinating and promoting the work of twenty-six denominational mission agencies within its membership in building and strengthening the evangelical faith in co-operation with the indigenous churches in sending choice missionary leadership, and also in assisting the churches to meet their own opportunities and to become acquainted with fellow workers in other lands by interchange of personnel, thus developing ecumenical vision, power, and achievement.

The Latin American conference which we proposed was duly held. Its actions are being put into effect with the strong and certain conviction that the Latin American nations are one of the greatest fields in the world for Protestant missions. The needs and opportunities are great, urgent, and irrefutable. New personnel is required. Persistence and prayer will secure admission into every field. Now that World War II has ended and reconstruction and re-occupation in other world areas make rightful claims on the Christian church, we dare not neglect these countries to the south lest we have a worse war and a more terrible chaos than we have yet known. Now is the time! No bomb dropped later will have the power of an idea released now.

There is a little church in the country a few miles south

of Caracas. We had motored from the capital city one afternoon, arriving at sunset. A group of humble Christians had gathered for a communion service. The church was no larger than a peasant hut. The dirt floor was swept clean. A table and movable benches were the only furniture. A clean white cloth had been carefully laid on the table. The minister in charge was a swarthy Venezuelan. My missionary companion told me his story. Before he had become a Christian, the minister who was now preparing the sacrament for us had been a hard, ruthless man. In a drunken brawl he was slashed on both face and hands. They had thrown him into prison. A Christian visited him in his cell and left a copy of the New Testament. For lack of anything else to do in the lonely hours of his imprisonment, the sobered drunkard turned the pages of the New Testament. Suddenly its light dawned on him. He sought information about this strange book. Its truth led him to become a Christian. As we celebrated the sacrament of the Lord's Supper together, I watched the bruised face and scarred hands of the former prisoner, now serving us the sacramental elements so reverently. I marveled at redeeming power. I often remember that face and those hands.

The enemies of the Christian religion work primarily within us, wherever we are. Is that not true? The brave, hopeful, Christian minority in Latin America would not be so small and needful if the large, inclusive Christian fellowship of the ecumenical church—the North American section particularly—had not succumbed all too often to its major enemies—materialism, nationalism, and other aspects of modern paganism. And bombs have not destroyed and cannot destroy these enemies.

Having been so recently in personal contact with the situation in Latin America, and because I am convinced that the struggle there is to become a major factor in world

history, I have, so far, placed the emphasis there. Obviously, however, determinative world issues in the "war of ideas" are being fought out in North America too. Said Rufus Jones in a recent impromptu address at a conference discussing the world of tomorrow: "Our superior concern *at this minute* must be the moral and spiritual preparation of America for the enormous task that confronts us. Now for the first time in the history of the world, America is the center of the hope of the world. Above everything else we must get ourselves prepared for the tasks which confront us, and we are not prepared at the present moment. Even if we had the Four Freedoms it would not be a world free from the possibility of moral collapse. We need a spiritual awakening. We are at a moment of crisis in history, and Christianity in America is at the center of the crisis."

Moreover, even a casual survey of present-day Europe and Asia readily exposes the post-war battles raging among opposing cultural, political, and social forces on both of these continents. One needs only to probe into the subterranean depths of thought and emotion to appreciate the place and influence of the Christian church in Europe and Asia today. From within the chief problem zone of Europe, Germany itself, comes this press dispatch, originating with the Assistant Chaplain General of the British Army, which is a parable giving a key to the understanding of the basic conflict in Europe and in Asia as well:

"The German people for more than a year living in squalor and rubble of their ruined cities, have faced nothingness. . . . They can see neither the beginning nor the end, and we shrug our shoulders and say, 'They asked for it.' . . . The Germans must be helped to see something worth while ahead; if not they will go bad.

"Furthermore, a sad proportion of the occupying armies is playing a shameful part in encouraging the rot. Too many are exploiting for financial gain the material needs of the conquered

people. Too many are prostituting their women and girls. . . . I tell you, it is a Frankenstein we are creating. . . . The German people, led and encouraged into the true Christian way, with the German churches built again into the fiber and framework of Christendom could make good their contribution to Europe and the world, could regain their decency and self-respect and become a useful member of the family of nations."

During the war, when the mission board I serve was making every effort to transport missionaries to lands not yet closed by the enemy but where enemy influences were dangerously rampant, I made many trips to Washington to appeal to the United States government and its military leaders for transport permission. Naturally, the movement of troops was a war priority and a problem of the first rank. Therefore, one had to make a very good case in order to presume that hard-pressed officials should take of their valuable time even to give the request consideration. The granting of transportation for any civilian, missionary or not, was rightfully most difficult in war time.

On one visit to Washington I had been advised to call on a United States Army colonel (I forget his name I am glad to say) who had control over priority rights for transportation to certain foreign areas where still a limited number of civilians were permitted to enter. The colonel's office was crowded with civilian clerks as well as army personnel. He was busy and I would not have disturbed him had I not held the deep conviction that at certain strategic posts in a particular area there was need for increasing the propagation of Christian truth where the enemy's ideas were penetrating. I tried to overlook the fact that the colonel was so busy that he kept on reading and handling the papers on his desk while I talked to him. As respectfully and as briefly as possible, I presented my request, even though he persisted with dis-

courteous lack of interest. When I had finished my story, still fumbling with his papers, the colonel bellowed out in a hard, harsh, loud voice: "No, I cannot grant your request. Furthermore, by the very fact you make it, I don't think you know what we in the army are trying to do across the world." I admit that this display of petulance and the obvious attempt to embarrass me before the now amused clerical staff was so humiliating that my reply at the moment was only, "I think I do, sir." And then I walked out. However, if I had been more poised and controlled, I believe it would not have been too impertinent for me to have replied, "I doubt, sir, in view of your statement, after my careful explanation to you as to why we need Christian missionaries in danger zones of potential armed conflict at this crucial hour, that not only you do not know what Christian missionaries are trying to do across the world, but, frankly, that you do not really know the significance of what your own army is trying to do."

But I did not give up. I could not believe the colonel had either the best judgment or the right answer. So I waited a few days and planned a counter-attack. I went right to the top. It came about through the good offices of Albert J. McCartney, then pastor of the Covenant-First Presbyterian Church of Washington, where the Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson, regularly worshiped. Dr. McCartney arranged for J. L. Dodds, a colleague of mine, and myself to have a twenty-minute unhurried visit with the very gracious and co-operative Mr. Stimson. And, strangely enough, he was not so busy as the colonel had been. Furthermore, his judgment was not the same. The Secretary of War, when the war was at its worst, had time to listen to the same story which I had told the colonel. I reiterated the need of reinforcements for tired, depleted missionary personnel at strategically important posts. Mr. Stim-

son had seated us in chairs by his desk. He listened attentively while we talked. When we finished, he thought a moment, and then spoke to an aide through the inter-office communicating system. Almost instantly two generals entered. After introducing us, the Secretary of War bade them sit down, and then something happened I shall never forget. To these two generals, one in charge of all Army transportation and the other in charge of all such transportation priorities, Mr. Stimson gave a talk on the importance of the foreign missionary enterprise in the greatest world conflict of our time. He told of the value of the Christian mission as he himself had seen it in China and the Philippines. He urged his generals to try to find some way to send out a limited number of specifically and strategically needed missionary reinforcements. The generals took us to their offices and arrangements were made to implement the Secretary's counsel.

True enough, the war situation worsened drastically, and only a relatively few missionaries got on their way; but that did not detract from the significance of Mr. Stimson's insight into the prevailing "war of ideas" and the relevancy of the Christian mission.

War has not destroyed the enemy. The enemy's forces have been scattered, and his temporarily defeated warriors are working, let it be emphasized and reemphasized, within our own gates. I refer not merely to German and Japanese agents trying for a come-back through subversive activities in our country. Granted they are here, but they do not constitute the gravest danger. Nor can one get very much alarmed by hearing so-called one hundred per cent Americans hoarsely whisper "Communist" every time there is some radical expression or activity by those who challenge the *status quo*, though atheistic Communism is an enemy of the worst kind and we must keep alert to its propaganda



and interests within our land. No, our most dangerous enemies in these days are the born-and-bred Americans who stalk around promulgating the same ideas in the United States of America which latterly produced Nazism and Fascism and Japanese militarism. I mean, specifically, the isolationists, the ultra-militarists, the racists, and the pagan materialists who are undermining and inhibiting our educational institutions, our government, our business, and our churches. It is such enemies who lurk within the churches which I fear most.

A certain churchman was asked to speak at an inter-faith seminar on "A Christian Looks at the Jewish Problem." He began in this way: "As a professing Christian, I cringe when I read the title: 'A Christian Looks at the Jewish Problem,' for I know that the 'Jewish Problem' is rather a Christian problem. This truth cannot be emphasized too often." In addition to his current observations, the speaker may well have had in mind the admonition of a Christian of an earlier day: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God."

For the world problem No. 1 is neither the Jewish problem, the race problem, the German problem, the Japanese problem, nor the Russian problem—it is the Christian problem. Simply and profoundly this is true, because if we Christians were sufficiently Christian solutions to the other problems soon would be found. This is not to be so superficial as to argue that then the solution of national and international problems would be easy or immediate. This is to insist, rather, that if Christians would be honestly Christian the demonstration and impact of Christian attitudes and Christian service would open the way to deal successfully with the other problems.

We Christians are a problem to the world and to ourselves and to God Himself because of the way we keep

silent in the face of evil and fear the consequences of speaking out. When Louis D. Brandeis was nominated to the United States Senate to be a Justice of the United States Supreme Court, the fight to confirm him lasted five months. After he had won his place on the bench, Justice Brandeis, it is reported, was without bitterness toward those who had fought him, but this was his deep resentment: "Most alarming is the unmanliness, the pusillanimity of those who believe that my efforts were commendable, but feared to speak out; men who so lacked an active sympathy with the demands of fair play that they were willing to remain silent although they realized fully that my opponents were guilty of foul play." One is made mindful of the words of Jesus, "He that is not with me is against me." One hears again the plea of the Psalmist, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." What a problem we Christians are because so many of us fear to speak out for Christ and his goodness and against evil and its cohorts, practically, specifically, exactly and effectively—both individually and unitedly.

We Christians are a problem to the world and to ourselves—and to God Himself—because of the way we condition our love. For example, there is no divine sanction in this, but it is rather significant, nevertheless, that in the encyclopedia the word following *atom* is *atonement*. The use of the atom bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki by a nation that calls itself Christian, and the relative callousness of the Christians of this nation when faced with this lamentable and wanton destruction, have done more to block an early solution to the world's major problems than any other one act in modern history. Debate as you will "military necessity" (a phrase which seems to include, in addition to military strategy, the right to do any hideous thing) Christians must look the facts in the face as Leland Stowe, no sentimentalist, defines them: "The United States became mor-

ally guilty of being the first nation to inflict mass murder, on a scale of horror hitherto unknown, through an atomic weapon. It cannot be contended that a 'test demonstration' would have failed to precipitate an early surrender of Japan."\* It is significant that almost two years afterwards both the President of the United States and the Secretary of War (at the time when the bomb was used) felt constrained to attempt a public defense of the atomic catastrophe. Immediately on the publication of their statements, even so conservative a paper as *The New York Times* replied that though President Truman says "fair warning" was given that continued resistance would mean the "utter devastation of the Japanese homeland," there may be some question whether, in view of the decision to drop the first bomb without warning or previous demonstration, this notice was adequate. And the editorial, after admitting that before the bomb was dropped the Japanese had sent out peace feelers through Russia, continues daringly and prophetically, "Yet Mr. Stimson, like many others, is well aware that a justification by practical results cannot be the final one. For otherwise it would be no more than the German military thesis that necessity knows no law, that the most brutal war is the most merciful because it ends quickly, and that the end justifies the means." These piercing thrusts of truth completely destroy the remainder of the editorial, which, as a cloak of political expediency, is wrapped about the case presented by President Truman and Mr. Stimson, feebly endeavoring to justify it.

Admitting that the military got out of control and that no group in the nation had information or power enough to stop them, it still can be said that if, after the dastardly deed had been done and had come to light, the entire Christian world fellowship had arisen as with one voice con-

\* *While Time Remains.*

demning it and had poured out Christ-like life in expression and actions of atoning compassion and love, such testimony would have given to the Christian community the way and the power to overcome evil with good. Of course, I know there were sporadic and guarded statements by Christian individuals and church commissions, but, so far as I know, only one institution had the insight and courage to give itself completely, at any one time, toward uncovering the tragedy in its true light, and that, strangely and amazingly enough, was the *New Yorker* magazine.

While we are on the subject of the Hiroshima tragedy and the problem of Christian love, let us look at those who were on the receiving end of the atomic bomb. The *World Council Courier* reports that in Japan during the summer of 1946 a company of Japanese issued the following "Declaration of a Mass Meeting of Christians":

"We, Christians who survived the disaster of Hiroshima, are gathered here in memory of our friends who were suddenly called away on this very day a year ago. We are standing in the ruins of a church building which was reduced to ashes, and in God's holy presence make the following declaration to the Christians of Japan and of the whole world:

"We repent of our former way of life, which was utterly powerless to avert war and its horrors.

"We reaffirm the teachings of Jesus that God is our Father and mankind His children, and that we are all brothers. We pray whole-heartedly that our faith may be restored and made faithful even unto death.

"We are living now in a world of misery and suffering, we are destitute of food, clothing and habitation, but we believe the only way to surmount these difficult conditions lies in brotherly love toward our neighbors. We therefore pray for God's help in the faithful performance of this Christian duty.

"We firmly believe that faith in Jesus' teaching and its practice is the true and unparalleled way of saving individuals and of reconstructing our native land, and thus we pledge ourselves to strive for the spread of this Gospel in word and deed.

"Dear fellow-believers of Japan and of the whole world, we beseech you all to pray for us."

The above speaks for itself, mightily. No comment is needed. Let us pray!

We Christians condition our love because we are afraid of the weight of the Cross. "Christianity Takes a Stand" is the title of a symposium issued recently by a certain church communion in a popular pocket edition which may be found on newsstands. There is much that is good in this volume, and it is a splendid thing to find such a tract on Christian religion in the book racks of drug stores and on news counters. But one phrase in the introduction to the symposium troubles me greatly, and I fear it colors the whole volume. A certain bishop, author of the introduction, refers to "the discipline of the achievable," and his thesis continues on that plane. What progress will the church make on such a worldly practical term as "the discipline of the achievable?" It is *the discipline of the Cross* which must motivate Christians with the sacrificial experience of a faith that "all things are possible with God." Such an experience will cost and hurt, and perhaps bring crucifixion. Yet there is no other way to Christian power. Present nominal Christian experience proves that "there is a simple and effective practicality of roots and thorns in this (Christian) teaching: roots that go a bit deeper than military armaments, thorns that compose the crown of those who will bear the cross and 'come after me.'"

Christianity takes its stand all right. And spiritually, if not numerically, it has been standing a long, long while. Even if one presses the numerical aspect, there is no reason for great rejoicing. As *Information Service* of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America recites, after a study of the *Yearbook of American Churches in 1945*, church membership officially reported for the continental

United States increased 32.8 per cent between 1926 and 1943-44, and the number of local churches increased 9.3 per cent. The estimated increase in population for the same period covering the same territory was 17.9 per cent. Is it unfair to suggest that if evangelism had been taken seriously as a re-creating force the 54,576,346 church members in 1926 might not well have done better? The figures show that, on the average, it took approximately thirty-five people to bring one person a year into the church, boys and girls included. In this connection, it is interesting, revealing, and somewhat humiliating, for American Christians to note that when considering the size and capacity of theaters (including moving picture houses) and the mass influence on their audiences, there are fifteen times as many churches as theaters (253,653 churches, 17,000 theaters) and the churches have more than five times as many seats (55,000,000 in churches, 10,500,000 in theaters).

Easter, 1946, I spent in the Canal Zone on a preaching mission under the auspices of the Union Church in Balboa, as a guest of its pastor, my friend Robert Rolofson. On Good Friday night after the service in the Union Church, it was suggested we go over to Panama City to watch the Good Friday festival procession. This we did. And, because of one particular thing, I shall never forget what I saw.

◦ The streets of the capital city of Panama were crowded with old and young. A parade had left the ancient cathedral in the center of the city to march, as a testament of faith, on a circular pilgrimage through the crowds and then back to the cathedral. We arrived in time to watch the procession go by. There were priests, church elect, government officials, party and organization delegations, old people, young people, little boys and girls, bands, flags, torches,

candles, floats portraying biblical scenes, and images carried on men's shoulders. Awe-struck, the crowd closely followed the floats and images in simple adoration. Suddenly, I felt the people about me press forward. A figure of special interest was approaching. As it came into view we could see that it was a man dressed to represent Christ. On his shoulder, in the traditional manner, he carried a great, heavy, life-size, wooden cross. This was the *Via Dolorosa*. We were fascinated. The Panamanian *Christus* plodded by so close to me that I could have touched him. Excitedly, I grasped my companion's arm and pointed toward the *Christus*. "God forgive us, Bob," I exclaimed, "Look!" Clearly one could see that where the heavy cross rested on that pilgrim's shoulder there was a large, soft cushion. "God forgive us, Bob," I repeated, "there was no cushion under HIS cross." In silence we watched the remainder of the pageantry go by, knowing all too well, in deep humiliation, how we, who try to represent Christ in our day, condition our love and limit his power by cushioning his cross.

And we Christians also are a problem to the world and to ourselves and to God because we withhold our God-given power. Here is a philosopher's way of putting it. Andrew Paul Ushenko, in his *Power and Events*, argues that without an insight into the reality of formative power the classificatory schemes of moralists are just words. He turns to D. H. Lawrence, in the latter's *Aaron's Rod*, to indicate the place and meaning of power in the world of history and today.

"We've got to accept the power motive, accept it in deep responsibility. It is a great life motive. It was that great, dark power-urge which kept Egypt so intensely living for so many centuries. It is a vast dark source of life and strength in us, now, waiting either to issue into true action or to burst into cataclysm. Power—the power-urge! The will-to-power—but

not in Nietzsche's sense. Not intellectual power. Not mental power. Not conscious will-power. Not even wisdom. But dark, living, fructifying power."

It is the Christian faith and purpose to bring to man not "dark," but light-giving, life-giving, fructifying, and redeeming power.

There are those who have found this power. R. C. Hutchinson, the English novelist, writes memorably in his novel *Interim*, which surely will be remembered tomorrow as a very great novel of today (too great, in fact, for present popularity). Hutchinson, who has shared his Christian insight and knowledge of power also in *The Unforgotten Prisoner*, *The Fire and the Wood*, and *Testament*, in *Interim* dramatizes a beautiful and moving story of power. He tells of a British sergeant who in the interim between battles and bombing during the war found wonderfully inspiring companionship with a hospitable family living on a remote English estate known as Orchilly. The head of the family, Bernard, is an elderly, sensitive physician who had practiced sacrificially in China up to the beginning of the war and now was passionately eager to return. But he is prevented from doing so by the dependence of his neurotic wife, who does not understand him, and by his own failing health—and, finally, by his death. The friendship between the warm-hearted and lonely sergeant and the brilliant and humble physician, a man of exquisite Christian faith, played upon by the intricate complications of the personal problems and tragedies of the latter's family, is to my mind one of the noblest portrayals in all literature. William Lyon Phelps once wrote of Hutchinson: "He has greater gifts, more ideas, more ability and more profound knowledge of human nature than any other novelist now living."



Hutchinson creates Bernard as one who feels pain, experiences sin, and knows tragedy, and also as one who asks concerning these "impostors": "Is love, however we conceive it, a force to penetrate as far as that?" Then comes the answer from Bernard's own soul, words which comprise a gloriously magnificent Christian manifesto, witnessing to the faith and strength which overcome evil with good:

"We've had the gospel for more than a thousand years, we've passed it around among ourselves like an old photograph till it's too worn and familiar to set us alight. . . . I keep thinking and thinking of the millions since the day of Golgotha who've made their lives a bridge across the wastes of hopelessness. . . . I know that truth is something holier than mere accuracy. I know that love is not mere appetite and that woods and clouds are beautiful. I believe in those values and I cannot escape the author of them, I can't get away from the knowledge of God or the belief that he is good . . . that he was sensitive enough to cry over a building, to feel somebody else's pain when she wasn't even in view; that he was a proletarian, a rebel and a failure, who was executed with all the contempt and obscene brutality that people had invented up till then; that in the last extremity of suffering he loved his friends and his torturers with so intense a passion that his spirit shattered the very axioms of physical creation."

