General Conference Quinquennial GOALS AND OBJECTIVES 1970-1975

- Lift up Jesus before the world and before our church members.
- Keep in sharp focus the unique mission of th9 church and its institutions.
- Reemphasize and follow through on the call to repentance, revival and reformation.
- 4. Give pragmatic and persevering attention to discovering solutions to outstanding problems.
- Maintain an unswerving commitment to sound fiscal policies and efficient operation of church business.
- Give unprecedented emphasis to soul winning in every phase of church activity, with the aim of adding 1,000,000 converted new members.
- Encourage the spirit of sacrifice in every aspect of individual and institutional life.
- Establish some SDA presence in every country, province, and major city yet unentered by the Third Angel's Message.
- Devise new methods to give unprecedented circulation to denominational literature, particularly our church paper and our missionary journals.
- Give in depth study to organizational structures of our church, with the view to operating more economically and more efficiently.
- Establish a clear denominational identity with the public.
- Make the absolute commitment to God that is represented by Paul's statement, "This one thing I do."

Keep these goals where you can read them frequently.

See page 24



the voice of the adventist ministry

VOL. XLIII NO. 12

THE VOICE OF THE ADVENTIST MINISTRY

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The Editor in Imagination Interviews Ellen G. White on the Subject of



5

RS. WHITE, practically the entire Christian world celebrates December 25 as the birthday of Jesus. Isn't this sufficient evidence for believing that this date

is the actual birthday of our Lord?

"... There is no certainty that we are keeping the veritable day of our Saviour's birth. History gives us no certain assurance of this. The Bible does not give us the precise time. Had the Lord deemed this knowledge essential to our salvation, He would have spoken through His prophets and apostles, that we might know all about the matter. But the silence of the Scriptures upon this point evidences to us that it is hidden from us for the wisest purposes."1

What do you think those "wisest pur-

poses" are?

"In His wisdom the Lord concealed the place where He buried Moses. God buried him, and God resurrected him and took him to heaven. This secrecy was to prevent idolatry.... For the very same purpose He has concealed the precise day of Christ's birth, that the day should not receive the honor that should be given to Christ as the Redeemer of the world—one to be received, to be trusted, to be relied on as He who could save to the uttermost all who come unto Him."2

Should we as Adventists ignore Christmas time entirely?

"... You will find it a difficult matter to pass over this period without giving it some attention. It can be made to serve a very good purpose." 3

Would you explain just what you mean?

"The youth should be treated very carefully. They should not be left on Christmas to find their own amusement in vanity and pleasure seeking, in amusements which will be detrimental to their spirituality. Parents can control this matter by turning the minds and the offerings of their children to God and His cause and the salvation of souls."4

Are you saying that the only gifts we should give on Christmas should be to the church?

"It is pleasant to receive a gift, however small, from those we love. It is an assurance that we are not forgotten, and seems to bind us to them a little closer. . . . It is right to bestow upon one another tokens of love and remembrance if we do not in this forget God, our best friend." 5

May I ask, do you have any suggestions

as to the kind of gifts we should give to one another?

"I would recommend such books as will be an aid in understanding the word of God or that will increase our love for its precepts. Provide something to be read during these long winter evenings." 6

Our Book and Bible House brethren will love to hear that! Frankly, I think what you have suggested is far more beneficial than watching the majority of TV programs. Only one problem with your answer and that is that books are quite expensive!

"The many trifles usually spent on candies and useless toys may be treasured up with which to buy these volumes...."

What about other presents besides books?

"There are many things which can be devised with taste and cost far less than the unnecessary presents that are so frequently bestowed upon our children and relatives, and thus courtesy can be shown and happiness brought into the home.

"You can teach your children a lesson while you explain to them the reason why you have made a change in the value of their presents, telling them that you are convinced that you have hitherto considered their pleasure more than the glory of God."

Many of our friends and loved ones have so much, it is difficult to know what to get them for Christmas. Do you have any counsel for us on this point?

"You that have means, who have been in the habit of making donations to your relatives and friends until you are at a loss to know what to invent that will be new and interesting to them, seek to put your ingenuity to the test, as well as your influence, to see how much means you may gather to advance the work of the Lord. Let your skill and and your capacities be employed 🐃 to make the coming Christmas one of intense interest, paying your addresses to the God of heaven in willing, grateful offerings. Follow no longer the world's customs. Make a break here. and see if this Christmas cannot show thousands of dollars flowing into the treasury, that God's storehouse may not be empty. You may not be recompensed on earth, but you will be rewarded in the future life, and that abun-

dantly. Let those who have so long planned for self now begin to plan for the cause of God, and you will certainly have increased wisdom. Let the conscience be enlightened, and the love of truth and of Christ take the place of idolatrous thoughts and love of self."