"A force to penetrate as far as that"—*that* selfishness, *that* fear, *that* hatred, *that* prejudice, *that* sin which does so easily beset us. A force to penetrate as far as our souls and give them power to release the invincible, creative Christian spirit. This is the victory that overcomes the world!

Bombs have not destroyed the enemy! We must not cry peace when there is no peace. That is why Uno-muno, the Spanish philosopher-mystic, pronounced on his generation and bequeathed to posterity this power-giving benediction: "May God deny you peace, and give you glory!" What

glory? "The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Here are the destruction of evil and the creation of good: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and ground in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

# 4

## How Strong Are the Strong?

AS A PARTICIPANT in a University Christian Mission held at the University of Illinois under the auspices of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, I served as co-chairman with Mrs. Charles Gilkey in a seminar on reconstruction in the post-war world. The students were particularly interested in the report Mrs. Gilkey gave of a conference of scientists and religious leaders which her husband, then dean of religion at the University of Chicago, had arranged at the request of a group of scientists concerned with the development of atomic energy. As they emerged from their laboratories, the scientists said, in effect, "We put the future of atomic power in the lap of you Christian churchmen. You can either permit the atomic discovery to become catastrophic destruction bringing man to utter weakness or you can so control atomic energy that it will be a tremendous, constructive power." The students at Illinois challenged this. Why would science thus turn to the church? What about the United Nations? Do not the scientists really place the destiny of the atom there? But the students did not argue further when confronted with these words of Professor Trueblood: "Though the atomic bomb is the fruit of science, the solution of the problem is not a matter of science, since it is admitted that there is no technological defense. The only hope, therefore, lies in world organization. Only world organization can

insure that the fearsome invention is used by those forces concerned with justice and not by the lovers of irresponsible power. *But since world organization is dependent on the trustworthiness of those concerned, the ultimate question is ethical rather than merely scientific or even political*" (italics mine).<sup>\*</sup> Here we have the ultramodern phenomenon. The power of science at its ultimate in our time turns to religion for strength.

As strange as this would have seemed to our fathers or, in fact, to most of us ten or twenty years ago, this scientific as well as spiritual understanding of the basis and guarantee of strength, though preached by a minority during the past centuries since Christ and proclaimed strenuously by the prophets before Christ, is only now beginning to dawn on the mind of modern man. Desperately he is asking: How strong are the strong?

It is hopefully significant in this post-war era that the pre-war emphases of the Christian minority on the source of creative and sustaining power are now the post-war priorities for the world's majority. Across the ages the Christian minority has staked its life on the claim first, that morality and spirituality are more fundamental and necessary to successful living than physical or mental ability; second, that comprehensive brotherhood must take the place of discrimination, inequality, and imperialism; third, that the essential unity of life demands the concept of "one world"; fourth, that leadership training is more important than political manipulation; fifth, that service is more productive than exploitation. And now see what has happened. These emphases have become world-wide priorities. No one is surprised any more to have business, professional, and political leaders or conventions of the so-called "common

<sup>\*</sup> *Foundations of Reconstruction*, by Elton Trueblood. Harper and Brothers.

man" plead for spiritual foundations, racial equality, "one world," character education and reconstruction. Now the majority of thoughtful men agree with T. S. Elliot that

"Those who put their faith in worldly order  
Not controlled by the order of God,  
In confident ignorance but arrest disorder;  
Make it fast breed fatal disease,  
Degrade what they exalt."

Above the din of guns, the shriek of bombs, the cries of tortured bodies, and the curses of the dispossessed sounds the inexorable word of authority: "*All power is given unto me.*"

The atomic bomb has frightened man out of his false dependence on humanistic security and has driven him to seek strength for his days in something greater and safer than himself. The most naïve citizen realizes that he is now living as in "a powder mill in which children play with fire." As I have indicated, since the destruction of Hiroshima much has been written in sad and repentant reflection. Yet nothing, in my judgment, has been more to the point and, indeed, more prophetic than what Hanson Baldwin, the military analyst of *The New York Times*, expressed the very day following the Hiroshima tragedy. Wrote Mr. Baldwin:

"Our development of an atomic explosive was in the nature of a race for survival. Its use will probably save American lives, may shorten the war materially, may even compel Japanese surrender. Yet when this is said—we have sowed the whirlwind. Much of our bombing throughout this war—like the enemy's—has been directed against cities and hence against civilians. Because our bombing has been more effective and hence more devastating Americans have become a synonym for destruction. And now we have been the first to introduce a new weapon of unknowable effects which may bring us victory quickly but which will sow the seeds of hate more widely than ever. We may yet reap the whirlwind."

In addition to the atomic bomb, other demonic forces have been forcing men to think more deeply than ever. Totalitarianism itself has brought mankind nearer to God, though in a roundabout way, it is true. As usual, Walter Lippman saw this before many others did:

"The dictators have seen truly that religious experience must forever raise up new enemies of the totalitarian state. For in that experience the convictions which the dictators must crush are bred and continually renewed."

Modern youth, also, has long seen the futility of our mad race for material strength. Those young men who are able to speak, do so, though few so beautifully as Wilfred Owen did before he was killed in action:

"Whatever hope is yours  
Was my life also;  
I went hunting wild  
After the wildest beauty in the world. . . .  
I mean the truth untold,  
The pity of war, the pity war distilled."

The church of Christ has the stern obligation to confirm and prove that man's power is but utter, tragic, and sinful weakness leading to complete destruction unless man himself be transformed and sustained by the power of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. How may we bring the church to know this and to do this? Let us face the question with all earnestness. The very future of the church, as well as civilization itself, is dependent on these three propositions:

*First, the church will not provide the strength needed for a new day until the church teaches afresh and manifests more bravely that peace for the world will come only through those who are more than conquerors.*

Once before, I expressed appreciation for Hugh Thomson Kerr's great hymn "God of Encircling Years," particularly this deep discernment: "When we are strong, Lord,

leave us not alone, our Refuge be!"\* In view of recent developments in national and world events, I am more convinced than ever that this is the most pertinent line for our day in all hymnology. Especially should this be the prayer of the American church. For we are a church of the conquerors. And being a conqueror is dangerous business. This is true not so much because of what the conqueror may do to the conquered, as for what the conqueror inevitably does to himself. "Conquest brings self-conceit and intolerance, the reckless inflation and dissipation of energies. Defeat brings prudence and concentration; it ennobles and fortifies." Havelock Ellis said that years ago and if it is still true, as I believe it is, then America and the American church should take serious heed.

An experience occurred at Chautauqua, New York, which has a point here. Chautauqua is an assembly ground given to cultural and religious affairs. One summer morning in 1946, some five thousand people gathered in the Chautauqua amphitheater to hear Tamaki Uemura who had but two months before come to the United States from Japan. The Rev. Mrs. Uemura was the first Japanese civilian to receive permission from General MacArthur to leave Japan. It was a tense moment when this representative of a conquered people stood before her conquerors. The audience at first was receptive but not very cordial. One could hardly expect otherwise. Our attitude toward the whole Japanese people was still that induced by war propaganda. But more than that, not as victims of propaganda but as torn hearts and heavy spirits, there sat mothers and fathers whose sons and whose friends' sons had been killed or tortured by a vicious Japanese military. I was aware of how Mrs. Uemura felt. She had told me a number of times during the previous weeks that, being a mother

\* *The Church Must Win*, by the author. Fleming H. Revell Company.

herself, she dreaded to face American audiences in which she knew there would be so many mothers of so many sons her Japanese "boys" had killed. (Strangely enough, during the weeks I traveled with Mrs. Uemura, however, she never once referred to what it meant to her to visit a people whose sons had had to share in the bombing of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Tokyo, from which latter ruins with her own hands she had pulled out the burned, mangled, or dead bodies of many of her own church people.)

One watched with some emotion this little Japanese woman face that vast American audience. And the Japanese woman won. Any conquering spirit that might have been in the audience gave way to admiration and almost affection, if one may judge by the applause, the faces, and the comments when the meeting was over. With prudence and consecration, with nobility and fortitude—and, more, with humility and Christian love, seeking forgiveness, a Japanese Christian won an American audience to herself and to the possibilities in her people.

Thomas Carlyle had a way of saying things which his contemporaries did not like, but which posterity believes worth remembering. Here is one of them: "Inexpressibly pity him whom they name conqueror." How true! Let anyone think sufficiently about the world today, and though he may be sorry for the conquered and believe that our conquered contemporaries "asked for it" and well deserved it, yet he cannot help but pity the conquerors. This nation of ours seems to be failing to understand the danger in being a conqueror. That's the pity, for it forebodes doom.

True to history, the modern conqueror makes paramount his own security, his own supremacy, and his own sovereignty. These three elements he fought to defeat in those whom he conquered. The tragedy comes when the conqueror endangers himself by consciously or unconsciously



absorbing the characteristics which he fought to destroy in the now conquered.

The weakness of security is the most subtle and therefore the most dangerous. President Dodds of Princeton takes cognizance of this very clearly:

"One of the tragedies of life is the readiness with which a natural and proper attention to a reasonable measure of security in this world shades off into a craven occupation with considerations of material self-interest, forgetful of security of the soul, in comparison with which world security is but dust and ashes in the mouth."

The American church is precariously tainted with the fallacy of security. Church budgets have so long given priority to the protection of individual church affairs that it sounds wild and fantastic to suggest that sound church finance should designate at least seventy-five per cent for "benevolences" and twenty-five per cent for local support. "Benevolences" means mere "philanthropy" to the average churchman. How few understand that through church "benevolences" (the word itself has become pathetically tepid and unimaginative) there is the release of the creative energy of the church into the channels of Christian production through evangelism, education, community service, and home and foreign missions. The average church piles dollar upon dollar upon its own building, its own services and local programs, its own staff of ministers, and on other paid workers. Its members spend a few hours a week within its doors. In worship they feel satisfied with a sense of security. Yet it takes but little realistic thinking to grasp the fact that true security for the church comes only as it gives life to make others, indeed all men, secure. "If any man would save his life he shall lose it, but whosoever would lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall find it."

Then there is the attitude of supremacy with which the conqueror struts. It is, of course, the psychology of war to keep telling oneself that he is always and in every way better than the enemy. If this were limited to military strategy and tactics that would be dangerous enough. But war breeds the idea that culturally, intellectually, and spiritually the enemy is altogether and always less proficient. Such an attitude is naturally carried over into the post-war maneuverings of the conqueror. Is it too much of a wrench to our war-conditioned natures to think unemotionally of such a possibility as an international court sitting with representative judges from *all* participating nations to try the cases of the war-guilt and war crimes of *all*? As much of a wrench as it may be, it is gradually seeping into our consciousness that the Nuremberg trials have failed to win the full confidence of this generation and have a poor chance of becoming a deterrent to war in the future because, for one reason, the trials were completely in the hands of the conquerors.

For at Nuremberg both the conqueror and the conquered, indeed all mankind, were on trial. In a letter to *The New Republic* a correspondent gives some very solemn and searching thoughts well worth pondering in this connection:

"There is a tremendous saying of Victor Hugo's to the fact that Society stands in the dock alongside every criminal who is placed there. In the true comprehension of that saying, I think, lies a far more valid promise for humanity than in anything like it to result from the Nuremberg trial. The indictment of the German war criminals is also the indictment of a world civilization in which such men could achieve the heights of political power and perpetrate their monstrous deeds undeterred and even unrebuked for so long. Only, in my view, as this truth is taken earnestly and contritely to heart by men and women everywhere throughout the world,

only as they resolve to act upon its severe implications and take such part as they may in the all-imperative task of bringing international relations out of their present anarchy into the realm of law, can there be any legitimate hope for our common civilization. It is a final and fatal weakness of the Nuremberg trial that its judges and advocates are bound to pretend that this greatest of revolutions has actually been accomplished; they must perforce evoke and apply an improvised pattern of law in a region where, as few know better than themselves, lawlessness still reigns supreme."

Which leads us to the matter of sovereignty. The conqueror dictates. He has won, so his will must be sovereign. Which presents a perilous issue the United Nations conference at San Francisco dodged and the United Nations at Lake Success continues to attempt to avoid. But it is an issue that cannot be avoided. The veto power insisted upon by the conquering "Big Four" blindly emphasizes a mortal weakness. The frustrations at the United Nations meetings may be traced to the anti-sovereignty complex. The people are not fooled. Until the sovereignty problem is solved they can but think, as much as they may believe in the United Nations and pray for its success, that the leaders of the nations are merely playing on the edge of progress. That is why the Secretary General of the United Nations, sadly had to give a negative answer, not long ago, to this searching question: "Has the United Nations succeeded in capturing the imagination and in harnessing the enthusiasm of the peoples of the world?"

It has taken centuries to come to it, but the common man is beginning to see that no matter on what side of the fence he is, the conqueror does not win a peace, he merely wins a war. If the conquering attitude strides on into post-war politics, commerce, culture and religion, there is sure to follow distrust, suspicion, bitterness, hatred and, thus, more war.

To bring the matter to a very definite point, read with concern a part of what William Attwood wrote from Frankfurt as recently as January, 1947, after a thorough survey of conditions in conquered Germany: "After nearly two years of a well meaning but often bumbling occupation, the prototype of seventeen million Germans living in the American zone is a sullen cynic who whines before his conquerors, shrugs at democracy, and looks to another war as a possible solution to his present troubles. . . . Two conclusions are inescapable. One is that the technically vanquished population of the American zone remains a potential threat to world peace. The other is that the American people must collectively share much of the responsibility for this situation. . . . The contempt is that felt by a bewildered people who expected their conquerors to send strong leaders to guide them and discovered instead that too many of the new leaders were, by and large, incompetent weaklings who could be manipulated at will. . . . One way to see a German with his mask off is to go into an American Army service club any Saturday night. It is only necessary to observe the young German waiters who stand stiffly in the corners watching the drunken, teen-age G.I.'s reeling and clutching at their slovenly frauleins. The look of cold, haughty disdain in the eyes of these Germans is something you don't forget. It is a dangerous look for the world. . . . To carry out the policy of democratizing Germany enunciated by General Clay, men are needed who will not only make railroads run but who can teach Germans both young and old that another dose of chauvinism is not the cure for their troubles. This lesson will never be taught them by eighteen-year-old draftees, by unimaginative regular army officers, nor by the kind of Americans of whom a young German girl said: 'It's amazing how intolerant they are of

Negroes, Jews, Englishmen, Russians or whoever happens to be their scapegoat.'"\*

In *Temper the Wind*, by Edward Mabley and Leonard Mims which was voted by the press as one of the ten best plays of 1946, one is led to the fringe of the major post-war problem in Germany and then let down. The play deals with the problems of a sincere and capable officer of the U. S. Army of Occupation in Germany as he attempts to handle the conflicting elements both in the Army and among the German people. The story of the play is not important here. The fact to bring out is that the play leaves you with two alternatives—strong, firm military force or vacillating compromise with resurgent Nazism. The way of re-education is ridiculed as sheer sentiment. No indication whatever is given of the vacuum in the German soul or of the shattering of an idealism which should be reclaimed and rebuilt by Christian education. There is no recognition whatever, as a keen German mind expressed recently, that Germany retreated, first, from Christian faith to Christian morality, then from Christian morality to mere morality, and, finally from morality to chaos and catastrophe. Listen, U. S. Army, why not draft God? Let Him lead as More Than Conqueror! As a matter of fact, there is encouraging evidence that anyone who has the grace and fortitude to enter Germany with Him who is More Than Conqueror will find a response. Stewart Herman, of the World Council of Churches staff in Geneva, reports the following statement made recently by an able and trustworthy German pastor named Asmissen:

"There is an evil solidarity between friend and foe, the solidarity of those who do not recognize the existence of a God who bids us speak the truth without regard for the consequences. . . . The standards of the liberal bourgeois broke

\* The New York *Herald Tribune*. January 17, 1947.

under their hands, but the Book of the Revelation, as an integral part of the whole Bible, lit up the unintelligible present. . . . We tremble to think of these last terrible years. What happened in them does not seem properly human. . . . There is no starving Greek, no murdered Jew, no tortured prisoner, no humiliated Pole or Russian who is forgotten of God. That holds, too, for every hungry child driven out of Silesia. For every raped woman, for everyone killed in air attacks. Not one is forgotten of God. What have those who trust in reason to say about that? Surely it is time that we confessed our sins and fled from God's inexorable judgment to take our stand before the Son of man! . . . 'The world is plunging into disorder as it rejects the priest and exalts the intelligent politician, the clever propagandist. Must we go that lunatic way? . . . The German people have no ideal left. . . . The German people will have to do with what it has got—which is *nothing*. And the question is whether this 'standing before Nothing' is going to become a philosophy of life. If so, then it spells nihilism. The Christians of Germany pray . . . that the German people may turn to Christ. . . . It is Christ or Nothing."

The fighting and the winning of a war are not the only factors in producing "the conqueror spirit." The danger is inherent in a nation's concept and use of power. That is how the conquering attitude of North American imperialism helped to elect Peron in the Argentine. Even in more friendly countries this danger is confirmed. I recall talking to a young Peruvian business man in Lima in 1944. His resentment toward things North American was fiery. "You did not think you could buy our good will, did you?" he asked me, referring to the money the United States had poured into South America in the process of the Good Neighbor Policy, which at that time was primarily to keep Latin countries away from the Axis powers. "Isn't there a Good Neighbor Policy?" one asked. And a South American replied, "Sure, there's a Good Neighbor Policy. The United States is our neighbor and we must be good!"

While visiting in Brazil my traveling companion and I, as representatives of the North American church, were entertained by a group of Brazilian Protestant churchmen in the charming inland city of Bello Horizonte. The luncheon was held in the beautiful and expensive Minas Tennis Club. A lay leader in the Protestant church, who was also the Minister of Finance of the State of Minas, presided over the luncheon. He was delightful in cordiality. I urged our host to be sure to come to the United States and to visit us. He turned to me and replied almost curtly, "I had completed arrangements to go to the United States in a few weeks, but a day ago I cancelled them." "Why?" I asked. Promptly he answered, "Because a member of my family just returned from the United States and has persuaded me to change my plans for a trip there." "But why?" I repeated. "Because he felt sure I would be hurt too deeply, would suffer too much on such a visit." "But why?" I insisted, somewhat startled. And the short piercing thrust came back: "Because of my color." Yes, I had forgotten my Brazilian host was a colored man—a dark-skinned Brazilian. But God forgive me and mine, he had not forgotten that I was a white man from the United States.

On the other hand, take the story of Rafael Borelly. Sr. Borelly was until recently the mayor of Barranquilla, Colombia. He is also a Presbyterian elder. Barranquilla is the third largest city in Colombia, a seaport town of some 150,000. I emphasize this because it is quite significant to find a Protestant holding such an important post for a long successful term in a so-called Roman Catholic country. I first found Sr. Borelly in a Protestant church in Barranquilla teaching a large young people's Bible class. One evening he invited a few of us for a ride in his car and for a bit of refreshment in an ice-cream parlor afterwards. As we talked, through an interpreter (the mayor's English is

rather feeble and my Spanish consists of about ten words which I use and misuse repeatedly to the boredom of my friends), I invited him to visit me in the United States. (If all the Latin Americans I invited to come to the United States should come, the U. S. government might think it was an invasion!) The invitation was accepted. "Splendid," I said. "And when you come I want you to meet some of the mayors of our North American cities." "I should be happy to meet them," Sr. Borelly replied, "but first and most important of all, I want to meet the Christian missionaries, now retired, who first brought me my faith and faith to my people and also understanding of true international Christian brotherhood." How humiliated I was. My first emphasis had been on politics. My Latin American neighbor's first emphasis had been on faith. He knew where America's strength lay. He had known North Americans who had come to his country as more than conquerors.

Some months later Sr. Borelly, true to his word, came to the United States. I had learned of his coming and had cabled him a welcome. He permitted me to make arrangements for his visit. I had intended to meet him at the New York airport on his arrival. Unfortunately, a shift of dates which took me away from the city made it impossible for me to do so. A layman associate of mine agreed to take an interpreter along and go to La Guardia Field to meet Sr. Borelly. When I returned to my offices a few days after the mayor's arrival, in came my layman friend, thrilled and elated by what had happened when he met the Barranquilla mayor. It seems that they drove directly from the airport to a large downtown New York hotel and immediately went up to Sr. Borelly's room. "And do you know what that mayor from South America did as soon as we had entered his room?" exclaimed the layman. "No, what?" "Well, sir, we had no more than shut the door than this



politician from south of the border said, 'Let us kneel down and pray.' And down we knelt and prayed." "What did he pray about?" I asked, "The interpreter told me," said my layman friend, "that that fine South American soul gave fervent thanks to God for the faith of this land which had been sent to him and his country and for the high privilege of being a part of the world Christian fellowship." So it came about that there in the heart of New York, in an upper room, representatives of two nations knelt together under the sovereignty of God in the brotherhood of man for the making of peace on earth.

In Eric Severeid's *Not So Wild a Dream*, that superbly written autobiography of one of the young and brilliant radio commentators of the war, now a post-war radio analyst, there is telling reference to the missionary movement. Severeid tells of his trip through the Gold Coast of Africa, where he claims imperialism is at its worst. He found most of the natives filthy, illiterate, and diseased. And then he adds: "You saw a few well-scrubbed Negro children in clean, starched clothes marching in brisk groups with books under their arms: *but missionaries had done that*" (italics mine). Indeed, this simple tribute to Christian missionaries epitomizes the influence of the church's mission in many lands. "But missionaries had done that" may be fairly applied to moral and spiritual development, industrial achievements, agricultural progress, medical service, literacy, literature, and the improvement of many a nation's culture.

As for the latter, we have the evidence of J. Merle Davis, Director of the Department of Social Research and Counsel of the International Missionary Council, who has made a scientific and discerning study of the cultural changes of peoples in almost every country of the world. He writes: "Among culture carriers the missionary alone

aims at the spiritual transformation of native society and brings to it an organized philosophy of life, a social structure, a scheme of conduct, and a moral discipline of a new faith, in short, a Christian culture. 'The Great Society' which is spreading to every race is, as has been already stated, creating a body of common custom, social practice, concepts of morality, justice, and interdependence. Without such a basis for world life, chaos lies ahead of humanity. Modern missions for one hundred years have been preparing peoples for membership in this 'Great Society.' Governments can build their framework and establish their laws, but they cannot create the inner disciplines of such a world culture: secular education stops short of providing the moral dynamic required. The disciplines, sanctions, and dynamic needed for effective participation in the 'Great Society' must come from the hearts of individual men. This is a supernatural phenomenon and is the task of religion. . . . Among the influences which are affecting the change in culture in the modern world, the foreign missionary movement holds a very high position."

If this be too academic for you, then surely you will be impressed by an excerpt from a missionary evangelist's report sent not long ago by way of regular procedure to a secretary of a board of foreign missions: "The case of a Hindu sadhu is interesting. He has visited us several times during the year, and bought a number of gospel portions and tracts, and finally purchased a Hindu Bible. He came once to the preaching tent at the Nagh Mela. At his invitation, Prabhu Nath and the missionary visited his ashram in Old Jhusi, across the Ganges. About the end of July he came one day, saying that he had improved the property across the river, put up a tile-roofed building, and expected to surround the whole property with a wall. These premises he said he wanted to turn over to the Mission to

be used as a school for village children or for medical work of some kind. He has asked that we and Rev. D. W. Tewari come over and look the place over to see what can be done with it. We hope to accede to his request in the near future, though we do not see what possible use the Mission can make of the property, on account of the paucity of workers. Questioned as to why he wanted to give this property for Christian service, the sadhu said that Hinduism was worthless because it did not emphasize the experimental side of religion, and he saw hope only in Christ and his way. Pressed to come out with a full confession of his own faith, he drew back, because he had so many supporters among Hindus. Yet we believe him to be not far from the Kingdom of God."

Leaders of modern thought are beginning to understand why John R. Mott, Nobel Peace Prize Winner of 1946, sent word from Japan in 1906, "Either you will send a thousand missionaries to Japan now or you will send many thousand soldiers later."

An experience at a meeting in November, 1945, of a certain board of foreign missions of one of the major Protestant communions in the United States tells a story that has a vital application here. The board was meeting to commission its first group of missionaries to the post-war world and also to rededicate a company of its veteran pre-war overseas representatives. It was inspiring enough to see forty-six eager young people (the first contingent of one hundred to go out from that denomination that first post-war year) receive their missionary commissions and to realize what it meant to them to be the first ambassadors of the church after the terrible scourge of war. But the greater inspiration to me came from the seventy-six older men and women who sat together awaiting recommissioning. These weather-beaten and valiant warriors had all seen

many years of service in Asia. Every one of them had been imprisoned during the war. Repatriated on the *Gripsholm*, or later freed from their Japanese captivity by American or British troops, now, after having had a period for rest and rehabilitation, they were about to depart for their former fields of Christian service in China, Japan, Korea, and the Philippines. To look at their strong faces, even yet showing the strain of the war years, was very moving to me. I had been with most of them only a relatively few weeks before their incarceration by the Japanese military. Suddenly, as I was reliving my experiences with them and was brooding over their later years of suffering due to the fact that they had so faithfully remained at their posts of duty, I thought of how the tide had turned, the scene had shifted, the picture had changed as now they stood upon the threshold of return to the formerly enemy occupied lands. For I remembered that just prior to the internment of these courageous folk, the board had sent them a cable of assurance which closed with the words, "With you in spirit of closing verses of Romans eight." You will recall that these verses begin, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" And then they reach in climax, "We are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

"More than conquerors!" How we prayed and trusted that that would be true. As the curtain of steel dropped around Asia and Europe and the conquering hordes of Japanese and Nazis marched across the lands of pain, how we held on and were upheld by, the hope and promise that our sons and daughters in the armed forces, as well as our missionary friends, would prove to be "more than conquerors." The presence of that company of seventy-six missionary veterans, strong, determined, and faithful, gave cogent testimony that they had indeed been just that—"more than conquerors."\*

\* *The Unconquerable*, by the author. Fleming H. Revell Company.

But now—a new day and a new setting. For it came upon me forcibly that no matter how completely they endeavor to identify themselves with the people to whom they go, these missionaries will not be able to separate themselves from the fact that each one of them now represents conquering America. Dare we still pray and trust that *they* will be “more than conquerors?” This they must be—and will. The world Christian mission has learned and must bring America, Asia, Europe and all the rest of the world to know that strength to make and maintain peace will come only from those who are strong enough to be “more than conquerors.”

*Second, freedom for the majority of the world has not been won and will not be achieved until the church in particular and the world in general take seriously this eternal guarantee of Jesus: “If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”*

How hopefully we held up the standard of the Four Freedoms! How heroically they were fought for! What a dear price in lives and possessions has been paid for them. And yet—where are the Four Freedoms today?

*Freedom from want?* We claim the war has been won, but this major objective for which we were fighting lies prostrate. We look out on a world where destitution, starvation and every aspect of human need are more devastating and widespread than before the war and perhaps ever in the history of the world.

*Freedom from fear?* We are more afraid of the future of the world than we have ever been before. It is hard for us to take this as more than an exaggerated generalization until we pause long enough to permit our imagination to play on the clinging, stubborn, prevalent fear that a spark somewhere may at any moment set off another atomic bomb and thereby actuate world annihilation.

*Freedom of speech?* Minorities in Europe, the Near East, Asia, Latin America, and the United States are imprisoned because they have dared speak. Yes, in the United States of America! In this land of the free, at this writing, conscientious objectors are still imprisoned or confined. During the war over 12,000 conscientious objectors to war went through the Civilian Public Service camps. Of that number under date of January 31, 1947, 197 remain in the camps. That is encouraging but it should be known that only through strong protests by groups and individuals did the Selective Service boards speed up release of the C. O. Immediately following the end of the war release of the C. O. was exceedingly slow. Now, one is thankful to note, it is about the same as the normal release of the draftee.

*Freedom of religion?* Stand by any one of us who has the responsibility of propagating the gospel today and see how free one is to move uninhibited in the Christian mission, whether it be in Europe, Latin America, the Near East, or Asia. Or listen to the story of the evangelicals in Spain. Or, for that matter, see how difficult it is to secure U.S. passports for Christian service in countries still occupied by American forces in Europe and Asia.

The Book of Common Prayer may not have divine origin but the Spirit of God certainly guided those who formed its contents. How consistent with the Christian revelation are these words of faith: "His service is perfect freedom." Better still is the guidance of St. Paul: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Or, best of all: "If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." The heart of the whole matter is here: "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

To men of low and high estate then, let the church speak of freedom with certainty and courage. An immediate and

an everlasting emphasis must be made by Christians today upon this incontestable fact: The fulfilment of the will of God is the attainment of freedom. To teach, preach, and demonstrate this is the particular and urgent duty of the church, because the Four Freedoms we fought for and paid so terrible a price for, we do not have. Nor shall we possess them until mankind has been brought to see and act on the truth that the strength of man contrary to the imponderables of God, leads only to the enslavement of his body, mind, and spirit by sin, both individual and collective. There can be no freedom for an individual or a nation until the predominant mind-set of the individual or the nation has been freed from ignorance, prejudice, idolatry, and greed. We moderns have created machines and thus fly as free as birds; we have produced contrivances which permit us to swim as free as fish; as yet, however, with all our knowledge and achievement, we still have not learned to walk as free men.

Once upon a time a speaker at a forum tried to stimulate questions and discussions. When he had finished in a near state of exhaustion he looked to the audience expectantly for questions. But there was only dull silence. "No questions?" he thundered. "No questions?" Still there was silence, an embarrassing silence, until suddenly the voice of a tired man called out from the rear. "I have a question." With relief and eagerness the speaker called back, "Fine, let's have your question." "Sir," came the question, "what time is it?" Ah, that tired soul's question was wiser than he knew. He was speaking for the millions of tired folk in the world today who, pressed by hectic appeals, bewildered by new inventions, tossed about by modern speed, surfeited by advertising "hucksters," deafened by radios and pulpits, confused by theories and ideologies, are still in the captivity of unemancipated minds and suffocated souls.

They cry out, "What time is it?" Is this the new age of promised liberty or is this still the time of human slavery? For God's sake and humanity's sake, "Let freedom ring!"

Surely, after 2,000 years of Christian history and two world wars of modern history and the threat of an atomic war which will absolutely destroy civilization, it is time to learn that there can be no freedom where ignorance reigns. First, take the basic problem of literacy. Frank C. Laubach, the "Apostle of Literacy," constantly reminds us that 1,200,000,000 of our fellow human beings can neither read nor write, and are, therefore, "the most bruised people on the planet, the naked, the hungry, the fallen among thieves, the imprisoned in mind and soul. At least a billion are virtual slaves." The church had best heed the heart-rending call of this Christian apostle as he prays and pleads that the Christian forces give strength through the power of literacy to the illiterate millions. For let this be put down as a very certain thing: the anti-Christian forces are speedily and effectively using the might of literacy to their own ends.

A more somber question follows. If and when the illiterate masses become literate, what shall they read? Shall it be only the hysterical headlines, propaganda for liquor, perfumes and movies, newsstand trash, novels and tracts of paganistic intention? Or shall both the common and the uncommon man learn to read intelligently and to discern the Truth that will make them free? One admires the courage of Chancellor Hutchins of the University of Chicago in planning to concentrate on adult education. He says that time is running out too swiftly to deal with the education of youth alone. What a lesson there is in this for the church! It is more than a matter of formal systems and organized projects of adult education. We must have *Christian* literature! This is the affirmation which Ruth Ure



defines, emphasizes and elaborates so cogently in her remarkably comprehensive and convincing book, *The Highway of Print*. Everyone should read it. The church should make it a required textbook, not merely for academic study but as a charter for action. Writes Miss Ure: "An amazing new day for Christian literature has dawned. . . . The great majority of mankind is just now entering into the rich treasury of unrestricted reading. That fact constitutes perhaps the most urgent modern challenge to Christian missions. If the church is to make on world thought an impact for Christ it must meet the opportunity with books, good books, Christian books, interpreting clearly and winsomely the Christian way and its underlying faith; and it must put such books within the reach of everyone. No other method of winning the heart of the world is quite so crucial as the provision of Christian literature." But how shall the church become aware of the value and power and need of Christian literature if the people within the church continue to neglect and ignore with such callous indifference the published facts of the Christian religion? Right at this point we face one of the most difficult Christian problems. Again and again is heard the lament of a leader in some worthy and vital Christian cause, "If only the people knew the facts." Someone has said, "When a man knows, he cares: when a man cares, he shares; when a man shares, he dares." But how shall we bring that man to know? "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink." "None so blind as those that will not see"—or read!

As for "spiritual illiteracy," one need not reiterate here the widely circulated findings that abysmal ignorance of the elemental teachings of the Bible and the tenets of the church existed among men and women in the armed forces. That the general public is pathetically deficient in its knowledge of the facts of both historical and current re-

ligion is sufficiently familiar to make it unnecessary to treat that aspect of the subject here; since the obvious solution, to which we refer elsewhere, is a rethinking of evangelism in its content and technique.\* More pertinent to our present thesis is the woeful ignorance of the average churchman concerning the life and work of the church itself and the relevancy of the church and its mission to basic contemporary issues. William P. Schell, one of my colleagues, who has been speaking in American churches for over thirty years as a representative of the Christian world mission, has declared more than once, and very truly, "Never underestimate the ignorance of the average American church congregation as to church affairs, both at home and abroad."

Yet interdenominational church agencies and boards issue tons of documents describing united church planning and action by such bodies as the World Council of Churches, the International Missionary Council, the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, the Home Missions Council of North America, the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, the Missionary Education Movement, the Protestant Joint Film Commission, etc. How many church members know the thrilling and statesmanlike programs of these well organized and efficiently operated united church organizations, each functioning strategically and effectively in its own sphere with carefully worked out interrelationships and comity? People simply do not read the related material. And I challenge any suggestion that this material is not important and readable. Furthermore, plenty of literature describing the life and work of denominational assemblies, conventions, conferences, agencies and boards is issued annually or more frequently. Each report and prospectus is carefully pre-

\* *The Church Must Win*, by the author. Fleming H. Revell Company.

pared, and though I am associated with one of these organizations and risk being accused of prejudice, I contend that the stories of activity and strategy which they tell reveal daring and adequately directed ventures in the advance of the Christian movement. Yet an astonishing number of preachers and laymen ignore these timely facts of world Christianity. I meet, on the average, three or four different church groups a week. I visit constantly in Christian homes all over the United States. The average Christian's ignorance of the achievements and program of the Christian church beyond the borders of his own home town is utterly appalling. And the result is, of course, many minds imprisoned in the merry-go-round of the local church's spiritual, social, and material vibrations.

The pastor, of course, is the clue to the solution. Frankly, with due respect for the burdens and pressures on him (I was a pastor for fourteen years), I lay the blame on his doorstep. In a well-planned, persistent program of adult education the pastor is able, if he will, to feed the fires of the minds of his people with white-hot data on the significance and impact of the gospel today in this nation and across the earth. John R. Mott, who over the years has had more demands on him than any pastor I know, once told me that the secret of his accomplishing the major things was his constantly deciding what was to be given priority. An intelligently informed congregation is a minister's priority. Or else he is bound to deal with a company of spiritually imprisoned, unimaginative, stultified minds.

Which leads us to the captivity of the mind by prejudice. Charlotte Gilman wrote in one of her poems, "I ran against a Prejudice that quite cut off the view." That line lucidly explains the reason for so many of our personal, social, political, educational, religious, and international

problems. This matter of being prejudiced is far from simple. It is a hard, hard fact. A wise, modern commentator understands: "It is easier to smash an atom than to break a prejudice." But be careful. We must be most careful and very humble, remembering the warning of Anatole France: "He flattered himself on being a man without any prejudices; and this pretension itself is a very great prejudice." Realizing this, and with a sincere attempt not to be prejudiced or unfair, consider this ultimate in prejudice and irony:

"Senator Bilbo, who is in Touro Infirmary at New Orleans, has a little object lesson in racial and religious tolerance no farther from his nose than the four walls of the institution which is serving him.

"The Senator who replied to a Jewish letter-writer with the salutation 'My dear Kike,' and who has practically called for pogroms in the United States ('Jewish and Negro minorities are trying to destroy our freedom and the American way of life') at Touro Infirmary is the beneficiary of a Jew.

"Judah Touro gave of his wealth and of the greatness of his spirit, to found this hospital 106 years ago. He was the son of a rabbi and a man of culture. Though the hospital that bears his name is under Jewish management, its work is non-sectarian. Its mercy, like the mercy of Judah Touro, knows no Jew and no Gentile, but only mankind.

"Senator Bilbo might ponder this as he lies abed in long-dead Judah Touro's hospital. He might be grateful that Judah Touro was not the bigot Theodore Bilbo is. For if he had been, Theodore Bilbo would not at this moment be receiving the services of one of the finest medical institutions in the South. He would, instead, be excluded as a hated Gentile.

"Let him look about him and see in the memorial of a man who was too big for racial hatred the most eloquent rebuke to the hate-monger."\*

We would not judge harshly. We know our own sins of prejudice. Nevertheless, it is a widespread, devastating cer-

\* *St. Louis Dispatch*, January 17, 1947.

tainty that ignorant, prejudiced minds force the majority of men and women today into mental embezzlement and the consequences thereof.

And then there is idolatry. Is the concept of idolatry *passé*? Are we pietistic and fanatic to deal with such a term these modern times? Not by a long shot! We are where we are in the world today, men without freedom, because consistently and arrogantly we attempt to break the first of the Ten Commandments and, instead, are broken by it. Whether our age wants to admit it or not, the Ten Commandments are not dated. We have not and we cannot outgrow them. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" still stands.

It always moves me deeply to sing:

"The dearest idol I have known,  
What'er that idol be,  
Help me to tear it from thy throne  
And worship only thee."

I know how the unfulfilment of that prayer in my life has kept me from true freedom, and I also know how the refusal to pray that prayer has prevented a free Christian world. God grant that for the church we love there may never be cause to sing a song similar to that of Omar Khayyam:

"Indeed, the Idols I have loved so long  
Have done my credit in this World much wrong:  
Have drowned my Glory in a shallow Cup,  
And sold my Reputation for a Song."

According to the dictionary, idolatry means the worship of anything not God. It is too obvious to waste type and space to amplify the average citizen's idolatry of money, power, the state, and self. We condemn this type of idolatry readily, even though we do not do much about it. But since

this inquiry is pointed toward the church primarily, even though we are crippled by the results of the more brazen paganisms, let us examine the more subtle and more penalizing idolatries which are cancers at the root of the Christian problem.

There is the church's worship of itself. There is that accent on ecclesiasticism which makes the church an end rather than a means. I know the temptation. I loved my church almost passionately when I was a pastor. I loved the sanctuary where often I prayed alone. I loved its windows, its pulpit, its tranquil study, its organ, its chimes. I treasured its intimate fellowship. I gloried in its services, its organizational framework, the well-planned programs for adults, youth, and children. I loved to preach. I loved to feel the response of an appreciative people, even though I did not deserve it. I had great satisfaction in dreaming of making the church more and more beautiful. How I reveled in the sheer joy of the Christmas and Easter festivals of worship. These things are not evil; they are good. Good until they unconsciously feed one's ego and develop a church's pride and become a hypnotizing end rather than a sacrificial means.

I know from present experiences how many of my brethren in the ministry, and with them their church people, are caught in this idolatry. I know how this idolatry in me cripples my soul. The rationalization which takes place in many a minister's mind when he is called to give up his precious associations and take a difficult, long-term appointment in the general work of the church or an assignment in the Christian mission is most discouraging. Of course, I do not mean that everyone should become a missionary or an administrator or promoter in general church service, but I do insist that ecclesiastical idolatry is the reason why we do not have more able men recklessly giv-

ing their lives to world Christian causes, either in individual church leadership or at strategic national or international posts. The undue emphasis on building already overbuilt church buildings and organizing and pampering already overorganized and overfed congregations by privilege-minded ministers has caused the church of Christ today to weaken its vitality and to keep its creative energy imprisoned. " 'Tis mad idolatry to make the service greater than the God." Thank God for the preachers who are free of this idolatry. Our hope is in them.

An even more dangerously covered idolatry is the worship of the family. We walk on precarious grounds here. Undoubtedly any sane man knows that the Christian family is the basic unit of Christian society. Moreover, in view of a divorce rate increasing to a terrifying degree, the state of family relations and loyalty is a fundamental problem. But I raise the question whether or not the deification of the family is not one of the chief reasons for the increase in divorce. "First of all, I must take care of my family." Well, on the surface that appears to be right and Christian. And yet, to put it bluntly, the care of the family was not the first duty defined by Jesus, either in his teaching or in his living. He left and, in a worldly sense, neglected his family for a consuming purpose. He dared say in extreme terms, obviously to make his point clear, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." When he was asked about his family in a moment of crisis, he replied, "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother." Undoubtedly, Jesus loved and cared for his family and taught such love and care ("Honor thy father and thy mother"), but he did not set this teaching up to stand alone.

Many a time I have seen a preacher (including myself) turn away from a challenge "because of my family." Many a time I have watched churchmen of means turn away from other families' needs and hoard up false material security for their own families. And then we wonder why the world does not heed the preachments of the church and the formal praying and singing of its congregations.

Let us look at the matter squarely. Most families that break up or continue in an unhappy state do so because they lack a family purpose greater than the family itself. The happiest families are those that by giving their lives, individually and unitedly, in selfless service make paramount the care for other people's families. The great Christian leaders, especially missionaries, have, to some degree, forsaken their own family security and given themselves with reckless abandon in Christ's service for other families, often entailing long separations, loss of security, and material hardship for both themselves and their families. And the records show that these Christian families are the happiest and most affectionate.

Which is the sequence—idolatry, then greed; or greed, then idolatry? I do not know. Sometimes I believe it is one; sometimes, the other. In any event, each breeds the other and both imprison us. As for greed, we know its poison so well we need not soil these pages with its story. Only for a moment, if ever we should forget, let us read and remember that for the last year for which statistics are available (1944) the American public, in addition to spending \$86,700,000,000 on war (the demonic results of satanic greed), and \$40,000,000,000 on other government expenses, had savings of \$40,000,000,000 over and above taxes, and was able to spend \$10,000,000,000 on general luxuries, in addition to \$7,100,000,000 on alcoholic beverages, \$5,500,000,000 on movies and recreation, \$2,700,000,000 on cigarettes and to-



bacco, and \$2,200,000,000 on cosmetics and personal care. Then, after such a demonstration of inane priorities, it is recorded that this same people gave \$1,600,000,000 to churches, charities, Red Cross, war relief, and community chests, of which amount only \$910,000,000 was for the churches and their own charities. And, according to the Department of Commerce, in this day, when both churchmen and non-churchmen cry loudly concerning the necessity of building spiritual foundations, the total gift to "religious bodies" is less than one per cent of income.

With what terrifying cynicism, or realism, Eugene O'Neill, in *The Iceman Cometh*, puts into the mouth of Larry Slade: "I'm through with the Movement long since. I saw men didn't want to be saved from themselves, for that would mean they'd have to give up greed, and they'll never pay that price for liberty. So I said to the world, God bless all here, and may the best man win and die of gluttony! And took a seat in the grandstand of philosophical detachment to fall asleep observing the cannibals do their death dance."

*Finally, the church and the world must admit that the prophet Zachariah knew what he was talking about when he declared: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord."*

As for the application of this ancient proposition to our mighty yet impotent era, here are a letter and a parable.

First, the letter. It came from my friend and colleague, Benjamin J. Bush, in Geneva, Switzerland. Dr. Bush was formerly a pastor in the United States and latterly has been the field executive for Work in Europe of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, representing that agency in the Department of Reconstruction and Inter-Church Aid of the World Council of Churches. During the two years Benja-

min Bush has been in Geneva he has written many letters of an interpretive nature in addition to his administrative communications. But nothing that he or any one else, for that matter, has written me presents so true and impressive a picture of the ennobling strength of the Spirit of God in the soul of man amid world chaos. The letter is rather long for inclusion here, but it must become an integral part of this chapter, with my able and admirable correspondent's permission, because of what it tells so powerfully in answer to the question, "How strong are the strong?" I venture to prophesy that this letter will become one of the spiritual classics of our time. It follows:

Dear Charles:

It is very easy to accept defeat and despair. It is too easy. A well-known writer of a well-known religious journal has sent a message across the Atlantic which is one great black question mark down across all of Europe. It is the question which at times confronts all of us who are in Europe. It darkens the noonday and deepens the midnight, but to the Christian at least questions are hands outstretched for answers.

The longer one associates with the real Christian people in Europe, the more certain he is that they are the answer. They are nowhere a majority, often a very small minority, but can we in the U.S.A. point any finger of judgment at this Continent because this is so? We find unflinching inspiration thumbing the pages of the past more often in the achievements of minorities than in the accomplishments of majorities. The greatest source of our inspiration, the Scriptures, certainly reinforce this emphasis. The democratic importance of majorities in a democratic country may dull our appreciation of a minority. We admit especially that most Protestant churches on the Continent of Europe are a mi-

nority, but we rejoice that in many places in many lands this minority is certainly a minority that is a very central and real hope.

Whether the church should be in politics as a definite organization we will not debate, but the fact that Christian people in different countries here have organized themselves into a political party is indicative of a faith in Christian principles and practice not without real significance. In this there may be a peril, but in all the countries there are Christian men and women who feel that the Christian witness is for a time like this. In some of these countries Protestants are co-operating with Catholics in this effort to turn chaos into a cosmos once again by the Word and Will of God. The number of people who have cast their votes for such a Kingdom political programme should suffuse the black clouds of pessimism with at least a shimmering hope.

But our confidence rests on a more secure foundation and one more dependable. There is, in a number of churches, a quiet but positive quickening of Christian faith. It is not Pentecostal as yet, but it can become that. It rests upon a great new appreciation of the Scriptures. Everywhere, across this Continent, there are men and women, old and young, who know that the Bible is the Word of God. When they tell us what this Word meant to them when all other words became echoes of lost voices, their testimony is authenticated by their experience. This power of the Word is certainly New Testament in nature and strength for the wife and her children who read the same chapter at home which the imprisoned father read in a concentration cell and who in separation were one by this communion of the spirit, caught up in the larger communion of the saints in the Kingdom of Glory. They told the writer very calmly that there was only one book which could meet such a

need and their faces lit up in bearing the testimony that it had met that need. This testimony as to the power of the Word is not exceptional and is one reason for the new place of the Scriptures in the churches in Europe. The indifference of most Christians to the Scriptures has been brought before the judgment of experience in Europe and given the Scriptures here an old-new place.

Here, too, faith has been born again, and because it has been defined in hunger and cold, in loss and pain, in concentration and hostage camps, in scourgings and death, it is not a theory or even a creed. It is something living that can pulsate with life and bleed with passion. Far from being a theme in a comfortable House of Worship on the Lord's Day, it has been a bleeding jagged path up which Christians have climbed bearing the burden of Hope for a New Day.

Communists scorn religion and look upon the church as an excrescence, but Christian ministers in Europe sharing cells with Communists everywhere, by their Christian endurance and forbearance have won countless Communist fellow-prisoners, if not unto their Faith, at least unto their friendship. And so one meets again and again a minister or Christian layman who tells very simply and naturally, often humorously, that the Communists who shared his cell with him promised him that when they came to power they would always protect him from the Communist judgment against the church. Such appreciation was won so generally in Europe by these New Testament Christian men and women that I have heard nothing but praise, even among those who scorn the church, for the high quality of Christian leadership in resistance and for the courage and devotion with which imprisonment and brutal, bestial punishments were endured.

You can now read Pastor du Pury's Journal, born in a

prison as much as Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. It is a spiritual pilgrimage in a prison. He speaks of this experience as simply, as we might of a summer vacation. The thrilling story of piecing together bits of paper with a little of the gruel secrete from the meager repast of the morning and utilized as glue should keep most of the ministers from any complaint in any circumstances. Peter is exalted afresh in the Protestant church by his commentary on Peter. In a real way the old Peter is led anew by this book as by an angel out of prison, to knock again at the doors of unbelieving Christians. We have all emphasized the ability of Christ to go through closed doors, but here in southern France Peter shakes off the shackles of his imprisonment and walks out of the prison released and triumphant.

When Mrs. du Pury narrates her rôle in this heroic epic there is not a single inflection of self-pity or complaint as she humorously and joyously tells her part of the story. If it is possible to add anything to the New Testament, some of these Christians have done so, and inasmuch as our Lord himself promised that his followers would be able to do greater things than they had done because he was going to his Father, it may be said reverently that they have added to all their sufferings an ability through humor, to belittle them to the Glory of God. To know such people is to be forever restrained from any foolings of self-pity or possible thought of sacrifice. Smiles and the minimizing of difficulties and trials by heroic Christian men and women in the church of Europe have been for me a spiritual tonic.

Whenever duty necessitates going to any part of Europe, the reward is not just in the duty performed, but invariably in meeting some new Christian cast in the mold of the heroic. I shall conclude this letter with a hurried account of two such young pastors. The first young minister has a Jewish background. His people lived in a city against

which Adolf Hitler lifted his violent hatred early in his campaign of anti-Semitism. To retell the story of this family's suffering would require many pages. But it may be summarized in one poignant sentence: this young man is thankful that his father died a natural death in the summer of '39. Through cold and hunger and miraculous escapes, this man wandered until at last he found himself a chaplain in a Resistance corps in France.

He quickly learned to speak French, and to speak it so perfectly that one of the most cultured women in a large southern French city could not believe the boy had not learned his French in his infancy. Alone, this young man captured thirty German soldiers. He spoke of the exploit as proof of the fear-demoralization which had gripped the Germans. On another occasion, when a small Nazi detachment came suddenly to a Resistance French village in the mountains and a brutal Prussian officer lined up the women and children to be executed, including the chaplain, this young man, bound and blindfolded, stepped forward and made so vigorous a defense in purest German for the women and children, not for himself, that when the officer broke into this defense with the order to fire, every German soldier lowered his gun and disobeyed the order.

Well, this young man would like to study in the United States, and it was a great privilege on behalf of the Protestant church to be able to say to him that we would also help in paying his expenses from France to the U.S.A. and back. One wishes there were enough young men like this to send one such to each seminary in the U.S.A., that our young ministers might all feel in mind and heart the throb of a new Christian heroism. This is the hope in the U.S.A.

One evening in October the other young minister came to our room in the hotel and on the large map of Europe

pointed to the Russian village from which he had been compelled to march on foot in the dead of winter, back, mile on mile, week after week. He was a chaplain serving against his will with men most of whom were compelled to fight against their will. When they were defeated in January, they began a retreat of nearly a thousand miles on foot, and he saw his regiment dwindle from 2100 to 400. He saw comrades shoot each other for a handful of raw beef and a few leaves of frozen cabbage. He marched day in, day out with only the hope of a little forage with which to still the burning, gnawing pangs of hunger. Melted snow picked up on the march was his drink. At times he pitied those who survived battle more than those who were killed in battle. He is a well-educated man, but said simply that he had read of nothing in history or imagination that equalled the horrors that he had seen and experienced. But he said that there was one thing that cold, hunger, battle, and brutal murder could not destroy, and that one thing was a real Christian faith.

He found that his faith altered everything and imparted a strength equal to every emergency, and, above all, it freed one from all hate and spirit of vengeance. In a kind of remembrance-reverie, looking far away, he said that a real Christian faith seemed to be food when you were hungry, water when you were thirsty, an extra coat when you were frozen, and gave renewed strength when you stumbled through the snow and physical exhaustion whispered seductively that it would be easier and better to faint and fall and permit zero weather to end it all. To such a reverie one could only listen in silence and rejoice that it could end with the unfailing *motif* of triumphant faith. Said our friend: "I had comforted the dying, I had encouraged almost every individual man in the regiment. I could never allow any question to arise regarding my faith, and so the

ultimate faith upon which it rested. Thus it was that day succeeded day and at last the march ended." But did it end? It had been possible for this man, when the final battle was over, to enter the American lines in the hope that a letter he carried promising him a scholarship in one of our universities might have purchased his early release and his acceptance in a seminary in an academic, cultured, comfortable city. A voice again whispered to him saying that he had endured enough and had a right to something different and better. But, instead of that, he turned East and not West, to give what strength he still had and his Christian faith, which had increased and never diminished, to his own people and his own village, where loss and destruction had been terrific. Are not such young people hope enough, even against a tragically stricken continent, to justify Christian effort? Pentecost was not a new day for a million people or 100,000. It came to a relatively small number. I do not believe that there is any land in Europe, no matter how small, in which there are not as many as there were at Pentecost who have seen and heard and spoken with all the accents and authority of Pentecost. This is my hope for Europe.

Yours truly,

Geneva, Switzerland  
November 14, 1946

BEN

And now the parable. Two years ago I was speaking one evening to a large Protestant youth meeting in the city of Sao Paulo, Brazil. My genial interpreter was a splendid North American Christian, a college president in Brazil and a master of the Portuguese language. We were getting along exceedingly well together in the give and take of an interpreted address until, to clinch a point, I quoted, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord."



My interpreter hesitated. I thought he had not heard or understood. I repeated: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." After a long pause, the North American turned to me and said with some embarrassment, "I'm sorry, friend, I've forgotten how to translate that." Then turning to the audience, he asked, "Does anyone here know enough English and Portuguese to translate what the speaker just said?" No one knew. "Skip it, skip it," I whispered. "Let's go on." And we finished the address without the quotation.

As we came down from the rostrum at the conclusion of the meeting, a number of people gathered about the steps to greet us. After a moment or two, I sensed a stirring on the edge of the group. A boy about twelve years of age came pushing through the circle. He had an open book in one hand and with the forefinger of the other he was pointing to a place on a page. As he approached me, he kept calling out in his shrill, little voice, in broken English, "Here it is, mister! Here it is, mister!" I recognized that the book was a Portuguese Bible. As the boy came up to me I saw that the Bible was open at the Book of Zachariah. I understood sufficiently to see that as he called out repeatedly, "Here it is, mister! Here it is, mister!" all the while he was pointing to the verse, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." He had found it. He had translated it. He knew.

I say this is a parable. In that meeting in Sao Paulo we symbolized both the despair and the hope of the world—adults talking to youth, adults trying hard to make themselves understood, adults trying to point the way. Then the confession, "I have forgotten how to translate those words about power." That's it! We of the older generation have forgotten how to translate into life "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." Then

youth steps up. A Christian youth, taught by the church, remembers. He speaks out clearly. He has found the answer to the question: How strong are the strong? "Here it is, mister! 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord.'" God grant the world may never take away such discovery from that boy. Church of Christ, it is up to you!

## 5

### Stripping the Church for Action

THE BRITISH COUNCIL OF CHURCHES early in the post-war days issued a 30,000-word statement on the Christian faith in the atomic age. One paragraph dealt specifically with the future of the church. It impressed me as being unusually prophetic and provocative. I transmitted it to a number of contemporary minds in order to have their varied reactions. To a carefully selected cross-section of business and professional men and women, including clergymen, educators, editors, and young people of various denominations, in both large and small communities, I sent the following, addressing each correspondent personally:

"If something radical is needed to set the world right, as none can deny, something radical must happen to the church. To remain content with our present presuppositions and present practice and to assume, as we often unthinkingly do, that the life and organization of the church will be much the same in ten, twenty, or fifty years as they are today, is, whether we admit it or not, to be oblivious of the revolution that is taking place in human society. What changes will be required we may not yet be able to see. *But only if we are stripped and ready to move out into new ways can the church hope to exercise moral and spiritual leadership in the era of atomic power*" (italics mine).

"The above quotation is taken from a recent statement issued by the British Council of Churches. . . .

"What changes in the life, organization, and work of the church do you believe to be necessary in order that the church

may move out into new ways to exercise moral and spiritual leadership in the era of atomic power?"

Over a third of the approximately three hundred approached replied. Since the majority of my correspondents probably never had heard of me, the number of those answering was a fair percentage in view of the experience of most questionnaires and, also, in view of the fact that I did not ask for "yes" or "no" answers, but for a written statement. Virtually all of the replies were full and detailed, giving carefully weighed convictions. I am sincerely grateful for the time and thought given to this inquiry. With the exception of one college president, everyone agreed—and some with considerable force—that the issue as defined by the British Council was well taken, timely, and urgent. Many thanked me for prompting them to face the pointed question, admitting that just such stimulation was needed to stab their spirits and to sharpen their minds towards a more fruitful dealing with the present crisis.

Will I be chastised or forgiven if I say, in all good faith, being perfectly honest but I trust not ungrateful, that too many of the replies reminded me of what President Conant of Harvard is reported to have remarked about higher education in this country? He ventured to say that the higher educational processes in the United States reminded him of a detour sign he saw in New England. Pointing to a side dirt road, it read: "Choose your rut carefully, brother, for you'll be in it for a long, long time." Having often feared I was in a rut in Christian thinking, I have not found it very consoling to discover that many of my peers are unconsciously nearing a rut too.

On the other hand, one did find flashes of spiritual insight to be treasured. Then, too, as one naturally and rightfully would expect, a great number of the replies urged with reiterated emphasis the necessary fundamentals; primarily,

true individual conversion, which, of course, must be underscored as basic.

By way of summary, I list the more significant points stressed, in order of their frequency and not necessarily their priority:

- Return to fundamentals
- More and better evangelism
- Deepen spiritual life
- Church unity
- Lay leadership
- Youth participation
- More efficient administration
- "Stream-line" ecclesiastical organization
- Enlarge the world mission
- A united voice on international issues
- Freedom from secularism
- More effective appeal to the masses
- Improve Christian education
- Improve quality of church membership
- More rigid requirements for church membership
- Stronger preaching
- More vital fellowship
- A more disciplined clergy
- Greater corporate witnessing
- More effective theological training
- More prayer
- Do away with class distinctions
- Eliminate professionalism
- Increase the church militant spirit
- Delimit fields of action
- More emphasis on economic justice
- Racial equality
- Outlaw war

The diversity of the replies is impressive and encouraging. The suggestions show a strong sense of responsibility, but they lack fresh creativity. Only two mentioned racial equality; that is amazing. Only two urged the outlawry of war; that is depressing.

From the accumulated material I have chosen a limited number of the paragraphs which seem to me to be particularly illuminating. In fairness to the many not quoted, after considerable thought and conference, it has seemed best to have all the contributors remain anonymous. This may help, also, to have each case stand on its merits and not on a personality. The following is presented in the spirit of a forum discussion, without the expectation that you or I will agree with everything that is stated:

The change within the corporate life of the church must keep pace with the change within the corporate life of mankind. That means:

1. That we must capture education. In other words, religion must become so effectual that the process of secularization in education will decrease.
2. That we must reverse the process of separation of church and state, which, in effect, has become a separation of education and religion. We must bring this about even though conscious of the danger of ecclesiasticism.
3. We must bring the ministry to a new status of dignity. At the present time, neither religion nor the church merits sufficient respect to bring into its ranks the best minds and the greatest devotion. We are not likely to do this unless we thoroughly revamp our system of theological education. It does not have either the discipline or the breadth of education that other competent graduate schools possess. It will also mean that our homes will have to be brought to believe that a son in the ministry should be a matter of pride instead of regret.
4. I see not the slightest hope of religion gaining adequacy in this age unless we rise beyond sectarianism to universalism in the life of the church. (*The pastor of a large mid-Western church*)



It is my firm conviction that the most important answer to this question lies in the leadership of the church, both

clergy and laity. Too many pastors and paid executives regard their position merely as a means to earn their bread and butter, and too many church officers regard their position merely as a recognition of honor and not one of responsibility. If we cannot somehow regain the sense of crusade which marked early Christianity, it is my conviction the church is done. Any time we fail to appreciate that we are engaged in a great cause, in which the welfare of the leader is unimportant and the cause is all-important, we are headed for disaster. It is the ministers and the church officers who give themselves without qualification or reservation who make for the progress of Christianity in the world. This is a fulfilment of the truth spoken by our Lord that "whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake and the gospel's the same shall save it." This means that the church will have to strip itself of a good deal of excess baggage as it moves into the new era that lies ahead. (*The pastor of a large church in an Eastern city*)



We are reminded of the Russian church officials who in 1917 were debating about the color of the stole that ought to be worn on certain church occasions, when not many blocks away the Communist revolution had begun. Surely, the church must be concerned about its own affairs, revolution or no revolution. But there is such a thing as being too concerned about what was and has been, when there ought to be concern for what is and must be! The church has a task to do, in the performance of which it and man will be saved!

Perhaps the remedy to this problem posed by the Church of England statement is not to be found primarily in new organizations and programs at all. It must be found in a

new kind of church leadership, a revamped leadership training, a fresh conception of the nature of evangelical Christianity and its mission in life and history. It is doubtful that anything can be done unless there emerges a revival of spiritual insight and power such as took place in Francis and the Franciscans, Luther and the Reformers, Wesley and the Methodists. They broke through the shackles of conventional religion and insisted on the Word becoming flesh again in the common ways of life. As a result they reached the people; their messages were fresh, relevant, and authoritative; their word had tremendous social consequences; and they saved the church from itself and from its ingrownness and inability to be the church. (*A professor in a theological seminary in the East*)

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I believe we ought to begin in theological seminaries and make a very thorough study of our curriculum. Somewhere along the line I believe the students ought to be taught how to deal with people.

There should be a new understanding of the relationship of the minister to the life of 1947 . . . which is not the life of 1940 or of 1930. The training of his mind should be such that he adjusts himself to the changing hour and a very rapidly changing world. We ought to be willing, I think, to give up some things, without being criticized, even though we have inherited them; but we should not give up things in our program simply because they are hard to do.

I believe the radio should be used more extensively, not necessarily to preach sermons but to give to the people of America, particularly the unchurched, the real meaning of the church.

I believe the church ought to take a very definite interest



—the Protestant Church particularly—in the production of the right kind of moving pictures.

I believe in the printed page, I believe in an advertising program in each community.

In all of this I am not thinking right now of the building of the church as an organization, increasing its membership or increasing numbers; I am thinking of it as an agency through which God can influence the life of a nation and the life of the world, and whether one member comes and listens or none at all, isn't the big concern. (*The pastor of a large church in an Eastern city*)



There is a lack of discipline among Protestants which is a heartache. The effort of ministers in union projects as compared with furthering the work of their own little vineyard affords glaring contrast. (*The pastor of a medium-sized church in a Southern town*)



A change needed, unless I have judged too hastily, is in the emphasis on preaching. From newspaper announcements and sermons that I have heard I get the impression that there has been too much stress on social needs and political issues—war and peace, industrial problems, international relations. I would not belittle these subjects as themes for sermons, but I get the impression that too many ministers wish to appear up-to-date in their understanding of world affairs. I cannot but feel that we need more teaching from the pulpit on the great doctrines of our faith, on personal as well as national righteousness, on the development of the spiritual life as well as the development of a right social outlook. (*A man missionary to Iran*)



First of all, let the gospel be preached! Add street preaching. Add evangelism on the part of church members. Add wholehearted co-operation with the Federal Council in its contacts with government agencies. Add co-operative local Protestant movements—such as the little Reformation festivals. Add enthusiasm for the ecumenical church. The church is afraid, on half a dozen fronts. (*A professor in a theological seminary in the East*)



We must end the Jim Crowism of our churches. The schools and most public gatherings are 'way ahead of the church here. Church membership must be non-racial. This may mean a "civil war" in our churches, but if it must come, let it come. (*The pastor of a large church in an Eastern city*)



We are one "in Christ" and if we as individuals and as a church do not practice that in our social actions we are betraying our Lord and his cause. Seventeen years ago, when I was teaching in a college, I met a young Negro student. He told me that a group of them had stumbled into a Communist meeting and had been reprimanded for going into such a place. He explained to me that they had no desire to return to the meeting. "But," he said, looking earnestly into my eyes, "never in my life have I felt such a sense of brotherhood." I think it is a sin and a disgrace that we are allowing godless organizations to appropriate our message, which I sincerely believe can be made vital and can be realized only "in Christ." (*A woman missionary to Africa*)



The church must be far more a fellowship than it is now. Our churches must not be merely congregations, but true communities of faith. (*The pastor of a large church in a West Coast city*)

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If the church would dare to renounce war absolutely, and call on its members never again to participate in war or in any way to condone it, it would have a tremendous effect on the entire cause of Christianity. (*The pastor of a medium-sized church in an Eastern city*)

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I am more profoundly convinced than ever, now that we have entered the atomic age, that the crucial question for the church is whether it will completely renounce war.

The Calhoun Commission of Theologians, that is the non-pacifist majority, justified food blockades and obliteration bombing during World War II. In its second report on Atomic Warfare and the Christian faith the theologians expressed contrition for obliteration bombing as well as the atomic attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nevertheless, the majority takes the position that this does not mean that the use of atomic weapons must in all cases be renounced. The use of atomic weapons in another war is, however, bound to be much more atrocious and indiscriminate than in World War II. Unquestionably, therefore, Christian thinkers will have to repent of their use again after World War III. . . . Obviously, from the ethical and the Christian standpoint, there is no limit to this process, or would be none, if it were not for the fact that the human race will be wiped out. In other words, if war has not now reached the limits beyond which Chris-

tians cannot condone it or participate in it, those limits will never be reached.

It seems to me that the churches, if they do not completely cut themselves off from war, regardless of whether international control, etc., is established or not, are in an utterly impossible moral position. I do not believe there can be any rebirth of the Christian faith, any revival of the churches, unless this issue is faced and answered correctly.

Changes in organization and work are dependent on changes in the life of the church, not the other way around. (*An executive of a social agency*)



Not many ministers have learned to enlist either their laymen or their young people in an active and creative participation in church planning or church work. When we speak of young people and their part in this process we are now referring very largely to young people who have undergone the experiences of participation in the war. Too much of our thinking regarding these people assumes a passive rôle on their part. Our question should be not what can the church do for these young people but how can we give them their proper place in the life and work of the church. (*A YMCA secretary*)



Some new way should be found of educating and inspiring the teen-age boy or girl, especially beginning at the age (junior or senior high school) when that young person deserts the church. In consequence they go into their twenties with little knowledge of Christ and what he means to the world and with little belief in the message

of Christ for bringing the world together. (*The pastor of a medium-sized church in a Western city*)



I am most deeply under conviction for the need of a new pattern to meet the needs of the successful American enterpriser absorbed in the material activities of life who pays lip service to the Christian church but who can't see the tie-up between faith and his everyday problems. There are two things which will be necessary to arrive at such a pattern. (1) The ministers will have to have a better or more sympathetic understanding of the enterprisers and (2) it will be the task of the laymen and not the ministers to evolve the pattern. (*A layman in a Western city*)



There is a real need in the life of the church for prayer groups—small bands of sincere, earnest Christian laymen who will work with the minister to lift the spiritual level and sharpen the moral consciousness of the congregation. (*The pastor of a small rural church in the East*)



The church must demand more of those who are received into its fellowship. The practice of probation would be an excellent thing. There ought to be required some evidences of change in living and attitude. The standard required by the church has been so low that people have stumbled into the church instead of climbing into it. (*The pastor of a large church in an Eastern city*)



Since the first business of the church is to bring Christian experience to individuals, with its natural conse-

quences in all their social relations, the technique to be followed in original phases of social action would be not so much to champion advanced views before the public in the name of churches as to set in clear light within the church for their members and attendants the social implications, at every level, of the experience of religion which they share through personal commitment to Christ and docility to his example. The Protestant churches, in America especially, are solidly anchored and deeply influential in the middle-income group, which holds the balance of power. So it is not so much public agitation that is needed as the conversion of our own people to Christian intelligence on such issues as world government, war and peace, race, and the economic tensions of the time, within the framework of full, Christian devotion. (*The president of a theological seminary in the East*)



The church needs today a rekindling of fires that have almost gone out, a reconsecration of hearts that have grown cold, a rededication to the task that so urgently calls us in this hour. The greatest need of the church today is for conversion. Cold, intellectual assent to the tenets of Christianity will not set the world on fire. Only when our hearts are warmed—strangely warmed—with a burning passion do we achieve the impossible for him. The church in all its interests must recapture the passion of the Christ. Our colleges have got to be Christian so that out of them will go forth inspired youth to become inspired leaders. Our Sunday schools and young people's organizations must be channels through which Christianity shall flow. Our churches in their service must attract in a new way the great unchurched masses of America. It will be either this

or chaos, for this is the hour when the church faces its greatest moment. (*The president of a college in the West*)

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First of all, it seems to me, that the fundamental need of the world right now is the old, old need which made it necessary for Christ to come into the world. No amount of scenery, no changes in organizations alone will serve to meet this need. We must get back to the great centralities of the gospel. In a sermon by Robert James McCracken, which I read recently, occurs this quotation from John Oman: "The churches are troubled, but it is about their numbers, their finances, and their enterprises, and not about what alone matters gravely—their message and the embodiment of it in their own fellowship". (*The pastor of a medium-sized church in an Eastern city*)

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I believe that the most important single change in church thinking and practice is the recognition, in all its implications, that the church is not an end in itself, but a means to a greater end—the kingdom of God. That involves a re-orientation of the objective and changes in the structure, program, and staffing required to reach the objective. Obviously the kingdom is not going to be achieved by the efforts of professional workers alone. They may build up the church as a membership, worshiping and contributing institution, but only when the dynamic revealed in the life and teaching of Jesus is carried out into business, professional, politico-economic and race relations will the Rule of God be realized. (*An interdenominational church executive*)

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We urgently need a new vision of the importance of our corporate witness. Because it is a witness we shall be saved from Utopianism, humanism, and trust in ourselves, as we seek to achieve it. Because it is corporate it will open to us the collective possibilities for good in the whole field of economic life as well as in our relationship to our government, other races, and to other nations. I am sure that much of the so-called intellectual and philosophical questioning of Christianity has really originated from the suspicion that in their corporate life Christians are reactionary and often an obstacle to social progress. A corporate witness does not mean starting with grandiloquent projects for changing the social order. It means for Christians to make a decision as to the difference that Christianity should effect in every phase of their community life and then go out to make this come true. They cannot expect a blueprint for this; they will have to be willing to make some experiments. One of the things that makes Communism as strong as it is in Russia is the fact that it is expressed first of all through the local Soviet on a community basis. Early Christianity was like this—but isn't today.

I feel increasingly that we may be missing God's most urgent message for our day as we dodge the gravity of the atomic energy crisis. It is not an expression of Christian faith but of fatuous humanistic optimism to dismiss it all by expressing the conviction that we as a society and a civilization will somehow survive. A sober rereading of the Old Testament prophets and reflection on the fact that our social order may be as truly marked for destruction as the nations of Judah and Israel were marked for national extinction by the judgment of God would be salutary. We need to draw on one of our unused resources of the Christian faith namely, our capacity for a qualified pessimism. I think we should go so far as to plan the strategy of



missions partly to meet the eventuality of the destruction of Western civilization through atomic war. (*A man missionary to Japan*)



Put great co-operative tasks at the forefront of the Church's outreach to the world. We have been Christian introverts too long. Now let us become great Christian extroverts—losing our lives in absorbing tasks to find them ever enriched by God's gracious presence and friendship with increasing numbers and members of the human family of every color, race, climate, and region. (*A man missionary to India*)



The atomic age means that for the first time in the world's history the Golden Rule becomes the only practical rule for guiding the conduct of the nations. The Machiavellian rule which had guided the nations during recent centuries never was really practical. Now it becomes obviously impractical even in the eyes of the hard-boiled. The challenge to the churches is to move out decisively and prove that that which is called moral and spiritual is also the most practical approach. In other words, Christian ways of thinking have to permeate the actions of everyone in his daily life. (*The editor of a liberal secular magazine*)



To find its way into the heart of the problems that threaten to destroy our world the church must not only preach the Cross, she must be willing to hang on it. She must be willing to lose her life, her structure, her organization, her reputation, her position, her power—if by so doing she can be free to throw her life into the whole world turmoil. She must be willing to suffer loss—and

perhaps even die in order that the peoples of the earth may find redemption and live to another age when they will build her anew. (*A woman missionary to Puerto Rico*)

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What changes should be suggested, I don't know. Would a Gallup Poll be any good in the situation? The "man-in-the-street" might have a word in season for us. (*An executive of a church board in Canada*)

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What, then, are these mistakes and faults and how may the church profit by them today? First, let us consider in what ways the church has failed in her endeavors or has not endeavored at all. She has done little, as yet, to re-educate the people who are members of prejudiced, biased, intolerant groups. She has done little to break down the barriers of racial and religious animosities, although she has not lacked words to decry these animosities and prejudices. The Protestant church and the Catholic church have achieved little of concrete value in the realm of interdenominational or interfaith fellowship, co-operation, and co-ordination. Oh, yes, we have banded ourselves together to form city, county, state, federal, and international councils of churches which co-ordinate and co-operate with the activities and projects of the individual churches or denominations, but how much have we achieved in breaking down the barriers of difference between churches or groups of churches, and in instituting true fellowship between these groups? Nor has the church actually educated her people to the high religious standards of right and wrong to such an extent that those standards are more than just preached and talked about but truly lived. And neither have we as the church—as the people who are supposed to have the

answers to the right and the only way of life—actually lived that way of life or helped men and nations to do so too.

The answers to these failures lie, I think, in three or four essential steps which the church must take if it is to be effective in moving out into new ways and areas to exercise moral and spiritual and social leadership in this era of atomic power.

The barriers of denominationalism must be broken through and new relationships of the very closest agreement and co-operation must be established. . . .

Our secular schools train men's minds after a fashion, but true and full development of the intellect cannot be achieved unless the spirit too is trained and developed. We must stop saying, "We can't teach religion in the schools." We must teach religion in the schools, for it cannot be divorced from secular life and remain meaningful or valid. We must not teach denominational religion in the schools; we need not. But we can and must teach the religion of higher morals and ethics, of honesty, tolerance, understanding, and brotherly love. These are the essence of true religion, yet they shut out neither Christianity nor Judaism.

And, socially speaking, the church must get out of the church in order to reach the unchurched peoples of the world. We rant and rave about juvenile delinquency, intemperance, crime, divorce, immorality, and all the other social evils of our time. Yet the voice of the church, though strongest in the outraged cry against these wrongs, is the feeblest and faintest of the voices that should propose and practice valid solutions.

In short, I feel as possibly you and many others do, that not only must the church wake her sleeping social and moral conscience but also she must cease her glorious

dreams of the kingdom of God and begin now to work and labor that the kingdom of God may become a reality.

I am but a teen-age high-school senior, and have far to go on the journey, but my life and its service are dedicated to the waking up of the church and marching in the Crusade for the Kingdom. But it will be more than a march. It will mean a lifetime of labor and grief and tears. But the salvation of humanity and the love of God make it the most worth-while quest I know. (*A girl high-school student in the mid-West*)

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Your question intrigues me and frustrates me. I am frustrated because my first reaction was to say that I would sweep aside all the church's organization and start from scratch. But, on second thought, that wouldn't do the job. No matter what kind of an organization we set up, there would still be the basic problem left: problems which grow out of the fact that we who make up the church are human beings, much too human, not very humane.

The trouble with the church today is not organizational. It runs much deeper than that. The trouble has nothing to do with programs, material, interpretation of religion, etc. It is far more basic than that. The real trouble is with people. It is inside of us. We are the trouble with the church. I often wonder if the Almighty hadn't repented of what He made and if He doesn't wish He could legally and morally wipe the slate clean and start all over again. It may be that it's time for another flood!

Seriously, the trouble is not with organizations, programs and the like, but with men. We have the grandest religion in the world, the only Saviour of men, the best moral standards, and all of that. We couldn't improve on that in a million years. What we need is to begin living what we

know to be right. We have the knowledge; we need the will and the power to do the deed.

We are so darned respectable in the church. Look first at the clergy. There is no finer group of men in the world; but, bless them, just try to get them to bind together to strike a mighty blow for Christ, and what do you find? We are all split up into a hundred different groups, not just along denominational lines but there are a dozen shades of opinion within the same communion, and few will really work alongside those whose views are just to the left or right of their own. Our ministers are well trained and they are cultured—they are real gentlemen—but we are not very concerned about anything. We are so involved in the economic system; we are so concerned about our future, about our children, our family interests, about our advancement that we can't really do anything beyond what our constituency approves. They lead us; we don't lead them. They call the tune and we dance. They pay the bills and we listen. Shades of Amos! Give us prophets, not puppets. I tell you, we are respectable. Did you hear what I said? We are respected by *everyone*. The world around us likes us and that is doom for the prophet of God.

Our people are respectable. Almost everybody is respectable in our denomination. That doesn't mean a thing. You can lie and still be respectable in the church. You can steal and still be among the upper crust in the church. You can commit adultery, swindle, just so you don't do it on a small scale—it must be big-time stuff. You can desert your family, get drunk, waste money, and thus deny the Christian stewardship of possessions, and do a thousand other things which defy God's moral government of the universe and you are still respectable in the church. The shades of difference between the church and the world have practically vanished, until we and the world are the same color.

The atomic age needs a John the Baptist. He would cry in the wilderness of America, and without benefit of homiletics or vestments would say:

"Repent ye; for the kingdom of evil (the atomic bomb) is at hand.

"For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Bernard Baruch, saying: If there is to be one world or any world there must be three 'minimum essentials,' control by an international body of production of the atomic bombs, inspection of all nations and their activity along this diabolical line, and punishment for those who violate this agreement.

"This is not all: O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance. And think not to say within yourselves. We have the A Bomb as our father. In that great and terrible day when the moon, the sun, and the stars shall be covered with blood, the atom bomb will be of no avail to you.

"And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. But he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

What I have been saying is this: the need of this and every hour is for character, Christian character, that is true, stable, loving. We need the kind of character that makes men big and forgiving. The kind that would make Americans world-minded, sympathetic, and loyal to our traditions while we take the broken world under our wing until it finds healing at the hands of God.

A colony of very small ants invaded our kitchen floor recently. I watched them as they filed in and out of the pantry, where a few grains of sugar had fallen. They were so excited. They bumped into one another; they raced here and there; they ran from the sugar to the anthill outside and back. They seemed so futile in their mad activity. I wonder if God, looking down on us, doesn't often feel about us as I felt about the ants.

These are days for the genuine stuff out of which greatness comes. If we are that kind we will handle that A Bomb problem, and we'll handle it in a God-like way. Even if we should fail to handle that problem now and are blasted to high heaven, if we are the kind of men I mean, our contribution to the stream of Christian tradition will be so great that because of us future generations somewhere will have the impulse and the will to outlaw the atomic bomb and thus rise up and call us blessed. (*The pastor of a large church in a Southern city*)

These answers to my inquiry have arisen out of the heat and burden of the day. They are not academic. Granted that the statements as a whole are not altogether comprehensive, yet they do indicate significant trends in thinking and presage the future. Furthermore, to me at any rate, the replies are inspiring chiefly because of the constant overtones of faith, confidence, love, and devotion, consistently expressing a determination that as for the church, *God shall be there!* One finds here men and women and youth "perplexed, but not in despair."

One thinks of Jesus and Peter, the Peter on whom the Master declared he would build his church "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." For, somehow, the deepest intimation of the certainty of Peter as the Rock upon which the church is and shall be built is hidden in

that beautiful and tender gospel story which reaches its full meaning and climax as Peter turns to Jesus and declares: "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."

Charles Rann Kennedy touched this mystically and memorably in *The Servant in the House*. Here is the yearning, the resolution, and the promise of the whole matter:

BISHOP: Now! Tell me about your church.

MANSON: I am afraid you may not consider it an altogether substantial concern. It has to be seen in a certain way, under certain conditions. Some people never see it at all. You must understand, this is not a dead pile of stones and unmeaning timber. It is a living thing.

BISHOP: Numberless millions!

MANSON: When you enter it you hear a sound—a sound as if some mighty poem chanted. Listen long enough, and you will learn that it is made up of the beating of human hearts, of the nameless music of men's souls—that is, if you have ears. If you have eyes, you will presently see the church itself—a looming mystery of many shapes and shadows, leaping sheer from the floor to dome. The work of no ordinary builder!

BISHOP: On the security of one man's name!

MANSON: The pillars of it go up like the brawny trunks of heroes; the sweet human flesh of men and women is molded about its bulwarks, strong, impregnable; the faces of little children laugh out from every corner-stone; the terrible spans and arches of it are the joined hands of comrades; and up in the heights and spaces there are inscribed the numberless musings of all the dreams of the world. It is yet building, building and built upon. Sometimes the work goes forward in deep darkness; sometimes in blinding light; now beneath the unutterable anguish; now to the tune of a great laughter and heroic shoutings like the cry of thunder. Sometimes, in the silence of the night time, one may hear the tiny hammerings of the comrades at work up in the dome—the comrades that have climbed ahead.



# 6

## The Folding Star

FOLDING STAR: "An evening star appearing about folding time." The verb *to fold*: "To confine sheep in a fold." Thus Webster's *New International Dictionary* informs you and then gives you further clarification from John Milton: "The star that bids the shepherd fold."

It was Stephen Neill, Assistant to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who led me to discover and ponder over the folding star so exquisitely touched with beauty and imaginative magnificence in Shelley's *Hellas*. These lines Bishop Neill quoted in a brilliant address:

"Swift as the radiant shapes of sleep  
From one whose dreams are Paradise  
Fly, when the fond wretch wakes to weep,  
And Day peers forth with her blank eyes;  
So fleet, so faint, so fair,  
The Powers of earth and air  
Fled from the folding-star of Bethlehem:  
Apollo, Pan and Love,  
And even Olympian Jove  
Grew weak, for killing Truth had glared on them;  
Our hills and seas and streams,  
Dispeopled of their dreams,  
Their waters turned to blood, their dew to tears,  
Wailed for the golden years."

We were assembled in the enlarged meeting of the International Missionary Council at Whitby, Canada, in July,

1947. It was the first world gathering of the Christian mission forces since the Madras Conference in 1938. Forty nations were represented. The theme of the meeting was "Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World." The spirit of the meeting became one of united, urgent and confident commitment to world evangelism; the delegates daring to state for publication:

"To preach to all men is not the same as to convert them. God alone can command success, and it is always open to men to resist His will. Yet, when we consider the present extension of the Church, and the divine and human resources available, we dare to believe it possible that, before the present generation has passed away, the Gospel should be preached to almost all the inhabitants of the world in such a way as to make clear to them the issue of faith or disbelief in Jesus Christ. If this is possible, it is the task of the Church to see that it is done."

The major achievement of the meeting was the working out, in complete harmony, of a strategy of partnership in the world Christian mission between the leaders of the older and younger churches, confessing that "progress in partnership depends in a measure on human insights and adjustments, but its origin is not found in these. Its source is in a common obedience to the living Word of God, given once for all in Jesus Christ, yet given anew through the Holy Spirit in every generation." The delegates emerged from Whitby believing and determined to demonstrate that in the world Christian task in policy, planning and action the older and younger church relationship would not be as either group leading or following—but a partnership. From the practical standpoint, as the findings of Whitby are released and implemented, this will be heralded as the major achievement.

Three weeks were spent in conference at Whitby and volumes will be written telling of what the reunited univer-

sal church now plans after the testing of separation caused by six years of war. Professor Kenneth Scott Latourette of Yale University, present at the conference, is to write, in popular book form, the official story of the meeting, describing fully the personnel, the program, the papers, and the conclusions. For years the world church will study this book and the Whitby findings as a guide to ecumenical advance.\*

Here, I would emphasize the fellowship at Whitby. For me this was the supreme value. In great and glorious reality we saw and experienced how truly the years have confirmed and sustained

"The Powers of earth and air  
Fled from the folding-star of Bethlehem."

For, to borrow a portion of the conference message, it was evident at Whitby,

"Throughout the war, the spiritual unity which binds in one the Body of Christ has never been broken. In country after country, those whom man's laws had made enemies found that it was beyond the power even of the desperate crises of war to make them anything but brethren of Christ. Twice within a single generation, missions and churches cut off from their home bases have been maintained throughout the days of separation by united international Christian action on a very large scale. Immediately the war was over, the old fellowships began to reassert themselves. The war has caused grievous wounds, but already it is clear that the Holy Spirit, the Healer, has begun and is continuing His work of reconciliation."

This great fact of the Starlit Fold overcoming worldly divisions became a memorable and living reality at Whitby, not so much from the programming and the planning or from the formal addresses as from the intimate experiences of fellowship. In this came the sense of the Eternal. In this one felt the Presence. In this one knew that God was there.

\* *Tomorrow Is Here*, by Kenneth Scott Latourette. Friendship Press.

If only all questioning hearts who wonder whether or not God is in the church today could have lived the three weeks of Christian fellowship at Whitby, no longer would there be meaning to the question, "Is God in there?"

Strangely enough, for my part, it was not the formal testimonies as to Christian achievement, either in the series of reports from all the world areas or in the evening of witnessing, when six first-generation Christians (from India, China, Cuba, the Philippines, Iran, and Europe), told of their conversions, which impressed me primarily and influenced me most. It was, rather, the day-by-day contacts with Christian men and women who by their extemporaneous remarks and actions, sometimes deliberately, sometimes unconsciously, in their simple and accustomed ways as fellow human beings, told me unforgettably of living where God lived and of walking with Him. The conference schedule being a crowded one, mealtime and teatime became treasured friendship hours. I came to understand as never before why so many of the high and memorable moments in the life of Jesus were at mealtime. The table talk at Whitby became almost sacramental.

First of all, there was the ever-enlarging awareness of the breadth, inclusiveness, and invincibility of the world Christian community which each mealtime emphasized. Did you ever sit at table with persons from other and different countries beside you, in front of you, and behind you—persons of different nationality about you, no matter which way you turned? And have you ever had this experience sixty-three consecutive times? And, if so, was it each time the natural and commonplace in the "breaking of bread" continually to be sharing marvelous things about the "bread of life" all over the world?

We ate in the college refectory at tables seating eight persons. At each meal we changed places, so that seldom

did the same people sit together. One day you would have breakfast with a Filipino, a Chinese, a Korean, a Norwegian, a South African, an Australian, and a German. Then there would be luncheon with an Iranian, an Indonesian, an Englishman, a Syrian, a Fiji-Islander, a Finn, and an Indian. Teatime would come, when we were not grouped at tables, and one might be surrounded by people from the Gold Coast, Mexico, Scotland, Uruguay, Malaya, Egypt, Cuba, Argentina, Ceylon, Switzerland, the West Indies, Puerto Rico, the Congo, Peru, Angola, Holland, Siam, Canada, and the United States—all conversing over the tea cups, and constantly the overtone of Christ was there. Then came dinner and one's table companions might well be a Belgian, a Burmese, a Dane, a Brazilian, a Swede, a Frenchman, and a New Zealander. It was a unique and significant experience to have table talk constantly on the international level and continually at a world-wide spiritual altitude.

One day I sat across from a Chinese professor. We learned that during the war he had been of particular interest to the Japanese because of his association with the present United States Ambassador to China, Leighton Stuart. Though the professor himself was rather reticent in talking about it, for eight months the Japanese military had kept him in solitary confinement. Unfortunately, solitary confinement was not unusual. But what this particular Chinese did during his incarceration was most unusual. He was not permitted to read or to write. Yet, on his release, this amazing person sat down and wrote poem after poem which he had composed and kept in memory while he was imprisoned. They were poems of Oriental beauty and Christian devotion, now to be published. I watched Professor Chao as he worshiped. His very demeanor at prayer spoke of the presence of God. To sit by him, to laugh with him, to share with him brought God near.

There was Chen Wen Yuen of China, a Methodist bishop. He had told of his conversion as a boy—and the price he had had to pay. He was only forty-eight years of age. From paganism to world Christian leadership he had come in so brief a span of years. He passionately pled for reinforcing the Christian mission in China. He told us that in 1926 there were 8000 Christian missionaries in China; in 1936, 6000; in 1946, 2000. He had the magnificent audacity to ask our assembly to set the goal of 20,000 missionaries for China in the near future. Bishop Chen was almost hilarious in his Christian adventuresomeness. One left the table after being with him, refreshed, stimulated, ready for things new.

Then there was also Ting Kwang Hsun of China, now a secretary of the Student Christian Movement of Canada, who during the war was acting pastor of the Community Church in Shanghai. So retiring and quiet a person he was that I shall never forget my utter amazement one mealtime, as conversation proceeded, to have this young man tell me, dispassionately and almost casually, of how he handled the Japanese military in Shanghai all during those hectic years of occupation. He kept the Community Church intact, holding all of its services regularly, and even ministered to prisoners in the internment camps. He knew well and vividly the guidance and protection of God. God's providence was no dramatic thing to him. He did not need to "practice the presence of God." He had *known* and *knew* the presence of God.

Chandrama Prem Nath Dass was a lovely person with whom to dine. Mrs. Dass, formerly principal of Isabella Thoburn College in Lucknow, radiated peace. I do not wax sentimental here. I have known Mrs. Dass ever since I was her guest in Lucknow in 1941. I have seen her under many circumstances since she came to the United States

two years ago. At the time of Whitby the newspapers were filled with the conflict in her homeland. The conference agenda covered many items of controversy as to education, social problems, nationalism, and racial issues—all cutting deeply into this sensitive Indian woman's mind and soul. Yet one found in her a deep well of spiritual confidence. She greeted every companion with charm and a bright Christ-touched spirit.

An Indian comrade of Mrs. Dass was Rajah Bhushanam Manikam, executive secretary of the National Christian Council of India. Dr. Manikam joined us in enjoying the good joke his name caused in the press. The enterprising reporters, noting the given name Rajah, thought he was an Indian prince and so headlined him in the newspapers. Dr. Manikam is a Christian statesman of the first order. Having been a professor in both Noble College in Masulipaham and Andhra Christian College in Guntur in 1937, as a layman, he was chosen to lead the united Christian forces in India through the past chaotic decade of political, social, and religious strife. His breadth of understanding of India's problems, his world-wide experience—he has traveled far afield—his quick and penetrating mind and his gentle God-filled spirit marked him a leader among men. He speaks to the point as one who knows truth intimately. It is not his mysticism, but his sense of certainty which gives one the assurance that this is a man of God. Being with Rajah Manikam for a while increased one's faith in the practical effectiveness of the mental and spiritual disciplines of the Christian religion.

A smile was always on the lovely face of Josefa Ilano, the brave little woman physician of the Philippines. To chat over the teacups with her, so attractively garbed in her wing-like Filipino dress, was as rejuvenating as the tea itself. It was difficult to realize the months upon months of

hardship this gentle and diminutive person experienced when she lived so dangerously under Japanese occupation. The Japanese had come to mean suffering and hate and bitterness to her, for she had been called on to try to heal wound after wound which the vicious occupying forces had so widely and grievously inflicted. Dr. Ilano was one of the few at Whitby who had come from a distant land not primarily to attend the world missionary conference. She had been brought to the United States to participate on a team with a Chinese and a Japanese in a mission of fellowship to the American churches. It was the Japanese woman, the notable Christian pastor, Rev. Mrs. Tamaki Uemura, who had put Dr. Ilano to her severest test. Dr. Ilano, the Filipino, did not know when she accepted the appointment to come to America, only a few months after the close of the war, that she would be asked to travel across the country for almost a year in most intimate and constant contact with a Japanese. Unexpectedly, a few weeks after her arrival in the U.S.A., Dr. Ilano found that she and Mrs. Uemura were in communicating rooms in a college dormitory and would be starting out the next day on a long journey as side-by-side traveling companions. Christian though she was, the years of war torture still dominated the little Filipino. How could she face the American public day after day by the side of that Japanese? In fact, how could she continue to face that Japanese? The two women had met during the day and had merely exchanged formal greetings. What of tomorrow and tomorrow, when they would be speaking together of the Christian religion? That first night not much was said between the two travelers before they retired. Dr. Ilano tossed restlessly. The Christian religion! This was no academic formal thing. Praying, the Filipino doctor knew that God was there. Quietly she slipped out of bed and across the room, and through the



communicating door she tiptoed. Swiftly she knelt beside the Japanese Christian's bed, where in united prayer there began a deep new love which transcended all that the hard and cruel years had known. The victory of this love in Christ was revealed in those two lives to thousands across spirit-starved America, and gave comfort and holiness and power. What a benediction came from God Himself as one watched the light in Josefa Ilano's eyes when we talked of what had come in a letter from Japan concerning the return of Mrs. Uemura, this paragraph particularly:

"Mrs. Uemura is back with us again, busy with her task of interpreting the heart of America to Japan in the same way as not long ago, she was interpreting the Japan she typifies to America. After resting for less than a week from those months of consecrated endeavor, she plunged into her task here. First, she went back again to the congregation which had been waiting so long and wistfully for her return. Then she presented to the Empress the beautiful Bible sent by the women of America, and talked for well over two hours with their Majesties, whose eyes, she says, welled up with tears more than once as she told her tale of the healing of wounds and the promise of the restoration of the long friendship that had been interrupted by the years of war. Auditoriums in Tokyo and Yokohama have filled with crowds of people who wanted to hear the message from her lips; and in a few days now she leaves to tour the western part of the land and tell the people there that the world can become one, but only in Jesus Christ."

Though no Japanese was present at Whitby, the spirit of the Japanese Christians was very much there. It was transmitted primarily through Charles Iglehart of Union Theological Seminary of New York, Far Eastern consultant of the International Missionary Council in Japan for many years, only recently returned from Japan on a government mission. Dr. Iglehart explained that not General MacArthur, who had permitted the prior coming of Mrs. Uemura, but the newly appointed Far Eastern Commission had pre-

vented any representative of the Christian Church in Japan to attend the world Christian conference at Whitby. This commission had not yet formulated a policy as to Japanese leaving Japan on foreign visitation, a matter the commission now held in rigid control. This was but part of the "tragic abnormality" of Japanese life, vividly described by Dr. Iglehart. His interpretation of Christian faith in Japan today was epitomized in what he told of Toyohiko Kagawa. Someone had remarked how amazed he was that Kagawa, now two-thirds of his normal weight, tired and overburdened with the responsibilities of a fevered peace after the terrible fire of war, could carry on so valiantly and continuously. To this Dr. Kagawa answered immortally, "What I have comes from God; but it is not strength, it is fire!" Somehow, as we mingled at Whitby, we remembered that. New understanding came to us as to what another meant when he wrote "Our God is a consuming fire."

Two Koreans were our table companions at Whitby: Kwan Sik Kim and Fritz Hongkyu Pyen; the former, chairman of the National Christian Council of Korea and general secretary of the Korean Presbyterian General Assembly; the latter, president of the Methodist Theological Seminary in Seoul and formerly general superintendent of the Korean Methodist Church. Both men had been pastors. Each carried the marks of physical and spiritual suffering, giving calm and certain witness to the victory in our Lord and our God. Dr. Pyen had a remarkable story. Because of his connection with foreigners in the seminary, the Japanese military had questioned him with utmost severity. For days he had been tortured in order to have him confess sedition, of which he had none to confess. In his prison cell they tied his arms behind him and hung him up by his wrists stretched up behind his back until he fainted, revived him, and then repeated the hideous process

over and over again. Weak and in horrible pain, he prayed. And how amazingly his prayers were answered. Quietly, conversationally—as one speaking out of some silently unfolding mystery—he told us how the prison commandant one day fell from his horse and while recuperating from his injuries had a vision. Some strange Figure told the Japanese officer he must stop persecuting the Christians. Shortly afterwards, Dr. Pyen was freed and the almost unbelievable occurred; his military prison torturer became a regular attendant at his church and later his friend. When sitting at table with Fritz Pyen one looked at him and felt the overpowering power of prayer. So that when Dr. Kim, one day, read to us a portion of a letter just received from Korea reporting that sixty of his pastor friends and associates had been imprisoned by the Russian military in northern Korea and persecution was running rife—one looked at Kim and then at Pyen and sensed serious concern but not alarm. It was overwhelmingly evident that these men had no fear—for they knew prayer.

Lootfy Levonian was a quiet person. He did not talk much around the tables. He did not have to, for after having heard his one brief address before a plenary session, one wanted only to look at him and hear his spirit speak. His was a spirit of humbling forgiveness out of a love tested over many arduous years. Professor Levonian, dean of the Near East School of Theology in Beirut and formerly a professor in the Central Turkey College of Aintab, who had also been dean of the School of Religion in Athens, was an Armenian who had known the inside of a prison cell as well as an academic classroom. Many of his family had been massacred by the Turks during World War I. In answer, Professor Levonian had rededicated his life to converting his enemies to the Christian faith. He soon became famous throughout the entire Near East for his forceful and

compelling tracts on the forgiving love of God in Christ. Many addresses by brilliant Christians were delivered to us as a perusal of the records of Whitby will show. But the address of Lootfy Levonian was the only one which majored on "forgiveness." Beclouded by so many personal, social, and national evils—past, present, and, from a human viewpoint, prospective—one sought to be near this brave Armenian to learn of his courage to forgive. For forgiveness is of the heart of God. And, undoubtedly, the unforgiving spirit keeps our awareness of Him dim. We thanked God for the deep love of Levonian.

What do the Fiji Islands mean to you? Do you know that in proportion to the total population they are perhaps the most Christian area of the world? Setareki Tuilovoni, young, tall, strong, and handsome, with his great head of bushy hair, captivated us with his tales of Christian achievement in Fiji. There he is minister of a Methodist church. Over 90 per cent of the people of the Islands are Christian. And what do you know of the Christian community in Indonesia, that storm-swept, troubled archipelago? Do you realize that there is a larger church in Indonesia than in China, Korea, Japan, and the Philippines combined? Toenggoel Sihombing, minister of the Batak Church, impressed that surprising fact on us with his youthful and contagious smile. These two young men, products of the Christian mission, were admirably alert and outspoken in the fellowship at Whitby. Unconsciously, as well as deliberately, they entered into every conversation as eager and ready witnesses of the power of God. We Occidentals, with all our wealth and possessions, conditioned by our modern scientific acquirements, needed—really rather desperately—the fresh and unsophisticated spirit of these young Pacific Islanders living so enthusiastically and confidently with their living God. When I

am tired and discouraged I shall always remember them.

The future belongs to Africa. If you doubt that, I wish you could know Christian Goncalves Baeta and Seth Mokitimi. Baeta comes from the Gold Coast, where he is synod clerk of the Ewe Presbyterian Church. Mokitimi comes from South Africa, where he is chaplain and housemaster of the Healdtown Missionary Institution in Fort Beaufort. The International Missionary Council honored itself and forecast the trend of the future by electing Mr. Baeta one of its vice presidents.

The insight and courage of these two strong Africans are symbolized clearly and dramatically in an incident which Mr. Mokitimi told us. It seems that recently in South Africa a Christian student conference of some two hundred young people finally decided, after long and controversial consideration, to permit six black South Africans to attend the conference; but they had to sit, eat, and sleep in segregated groups. And it seems, also—and what Christian dare not take warning, as well as be ashamed—that at that same time, near by in South Africa, the Communists held a conference at which black and white were equally represented without any degree of segregation or discrimination. As our friends and brothers, Christian Baeta and Seth Mokitimi ate and lived with us at Whitby, without segregation or discrimination, thank God, we saw, as in no other companionship, the Light of the Folding Star.

Except, perhaps, did the Folding Star of Bethlehem shed its light supremely on the indestructible Christian fold when we sat together with our three German friends, Karl Hartenstein, Walter Freytag, and Carl Heinrich Ihmels. They had come directly to Whitby from the American, British, and Russian zones of Germany, respectively. Each of these German ministers is the head of a German foreign missionary society. Undernourished and hungry these

German friends were, it almost brought tears to my eyes to watch them enjoy good food. As one ate with them, food became sacred. The bountiful meals at Whitby made new men physically of the German Christians. Their bountiful spirits made new men of all who shared at table with them.

I shall never forget how Hartenstein preached one day on the blessings of Israel. I shall never forget how Freytag quoted Bishop Worm as saying of the German Church during the Nazi regime "We did not do what Christendom expected of us." I shall never forget Ihmels, old and gray, telling me how he had had opportunity to leave the Russian zone for the American zone but had resolved, come what might, even after the long penalties of Nazism and war, to remain in Leipzig with his society and his people. Living those days at Whitby with these three gracious and devoted German Christian gentlemen, I came to understand the deep and tender meaning in this excerpt from a letter received, after a recent visit to Germany, by my good friend Conrad Hoffmann, Director of the Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews of the International Missionary Council:

"You can hardly guess what it means for us to see that a man with a world-wide experience like you is able to look at these tragic things which happened in Germany, with the sentiment of pure sympathy and benevolence! Your visit in our house was not only a tremendous joy for us all, it was at the same time a well-felt strengthening of our heart. I have experienced, speaking with you, what it means that a man is full of kindness. We can understand that the world is used to condemn after all what happened, but we also are aware of the fact that the mere condemnation is useless without replacing the former evil by some new and better thing. It is the secret of the Christians that they are able to live by forgiving, thus, they can really forgive."

The two veteran statesmen at Whitby were, of course, John R. Mott and James C. Baker, the former, chairman-emeritus, and the latter, chairman of the International Missionary Council. These are two men of God who stand very gloriously at the gateway of the Christian fold, clearly in the strong and sure Light of the Folding Star. Bishop Baker, serene and poised, with always a word of commendation and good cheer, guided the Council with kindness, fairness, and good judgment. As for Dr. Mott, indeed he need but look about him and over the earth to see his monument, the ecumenical movement rising on the stalwart foundation of Christian unity.

When Dr. Mott spoke at Whitby, surveying the world and relating his part in, and plans and hopes for, the ecumenical movement, God was always there! Yet a strange and wonderful thing happened toward the close of Dr. Mott's opening address, which gave us all a special awareness of God's Presence.

As he spoke, Dr. Mott stood on a rostrum before a velvet curtain, the curtain drawn to cover the altar used in the worship services. Toward the end of his address, the beloved leader, now eighty-two, seemed to falter for a moment. He turned his back to the audience, and, forgetting the curtain had been drawn, said abruptly, "I thought the cross was here." He fumbled with the curtain. He could not draw it aside. With some confusion and disappointment, he turned to continue his address, but his words were not very clear. Suddenly, a West Indian Negro moved swiftly from his seat to back of the curtain and returned holding aloft the cross. He placed it on the speaker's desk before John R. Mott. Dr. Mott paused, smiled, and restored and renewed, centered his message on the cross—and ended his address triumphantly. Wherever and whenever we saw Dr. Mott at Whitby we thought of him

standing there behind that cross. What parable and reality are in the fact that a Negro from a mission land had found and lifted up the Cross!

“And what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell . . . of [all] the prophets [who assembled from the ends of the earth at Whitby]: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises . . . escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong. . . . And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. Wherefore . . . let us run with patience the race that is set before us . . . looking unto Jesus. . . .”

Even so! The witnesses at Whitby have but raised a standard. Its emblem is Bethlehem's Folding Star. But the Fold of the Great Shepherd is more than history and it is greater than testimony. It is *life*. And that includes more than the life of Whitby yesterday. It must be revealed in the world Christian community today and tomorrow. It must be lived in your life and mine. That is why the closing paragraph of the message sent from Whitby points to the only way in which any church or community may tell the world that “God is here”:

“In the end, renewal comes down to the individual. Total evangelism demands the co-operation of every single Christian. Each one must bring his gift of service and all must be partners by prayer in the enterprise of the church. The demand of the hour is that every Christian should face the challenge of Christ, should sanctify himself by the power of the Holy Spirit, should learn to live as a Christian in his own place and vocation and should witness boldly for Christ by both life and word, trusting the power of Christ to use him, and leaving the result of his work in the hands of God.”



## Above All, Keep the Vision

"Somewhere inside of me  
 There must have always been  
 A tenderness  
 For the little, lived-with things  
 A man crowds upon his worn fistful of earth;  
 Somewhere inside of me  
 There must have always been  
 A love  
 Made to fill the square aggressiveness of new-cut hedges,  
 And feed the pursed green mouths of baby leaves,  
 A love made to understand  
 The way grass cuddles up to porch steps leaned upon by time,  
 And why dandelions nudge the stones along the walk;  
 A love for garden hose curled sleeping in the noon hush,  
 Coolness trickling lazily from its open mouth,  
 For shingles starched and saucy in white paint,  
 And an old rake rusty with dreams of tangled grass and  
     butterflies.  
 A love  
 For candle flames, like pointed blossoms on their ghostly  
     stems,  
 And frost-forests breathing wonder on the parlor windows.  
 Somewhere inside of me  
 There must have always been  
 An altar of hewn stones  
 Upon which my love casts these—  
 Burnt offerings—  
 To make a sweet savor  
 Unto my soul.  
 Give me the strength, my God,

To scatter my fires and tumble the altar stones in confusion;  
Give me the strength to raise my eyes,  
So that hard and sharp across my heart  
Like shadow cut on mountain rock,  
Will fall the frozen agony of sunset—  
So that I can see  
The swept laughter of clouds spun into the blue web of  
infinity,  
So that my soul can reach out  
And melt in the sweep of forever  
Above all these.”

*Altar Smoke* was written by Rosalie Grayer, a seventeen year old student at the Abraham Lincoln High School in Brooklyn, N. Y. I discovered it one day in the New York *World Telegram*. I place the poem here for two reasons. First, in these days, when so many of our youth have become cynical and disillusioned because of war and its tragic results, it seems to me to be wonderfully significant and encouraging that in the midst of a great city pressed upon by all of its paganisms and disappointments a sensitive young girl should express goodness, beauty, and truth so exquisitely and meaningfully. And, second, this touch of modern verse is included because of what it inspired Mrs. Helen Frith Stickney, poet and vice-president of the Poetry Society of America, to say, when, as one of the judges in the Inter-High School Poetry Contest, she shared in awarding the first prize to Miss Grayer for *Altar Smoke*. As the newspaper reported, “Mrs. Stickney told the young poets, ‘Above all, keep the vision!’”

To the youth of our time and, indeed, to all their elders this one strong plea is the supreme imperative: ABOVE ALL, KEEP THE VISION!

A friend of mine who was interned during the war years by the Japanese in the Philippines, reported that during the latter period of her imprisonment the Japanese military

would not permit the prisoners at any time to look up at the sky. Imagine what it meant during those long anxious months never to be able to take one's eyes from the ground. A severe penalty was the bitter price paid by anyone caught looking upward. Then one day came the sound of planes. Penalty or no penalty, all eyes turned toward the sky. See the glorious harbingers of freedom! Behold! A vision of life!

But the vision did not last long. The most difficult days of all were ahead. How tragic were the weeks which followed freedom! For the Japanese military returned in a vicious counter-attack. Through the sky came shrapnel from Japanese military positions. Those first weeks after release from internment, until the Japanese military was finally driven out by the American troops, were the hardest of all, terrible beyond description.

The experience of those post-internment days presaged what was to happen to the entire world after the first flush of the joy of an allied victory. The tragedy of war compelled all of us to keep our eyes on the ground. Humanity's eyes could not look very far into the future when bombs and guns of war were blinding them. All of us were (and are) prisoners of war, no matter what we may have been doing during war time. Throughout the long, hard fight for freedom there was the desperate hope for an aftermath of peace. What came was a relatively few hours of hysterical post-war exultation mixed with fearful thanksgiving. Then came, swiftly and ominously, the horrible war psychology all over again. Insanely soon, bitterness, distrust, hatred, and greed have resurrected themselves among the nations. It has been harder than ever to look upward, to see clearly, to walk with vision.

Clouds of cynicism darkening the soul have marked the beginning of the post-war era. Professor Ferre of Andover

describes the situation pointedly: "A lostness and wistfulness characterize our age. Men would be saved but dare not or will not. . . . They see the way and give it a nod. Life at a creative and satisfactory level cannot go on without trust, honesty, responsibility, and self-giving concern. When (the cynic) . . . is faced with the problem of surrender to this fact . . . he fights shy of it." He turns away and seeks an escape. He avoids the issue. He keeps his eyes on the ground of his doubts, his fears, his anxieties.

Jesus knew how hard it was for men to keep the vision. He talked and walked with a people imprisoned by imperialism, ecclesiasticism, and personal sins. His intimate companions were always keeping their eyes on the near, mostly on themselves. Hear him as he tried to send them on with a vision and a sense of mission: "Lift up your eyes! Lift up your eyes!"

We have endeavored to face facts honestly in these pages. What we once called a Christian civilization, including the Christian church, which has been an integral part of that civilization, has not come through too well. Our souls are torn and unclean; ideals have been shattered; promises have been broken; nationalism, racism, and imperialism still breed their ilk; war threatens still. We cannot cry peace when there is no peace—but, above all, we must keep the vision!

What vision?

The vision of idealistic youth yet daring to believe that there shall be "on earth peace, good will toward men."

The vision of praying men still having the courage to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

The vision of singing souls, singing persistently and majestically,

"Let every kindred, every tribe  
On this terrestrial ball,  
To Him all majesty ascribe,  
And crown Him Lord of all."

The vision of the prophets who in each successive generation have promised that "he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nations shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

This vision: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

"Lift up your eyes!" "Lift up your eyes!" Above all, keep the vision!

But how? Well, that's a fair question. Far too often we let the vision fade from us because we do not discipline ourselves with a reasonable and determined methodology. A professor of religion states that he has found that his students want to assume faith and go right on. "As they come back in later years," he adds, "from their churches or from the chaplaincy they keep telling me: 'Stress method! That's what helped me most.'" How shall the Christian church keep the vision these blinding days? That is our concluding concern. For "where there is no vision the people perish," and to perish is to be without God.

By way of summarizing what we have tried to say thus far, let us consider two fundamentals concerning Christian vision which the church in its preaching, teaching, and individual and collective living must ever hold before its leaders, its members, the community, and this and every other nation, if it is to be in close communion with God and effectively release redeeming power for the healing and salvation of this suffering world.

*In viewing and reviewing the events of our days, let the church ever keep and share the clear vision of people behind the headlines, people who are hungry and must be fed, who are lonely and long for friendship, who are lost and need Christ.*

For we are cursed by the headline point of view. Headlines are primarily superficial labels of the worst in society. The dominant factor in the press is the headline appeal. By "the press" we mean mass communication: newspapers, radio, motion pictures, magazines, and books. This is the field covered by The Commission on Freedom of the Press sponsored from 1942 to 1946 by *Time, Inc.*, *Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.* and the University of Chicago under the chairmanship of Chancellor Robert M. Hutchins. In the report of the commission, entitled *A Free and Responsible Press*, published in 1947 by The University of Chicago Press, it is asserted that the press is "probably the most powerful single influence today." "What is needed, first of all," the commission continues, "is recognition by the American people of the vital importance of the press in the present world crisis. We have the impression that the American people do not realize what has happened to them. . . . They have not yet understood how far the performance of the press falls short of the requirements of a free society in the world today." As for the headline issue the commission argues: "To attract the maximum audience, the press emphasizes the exceptional rather than the representative, the sensational rather than the significant. Many activities of the utmost social consequence lie below the surface of what are conventionally regarded as reportable incidents. . . . The effort to attract the maximum audience means that each news account must be written to catch headlines."

Note the irony, for instance, in the headline psychology

which dominates *Life* magazine. Priding itself on its tenth anniversary by boasting of its keen analysis of the American scene, *Life* presented in its anniversary number a retrospect of the major events and segments of America during the years 1936-1946. How sensation-seeking and degrading was this appraisal of the years. Even *Life's* best writer, John Chamberlain, in the lead article on the decade dealt with it superficially and with vulgarity. He ignored the development of any philosophy of life. Nowhere did he mention the conflict of ideologies which has characterized so indelibly the past years. The most revealing omission is lack of any reference to religion. The aspirations and the dreams, the hopes and the fears of humanity are directly neglected and are not even presented by inference.

One of the most dastardly curses of war is that we as victims of a vicious propaganda which is repeated and repeated, build up half-true or completely false concepts of people by labeling the nations and their citizens with the character of their worst weaknesses and evils. Interminably the headlines spew forth "Nazi," "Jap," "Communist" on the hysteria and stupidity in American life, spattering and beclouding all of us.

Before I went to the Argentine in 1944, I was warned by North Americans, themselves victims of the press, that I should be careful not to speak English on the streets of Buenos Aires; for if I did, it was quite possible I would be slapped by Argentinians because they would recognize me as a North American. Yet, as a matter of fact, when I walked through the streets of beautiful Buenos Aires, even though I realized there were political forces at work doing great harm to the country, I discovered cordiality and friendship among the common people which surpassed my wildest expectations.

Ruth Seabury tells of an American soldier, who, on his

return from Japan, exclaimed to her, "I am a loyal American, Miss Seabury, and I have served my country. I have done my best to be patriotic and I certainly do not want to seem traitorous in my attitudes. But, Miss Seabury, I must confess that after the past months serving with the occupation forces in Japan, well—doggone it—I've come to like those Japs."

The present journalistic purpose seems to be for the headlines to do their best, or worst, by slurs, insinuations, accusations, and threats, to make us fear and hate the Russians. It is always difficult to determine whether the headlines merely exaggerate the facts or insidiously attempt to stir up the people and thereby make the facts precarious. It was a courageous and much needed word which Wilbur La Roe, Jr., of Washington, D.C., an outstanding Protestant layman, wrote to *The New York Times*: "This situation calls not for weak statesmanship but for Christian understanding and healing. It does not call for sending a fleet to the eastern Mediterranean, for military maneuvers across the Arctic, or for selecting the Western Pacific as the place to demonstrate the force of the atomic bomb. All these things are morally certain to increase Russia's 'iron ring' fear complex. It is of such stuff that war is made."

In *The American*, Howard Fast tells of Albert Parsons, the leader of labor in the social and political struggle of America at the turn of the century. The powers that be hanged Parsons after he had been framed. They called him a Socialist, a Communist, and an Anarchist. All of which he was not. He was an American fighting for the rights of the common people. The political masters of his time would not understand. They were looking and thinking in terms of headlines. After the death of Parsons, a friend, standing before the judge who had sentenced the labor leader to death, dared say: "We must understand



some of the things which went into the makings of Parsons. All of them we can't understand, for there is no man whose life isn't a secret book; and so much of it is a code which only God himself could ever decipher."

The headlines are at times conscious of internationalism, but even then they do it no lasting service. Our need is some greater force than headline internationalism to go beyond "one world" to "one people." A delightful and brilliant woman of India, Miss Mangat Rai, principal of Kinnaird College in Lahore, found herself in the company of a group of American Army officers when she was crossing the Atlantic to the United States. She sat in my office a day after her arrival and told me of her respect for the American officers and how much she had appreciated their companionship on the journey. "But," she said, "when we were parting at the dock one of the officers said to me, 'It has been fine to know you Miss Mangat Rai, but I pray God that I'll never have to see that dirty, filthy, ugly country of India again.'" Miss Mangat Rai smiled wanly and remarked quietly, "You see, friend, it takes more than headlined international contacts to build understanding."

Leaving his wife and children, Theodore Romig, a young missionary, went to China, following the war, to help in Christian reconstruction. In the interior he found that his ministry included service to American troops as well as mission reconstruction work. After two years he prepared to come home on an emergency furlough. A number of the young soldiers with whom he had become quite friendly came to say good-by. Romig asked one of them what impression they now had of the Chinese. "Frankly," replied the young fellow, "we G.I.'s summarize our attitude toward the Chinese by three D's." "What does that mean?" asked Romig. "Dirty, dumb and dishonest," the G.I. replied. The young missionary obviously was reliving this incident and

thinking of his many clean, brilliant, honest Chinese friends when he said to me with a sigh, "Yes, it takes more than international contacts to see clearly and understand another people adequately."

At a conference sponsored by the New England Council in Boston, November, 1946, President Conant of Harvard spoke prophetically when he said, "To my mind, discussions of different nations and plans for their future are often carried on with too much emphasis upon political machinery and the economic structure; too little regard is paid to the actual relations that exist between individuals and families, too little understanding is manifest of the structure of society." At the same conference Dr. E. Wight Bakke, director of Yale University's labor and management center, stated at an industry panel that a "lack of understanding of the survival needs of the other fellow was at the root of the specific difficulties between labor and management."

One is stirred and encouraged by the clear insight in this further word from *While Time Remains*, by Leland Stowe: "There are no 'foreigners' in a world that shrinks as recklessly as we ourselves are making this world shrink. *There are only people.* It is a fortunate man and a fortunate nation that has many people as friends . . . the American people are still lured by the sirens of prejudice and emotionalism. . . . I never saw or heard of any racial discrimination whatever, while I served as a war correspondent in the Soviet Union. For the yellow, brown and black races—for the underdogs of the earth—this common citizenship and racial equality undoubtedly constitute, in Owen Lattimore's beautifully apt phrase, an inestimable 'power of attraction.' . . . The recent war showed Americans to be considerably less exportable than most of our allies. . . . They raise the question sharply as to whether, collectively, we are capable

of holding or winning the friendship of most of the world's peoples. . . . In patriotism my mark was never less than 100. In understanding of other nations and the qualities of their peoples, it never could have been much over 5 per cent. It is safe to say that this discrepancy and disproportion are very little less in most American schools today. . . . For of all our complicated world problems and all the recurring political crises among the great powers, the most frightening thing in today's world is and remains the terrible unpreparedness of the American people either to co-operate constructively for peace or to assume their necessary rôle in world leadership."

While I was waiting for a plane in Cuba one night I wandered about an airport casually reading notices and signs posted here and there. From out of the commonplace a striking sentence held me. Blazoned across a Pan American Airways poster were these bold words: "THERE ARE NO DISTANT LANDS." Yes, echoes Edna St. Vincent Millay, "There are no islands any more." You cannot hold back the world!

Then they tell me the scientists are on the way toward perfecting a rocket which will hit a dime 5,000 miles distant, and also poison gas so powerful as to be able to kill all vegetation and thus starve entire populations. Harold J. Laski may be under fire for his radicalism, but he is wise enough to know this: "We have learned in the hour of danger how truly we are members one of another."

After his visit to the United States as a delegate to the United Nations Conference at San Francisco, one of the leading members of the Iranian government remarked to a friend of mine he was thankful that before he had gone to the United States he had known, had lived with, and had been taught by American missionaries in Iran. When it

is lifted into the perspective of the facts and meaning of the world Christian mission, this brief comment reveals there is a way to build foundations for a world order of brotherhood and true internationalism. The Christian mission produces the things that make for peace. The Christian mission gives notice that there are *people* behind the headlines, and that if there is to be peace people must be looked upon, each by the other, from the viewpoint of him who, knowing much about the good and the bad, the strength and the weakness in all men, counseled: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?"

One of the most impressive interpreters of Oriental life, Robert J. McMullen, former president of Hangchow Christian College in China, latterly president of Center College in Kentucky and now Executive Secretary of the Associated Boards of China Colleges, tells of standing near a bridge in Shanghai watching the Japanese soldiers, during the early part of the Sino-Japanese conflict, pushing and tormenting Chinese coolies with their bayonets. An American woman who had served in Japan as a missionary teacher was standing by Dr. McMullen watching the behaviour of the brutal Japanese soldiery. With tears streaming down her face, the woman kept crying: "My boys, my boys. I knew many of those Japanese boys when they were in my school. They never were that way before. They were such fine boys. See what war has done to them." As he related this story, Dr. McMullen spoke tenderly of his own son serving with the armed forces in China and prayed audibly, "O God, keep my boy from such a change. Save him from the brutality and penalty of war!"

"Angels of peace and joy go round the clock  
Proclaiming that Emmanuel is come;  
But the cold shepherd hides behind his flock,  
And the steel feathers whistle down and bomb  
Monte Cassino Abbey, where we pray:  
'Where shall we run to? O where shall we hide?  
The Angels' wings are flaming on this day,  
The riders of the sky are stupified  
With justice. Father Shepherd, let us run  
And find a place of hiding from the face  
Of our Redeemer.' 'But, my dearest son,  
My son,' you whisper, 'there's no hiding-place,  
Though in the armor of obedience,  
Michael, the Fowler, fly to your defense.'"\*

Behind the headlines are all the weaknesses, sufferings, fears, and sins, and all the aspirations, dreams and possibilities of our *common* humanity. There are *people* behind the headlines! Richard Crossman, the British M.P., in *Palestine Mission*, his personal record as a member of The Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry into the problems of European Jewry and Palestine, states that a major purpose of his interpretation of the experience and findings of the committee is to emphasize "the need, on the part of British and American statesmen, for imagination and understanding strong enough to see through official papers to the human problems which they too often conceal."

It is encouraging to sense this trend of understanding in world affairs. Listen to John W. Davis: "There can be no such thing as lasting peace that is not founded on the decent treatment of human beings." Or, again, hear General Eisenhower: "Governments search for peace but in the end it will be the citizens of all countries who must outlaw war." It was "we the people of the United Nations" who wrote the San Francisco Charter. The Covenant of

\* *Monte Cassino*, by Robert Lowell, in *Common Sense*, December, 1945.

the League of Nations was a compact "among the High Contracting Powers."\* We are making progress!

It is the special and bounden duty of the Christian church today—in its preaching and teaching and in all of its community, national and international services and relationships—to keep clear, vivid, and impelling that there are *people* behind the headlines and, particularly, that there are these three global facts:

*People are hungry!*

Once upon a time people on one side of the headlines could callously attempt to ignore this fact about people on the other side. The theme song of the American isolationist, "Let the rest of the world go by," is sticking in his throat. American philanthropy and a new economic order for America, as essential as they may be, are not sufficient answer. Let the terrifying irony and revelation of Stewart Alsop duly warn and edify us. He writes from Cairo on April 20, 1947:

"Animals in Egypt, and in most other Middle Eastern countries, are more valuable commodities than people. The donkeys, horses and camels are on the whole better fed, housed and cared for than the unfortunate fellahin. A few years back, Americans could afford to react to this information with an indifference only faintly tinged with a mild and distant indignation. It has now become, however, a fact which closely affects the vital American interest. For Egypt, like a number of other states in this area, is a Marxist's dream of a decadent capitalist state rushing headlong down the Gadarene slope toward social revolution."

As the conscience of the state, the church must now, as never before, show clearly and without equivocation that it understands the terrific and far-reaching implications of the hunger of people, before the church can expect the gov-

\* "Declaration of Interdependence" issued by the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

ernments of the world to do much about it. Recently a deputation of Americans surveying post-war conditions in Europe spent a few hours in conference with the young rector of St. Martin's in the Field, the historic church on Trafalgar Square, London. The Americans had come down the circular staircase leading from the rector's study to the side door of the church and were about to go out into the street, when the rector called to them from the top of the staircase, "This last word before you leave. Never forget that what the church does about bread during the coming months will determine not only the future of the church but also the fate of the world for the next century."

One remembers an American chaplain who, following his return from Asia after the war, iterated and reiterated that in so far as the peoples of Asia were concerned it was time to recognize that a gospel for the poor which has no concern with the cause and cure of poverty is nothing more or less than an emasculated gospel and that unless Christians can, in the words of Kagawa, "baptize their bread and butter" by showing the relevance of Christianity to their economic life, their prospect for bringing about the baptism of souls is very poor.

You would think that the church needed no prompting to care for hungry people as a priority. Yet certain churches still debate the question of what should come first these days in Christian service. That is why in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City, on a day dedicated to the oppressed people of the world, Howard Thurman, the American Negro scholar and preacher, speaking from the pulpit of the cathedral, chose as his subject "Apostles of Sensitiveness." It is revolting to listen to church councils demand that some plans be instituted for the revitalization of the spiritual life of the church in America and then find ensuing discussions entirely given to techniques

of building up church attendance and projects of evangelism, without any apparent awareness that though man cannot live by bread alone he cannot live without bread. "Life without freedom is meaningless. So also is freedom without life meaningless. If Europe and Asia are to have the freedom for which the war was fought and are not to sink once again into the quagmire of demagogic deception and fascist illusion, their peoples must be fed. Freedom means food."\*

Halford Luccock once said, "The trouble with church windows is that you cannot see out of them." Sometimes you can. But the question is, What do you see? I remember visiting a beautiful little church on the edge of the desert near Tucson, Arizona. At the rear of the chancel there was no stained glass, but, instead, a window of clear transparent glass, so that at sunset as one worshiped he could look through this altar window across the desert to the gorgeous hills beyond. That was most inspiring in the days before the war. But now something more is needed. Behind the altar there needs to be a window open so wide that a worshiper may see and feel the pain of the world, and suffer, and then go and do something about it.

You may remember the incident told by Pierre Van Passen in *Earth Could Be Fair*, when the Dutch Admiral Piethin returned home from the war. He stood on the doorstep of his homestead cottage and called a greeting to his mother. "Don't come in son, till you've wiped your feet on the doormat," his mother called back to him. If this be a parable, it is now passé. The dirt and hunger and destruction of war cannot be wiped off easily before home ties in the Christian fellowship are reunited. Christian homes, like Christian churches, must take into their aware-

\* *World Alliance News Letter.*



ness and experience the stains which mark the hunger of the world.

*People are lonely!*

The genius of the success of Alcoholics Anonymous is fellowship. A man or woman addicted to drink finds it hard to refuse an invitation to join a group at a bar or a cocktail party because of the appetite for drink, and, also, because of the hunger for comradeship. On being taken into the stimulating and strengthening fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, though there are other major factors involved, one feels no longer apart—one gains the sense and experience and strength of belonging. This is but a limited example taken from one type of the vast number of lonely people across the world who are separated from their fellow men by varied weaknesses, sickness, poverty, wealth, nation, or race. As an extreme but lucid illustration from another area of loneliness read this pathetic and revealing testimony of an American who found himself afflicted by the disease of leprosy:

"We who are afflicted with leprosy do not begrudge a sufferer of any disease his freedom; but existing rules and regulations and the opinion of some health boards are inconsistent. For example, victims of diseases other than leprosy are permitted to travel at will on public carriers or by any other means of transportation. They may stop at hotels and tourist camps, dine in cafes, and they receive every courtesy and attention from the operators of such public conveyances and eating places.

"On the other hand, if one of us wants to make a visit home, he must first obtain permission from the medical officer in charge of the leprosarium, then permission from the boards of health in the states through which he plans to travel. The leprosy patient also must agree not to stop in any hotel or dine in any restaurant, and must furnish his private conveyance to and from his destination. If tuberculosis is 100 times more contagious than leprosy (which is declared in a state-

ment I have from an outstanding member of a state board of health) and if one tuberculosis patient is 100 times a greater menace to public health than is a leprous individual, then why the discrimination? The answer is easy. Traditional teachings have caused a universal prejudice against those who have leprosy.

"There are said to be less than 2,000 cases of leprosy in the United States. Leprosy is not a major problem to be dealt with in this country. The greatest obstacle we have in trying to gain our rightful place in the world is the disparaging talk about us, both oral and written. Individuals who are in a position to assist us reverse the actual duties of their offices when they speak of us as 'the living dead,' 'the unclean,' and the 'social outcasts.' Terms such as those do us the greatest injustice imaginable."\*

It is a fair question to ask whether certain classes, nations and races are not treated by others as though they were leprous and accordingly to be regarded as outcasts. The conditions of the untouchables of India are not only very well known but arrogantly sentimentalized by certain Britishers, who use the caste of untouchability as an excuse to discriminate against all Indians. Furthermore, the vast majority of North Americans deal with the Negro race as though they were untouchables of the worst degree. With others it is the yellow race. With many it is the Germans. Now it is the Russians' turn for outcast treatment. Who will be next? How difficult it is for those of us who are protected and enhanced by an ever-enlarging circle of privileges in home, class, nation, and race to forget and overlook the frustrations and subsequent bitterness which rise in the minds and spirits of those who are continually being pushed aside because they happen to be of a particular class, nation, or race. From a political point of view Sumner Welles put his finger right on the spot when he said that the United States lost its greatest opportunity in

\* From a pamphlet issued by The American Mission to Lepers.

its effort to bring peace to the world when at the San Francisco Conference, our nation's representatives did not demand bold, unequivocal, and thorough dealing with the status and problems of the smaller nations, and of the colonies in particular.

It is unnatural and unchristian for people to live separated from each other and, worst of all, to live separated from God. How dare we Christians try to keep to ourselves the comradeship which we have in Christ? The building of Christian fellowship is the primary task in our time. For this reason, I am convinced that the greatest obstacle to the advance of the Christian faith across the earth is the Jim Crowism of the Christian church of America and of the large majority of its institutions. To talk in general terms of building the world church through the Christian mission is not enough; there must be the demonstration of true Christian fellowship. One is reminded of the scene in Lillian Smith's *Strange Fruit*, in which a woman character, asked to face the problem of racial discrimination at her doorstep, shrugs her shoulders and casually remarks that she is too busy. She announces that she has plans that afternoon to attend a foreign missions meeting to study conditions and needs in India!

A Russian statesman shocked the American public when he was quoted in the press as saying that in view of the repeated accusation by Americans and British that Russia was behind an "iron curtain," he would call attention to the fact that America and Great Britain were each living behind a "velvet curtain." Whether or not we agree with the Russian, and no matter how true it may be that Russia is behind an "iron curtain," we have to admit that the "velvet" of privilege and possession hangs heavily about Great Britain and America. A velvet curtain is as hard to see through as an iron one. The curtain of privilege and great

possession is a terribly perilous barrier to seeing the needs of others, and, consequently, it is an exceedingly dangerous hindrance to world fellowship and peace.

We have a great country, we Americans. There is nothing in all the world comparable to the beauty, natural resources, wealth, freedom, and faith of the United States of America. I have been in fifty-five countries during the past ten years, and each time I have returned from a foreign journey, like every other sane American, I pray a prayer of thanksgiving to God for my country. But may God save us from unrighteous pride and self-sufficiency. Daily we should read as a warning the parable of the Pharisee and the publican. We are in danger. No matter how great the privileges and how effective the processes of democracy in any given country, "we cannot long live with ingenious means without great ends." And the sooner we learn this, the better. For too long a time true Americans have been trying to teach this to us.

In its simplest terms, a democracy is a vital experience of free brotherhood. Such brotherhood was the historic "end" for which our forefathers sacrificed and toward which they valiantly pointed the way. We sing and teach our children to sing:

"O beautiful for spacious skies,  
For amber waves of grain,  
For purple mountain majesties  
Above the fruited plain!

"America! America!  
God shed his grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea."

It is the next to the last line over which we are stumbling. It may be that we shall fall into the abyss from that very point. Three terrifying danger signals have been lifted.

First, our treatment of Japanese Americans during the war. Second, our slowness in freeing conscientious objectors after the war. Third, the post-war resurgence of violent discrimination against, and vicious segregation of, the American Negro. In regard to the first two we are making some progress. But as for our dealings as white Americans with Negro Americans, reports of the limited progress made by interracial groups, both in the North and the South, to the contrary notwithstanding, time is running out—and running out fast. Those of us who are of the white majority in the U.S.A., but are of the white minority in the world at large, had better wake up before it is too late.

The racial situation is bad enough, indeed, it is contemptible and vicious, in the North, particularly in such cities as Washington, Baltimore, New York, Detroit, and Chicago. But when you get into the segregation sections of the South, with all due respect to my enlightened Southern friends, many of whom rebel as I do, the situation is even more revolting, sickening, un-American and un-Christian. To rationalize, temporize and soften the impact of sinful acts by talking about Yankee interference and a long-term educational solution (the favorite alibi of a number of ministers and many church members in both the South and the North) is, in my judgment, to be unrealistic if not cowardly. How can any one who calls himself American or Christian live constantly with "White" and "Colored" signs posted in railroad stations and public buildings for the painful humiliation of American Negroes who fought and sacrificed to win a war for brotherhood and freedom, and for the more degrading humiliation of white Americans who permit such things to be? Recently, I traveled on a boat from Cape Charles, Virginia, to Old Point Comfort. On board was one of the great Negro concert singers of this country and the world.

Yet we could not sit together or eat together on that ship, though I was forced to eat in a filthy white dining room and sit with white persons who in culture and personality were far inferior to my Negro friend, or, for that matter, to many other Negroes on board.

It is not pleasant reading, but these facts should be known, both for themselves and for what they signify. I know a Negro woman who was born and reared in the North who married a Southern Negro and moved to Atlanta, Georgia. Both are refined and well educated. The insulting restrictions and daily mortifications heaped upon that Negro woman when she moved to the South were so great and of such a nature that for years now she has not been willing to leave her home to go out into the streets and life of the city. Furthermore, I know of a highly sensitive and lovely Negro girl who once said that she would be willing to stand the agony of being skinned alive if that would make her white and save her from the day by day agony of being treated as she is because her skin is black.

Negroes are *people*, God's people. What do you mean by "and crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea"? And what are you and I doing or going to do about it? For one thing, let the church speak out and protest, and, also, demonstrate true brotherhood untiringly, unwaveringly, boldly and practically in all of its local, national, and international relationships. It will, if God is there!

We have stressed the Negro issue and have done so because one is convinced it is the most crucial minority problem today. But such emphasis as we have given must not in any way detract from the other minority groups in America and the heavy handicaps which lack of Christian concern and fellowship places upon them. Chief of these others, of course, is the Jew. It staggers one's imagination

to try to grasp the fact that in this enlightened age a group of men called Nazis could cause 6,000,000 of the 16,000,000 Jews in the world to be exterminated and that a vast majority of the remainder are wanderers on the face of the earth. And what have we now in the face of such horror? It seems incredible, but it is true, we have an increase of anti-Semitism. By the hope we place in human hearts one would expect, instead, a growing sympathy and understanding. Worst of all, the dishonorable anti-Semitic attitude is seeping further into the Christian community itself. God and anti-Semitism cannot both remain in the church. There are many evidences that the Jewish people are giving increasing thought to the Jew, Jesus Christ. Where shall they find him? Is the Jew being invited and welcomed into the church of Christ to find God there? (There is no attempt here to deal with this timely and compelling question, because the interested reader may find the whole matter clearly, courageously, and comprehensively presented by Conrad Hoffmann, Jr., in his recent book, *What Now for the Jews? A Challenge to the Christian Conscience*, Friendship Press.)

What a blessing it brings to lonely hearts when the church does reveal its fellowship of love and also its essential oneness. Consider the case of Dona Cecilia Sequiera, a lovely, dark-skinned woman of Brazil. When she was on a visit to the United States attending an international conference of church women, she startled a companion by stating firmly on one occasion that if necessary she would miss a train which was to take her to an important appointment. It was when Dona Cecilia found herself in the symbolic circle of interracial and international fellowship at the concluding session of the women's conference. About an altar of light, a group of women from many countries, including India, Korea, Japan, China,

the Philippines, a number of European nations, and the United States (both Negro and white) had clasped hands to bind their lives and purpose in the love and unity of the Christian faith. The service was longer than had been expected. As Dona Cecilia held her place in the circle, her hostess and guide touched her on the shoulder and told her she would have to leave at once in order to catch the train. The dynamic Brazilian Christian replied in a low but passionate whisper, "I shall not break this circle and destroy its symbolic unity until the service is ended, even if I miss this or many other trains." And a Voice must have spoken again with great gratitude, "That they all may be one . . . that the world may believe."

*People are lost!*

Aldous Huxley in *A Perennial Philosophy* quotes an ancient sage of India:

"Sell your cleverness and buy bewilderment.  
Cleverness is mere opinion;  
Bewilderment is intuition."

There is hope in the intuition of most men today that mankind is tragically lost, both individually and collectively. Our danger is not in those who are lost and know it, but in those who are lost and do not know it. We repeat, the urgency of the hour is created not by the admission by the world that it is lost, but by the relative indolence, inactivity, and inadequacy of the church of Christ, which alone can save this world. We must bring the church to understand the tremendous obligation and unprecedented opportunity which it has today in every nation of the world in the processes of Christian education and evangelism.

More than once I have walked the streets of American



cities on Sunday nights, seeking a church in which to worship but unable to find one, at least in the downtown sections. Plenty of church buildings were there. But on Sunday nights the doors were closed. Yet moving-picture lights blazed, welcoming the masses. Bars and cocktail lounges were crowded. Thousands paraded the sidewalks, youth predominating. Literally multitudes passed by the closed, darkened churches. How many were asking, "Is God in there"? God wants to be there, God will be there, if only we will do our part.

Out of all the memoranda which Dr. Visser 't Hooft of the World Council of Churches has been sending over to us from Geneva these past years, this one stands as the most telling as it challenges the church to keep faith with man—and with God.

"We find ourselves before an immense vacuum, a vacuum which terrifies us. The so-called forces are not as powerful as they pretend to be. And it is impossible to see how they can build a new world, how they can fill this vast void which is the heart of modern man, betrayed, disillusioned; yet the vacuum is at the same time a great challenge. The historic forces are in search of foundations. Now or never is the time to proclaim: 'other foundation can no man lay than that is laid.'"

We have our chance again. After World War I, John Kelman, in *The War and Preaching* tried to bring the church to an understanding of the chance it had at that time. He wrote: "It was Christ who said of his resurrection, 'I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it again.' In our day the Son of man has shown in a very wonderful fashion that he has power to lay down his life. The time has now come when he must show that he has power to take it up again. In this hour we are by his side for that very purpose, that we may help him after

his Calvary to find his resurrection." We have our chance again. This time we dare not fail!

Is such talk an idle dream? Does the church have the power to save this world before it is too late? With his sense of immediacy and cogent realism, which the church in his day would neither heed nor implement, John Kelman also declared: "Benjamin Kidd in *The Science of Power* and Owen Wister in *The Pentecost of Calamity* have pointed out that the sentiment of a great nation can be completely changed within a generation." The ecumenical church can save the people behind the headlines if it will only do God's will in our day. "What should we say if, in an army ready to meet the enemy, the corporate life of the soldiers was as lax and ineffective as the corporate life of our church? Defeat would be inevitable and we should declare it well deserved. Christians can no more fight alone than soldiers can fight without mutual co-operation. We too need Christian discipline and organization. A communion of spiritual forces is needed as great as the common effort of material forces, if our task of bringing the kingdom of God here on earth is to succeed." These are the words of Sir Stafford Cripps. Here is vision as to God's will. When Christians all over the world will keep that vision and act upon it, then the world will know that God is in the church, mightily.

*Finally, amid the frail and the transitory, within and without, let the church keep and share the true vision of the inviolable, the inevitable, and the eternal which is personally revealed in and through Jesus Christ.*

The soul of the church is in the soul of each of its members. The vision or blindness of the church is according to each constituent Christian's faith. To put the matter simply: if God be in the church, then the necessary prerequisite—God must be in the souls of churchmen. Earlier we re-

ferred to a volume by Howard Spring, the British novelist. In the same illuminating essay he wrote: "A basic point in his (Jesus) teaching was that, as the relation of man with God is personal and individual like the relationship of a son with his father, and not comprehensive and amorphous like the relationship of a nation with its leader (which is why religious mass-emotion is to be distrusted), an advance of godliness in the world [and may I add, emphatically, the church] will come from the changed individual affecting the whole (within the limit of his potentiality) rather than from some general vague intention of the whole to benefit individuals." Quietly, but persistently, let each Christian repeat to himself until he is convinced, and reiterate in practice until he is certain, that personal concentration on and commitment to Jesus Christ are the means and assurance of true Christian vision for Christian individuals and, thus, the Christian church.

"That one Face, far from vanish, rather grows,  
Or decomposes but to recompose,  
Becomes my universe that feels and knows."\*

In *The Humanities*, by Louise Dudley and Austin Faricy of Stephens College, there is an example of vision being enlarged in the appreciation and experience of art: "When a person has enjoyed any work of art, he becomes more sensitive to all expressions of art, and so he becomes more alive to the world in general. The man who has studied Renaissance architecture notices for the first time the pilasters on his own house. The person who has begun to notice design begins to see variety and beauty in grills and fences of the houses around him." Substitute here an appreciation and experience of Christ and one grasps the source and perception of Christian vision.

Because in and through Jesus Christ Christian vision

\* Robert Browning.

is of the inviolable, the inevitable and the eternal, ultimately neither the Christian nor the church need be afraid. As the great churchman Harris Elliott Kirk of Baltimore used to tell me over and over again, "Never forget, God gave His only begotten Son for the world and for His church; and what God gave His only Son for, God means to have!"

Thomas Wolfe, who burned out his life so soon with a brilliant passion for eternal values while living intimately with the things of time, shortly before he died wrote to a friend, "I believe that we are lost here in America but I believe we shall be found. . . . I think the true discovery of America is before us. I think the true fulfilment of our spirit, of our people, of our democracy is still before us. And I think that these things are as certain as the morning, as inevitable as noon." In similar terms one may be assured of the church. For surrounded and surfeited by the brutal and disappointing facts of our time, when one keeps the vision, he knows the future of the church is sure. The Christian outlook is more than scientific; it is religious. By that one means what the illustrious scientist J. Arthur Thompson had in mind: "Scientific knowledge is indispensable but it is, as the schoolmen said, 'evening knowledge,' *cognitio vespertina*, cold and grey and shadowy: religious knowledge is 'morning knowledge,' *cognitio matutina*, where all is seen in the growing light of a new day."

Above all, keep the vision! Christian vision! For the day must come (indeed, is it nigh at hand) when the church of Christ, bearing as it may the wounds of prejudice, compromise, greed, and other grievous sins, shall, nevertheless, stand forth with indomitable faith and proclaim, as did Cyrano:

“Surrender? No! Never—never! . . .  
 No! I fight on! I fight on! I fight on!  
 Yee, all my laurels you have riven away  
 And all my roses; yet in spite of you,  
 There is one crown I bear away with me,  
 And tonight, when I enter before God,  
 My salute shall sweep all the stars away  
 From the blue threshold! One thing without stain,  
 Unspotted from the world, in spite of doom  
 Mine own!

And that is . . . . .  
 That is . . . . .  
 My white plume . . . . .”

*O church of today and tomorrow, pressed upon and stained by doubt and sorrow, Christ is thy White Plume! Above all, keep the vision! Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Christ loved the church and gave himself for it! And he shall reign for ever and ever! Alleluia!*

## Postscript

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN: *Sir*: For me to go to church is a matter of course. My father set the example. And throughout the years too many for a still youthful spirit to count more than casually, I have been the beneficiary of such good counsel as comes to listening congregations from the pulpits—high and low—of at least a score of faiths. Orthodox and heterodox, and not at all improbably sometimes heretical, have been the sermons, but sincere and well intentioned virtually all of them.

All thinking minds are in quest of sometimes elusive truth, and virtually all clergymen, it seems to me, are tonics—in their discourses—good for our sometimes reluctant morality. But let me go to church always with an open and receptive mind.

As I entered a church some little time ago, a little girl, standing at the door, accosted me. "Mister," she said, "is God in there?" And I think I spoke truthfully when I answered "Yes."

New York.

TEE EFF.

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