Should Christmas and other holidays be used exclusively for our own families?

"When you have a holiday, make it a pleasant and happy day for your children, and make it also a pleasant day for the poor and the afflicted." 10

"Clothing and other useful articles may be given to the worthy poor, and thus a work may be done for the Master." 11

Mrs. White, have you ever gotten any letters asking whether it is a sin or not to use Christmas trees?



"Letters of inquiry have come to us asking, Shall we have a Christmas tree? Will it not be like the world? We answer, You can make it like the world if you have a disposition to do so, or you can make it as unlike the world as possible. There is no particular sin in selecting a fragrant evergreen and placing it in our churches, but the sin lies in the motive which prompts to action and the use which is made of the gifts placed upon the tree.

"The tree may be as tall and its branches as wide as shall best suit the occasion; but let its boughs be laden with the golden and silver fruit of your beneficence, and present this to Him as your Christmas gift. Let your donations be sanctified by prayer." 12

But won't this bring a spirit of levity into our services?

"In no case should mere amusement be the object of these gatherings. While there may be some who will turn these occasions into seasons of careless levity, and whose minds will not receive the divine impress, to other minds and characters these seasons will be highly beneficial. I am fully satisfied that innocent substitutes can be devised for many gatherings that demoralize." 13

Do you have a final word for us?

"Will you not arise, my Christian brethren and sisters, and gird yourselves for duty in the fear of God, so arranging this matter that it shall not be dry and uninteresting. but full of innocent enjoyment that shall bear the signet of Heaven? I know the poorer class will respond to these suggestions. The most wealthy should also show an interest and bestow their gifts and offerings proportionate to the means with which God has entrusted them. Let there be recorded in the heavenly books such a Christmas as has never yet been seen because of the donations which shall be given for the sustaining of the work of God and the upbuilding of His kingdom." "

I want to express my appreciation to you for these practical answers.

J. R. S.

REFERENCES

- The Adventist Home, p. 477.
- 3 Ibid., p. 478.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 478, 479. ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 479. ⁷ *Ibid.*

- 8 Ibid., p. 481.
 9 Review and Herald, Dec. 9, 1884, p. 770.
 10 Counsels on Stewardship, p. 297.
 11 Messages to Young People, p. 311.
 12 The Adventist Home, p. 482.
 13 Ibid., p. 483.
 14 Ibid., p. 483.



Religious Philosophy Department Spicer Memorial College, Poona, India

SOME years ago my wife and I were sailing by passenger ship en route to the mission field. We were young and recently married and found the rather fast type of entertainment provided by the ship's officers not too much to our Adventist tastes. We were able to participate in the deck games, but the midnight dances, the movies, and the drinking parties as the ship crossed the line in the Indian Ocean found us excluded. We made a number of friends on board ship, but two men in

particular interested us. One was an acquaintance from the dining table. Tall and middle-aged, he was reserved but friendly, cultured, and dignified. It came as no surprise to us to learn even though he did not wear a clerical collar, that he was a Presbyterian minister. The other was a young man whom we only came to know on our last day or two on board ship. But we could hardly have failed to notice him earlier: boisterous and rowdy, he was always in the thick of things on deck, in the

lounge, or at the bar. Then, when at last we made his acquaintance, the bombshell dropped: he too was a Protestant minister!

I have often thought of the shock we had on learning that the second passenger was a man of the cloth; and I have reflected on the bearing of the first which marked him-without any formal clerical robeas a man apart.

There Must Be a Difference

No doubt we as ministers are to be men who are actively involved in the concerns of humanity. Like the worker-priests of Paris, we must go where the people are, we must play with our young people if we expect them to listen to us, we must have the common touch. And yet—there must always be a difference. There should always be a certain reserve commensurate with our high calling; certainly it is a tragic debasement of our office if people are shocked to learn we are ministers!

This "separation" of the minister is crystallized in the expression "man of God." The phrase occurs only twice in the New Testament, both from Paul, and significantly, in each place addressed to Timothy (1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17). Although Berkouwer (Man, the Image of God, p. 349) suggests that Paul uses the term in a general sense to refer to the believer, it seems likely that he has in mind here the minister in particular. Elsewhere, Paul commonly refers to the believers as "sons," "saints," the "called" or the "elect"; the "man of God" in the pastorals surely denotes one with a special commission. The first reference, moreover, unambiguously denotes the minister, Timothy, as a "man of God."

The term "man of God," if it is rare in the New Testament, is nevertheless of frequent occurrence in the Old Testament (at least sixty-five times) and the usage here is always to one called in a special way to act and speak in God's name. Thus, it is used of Moses (Deut. 33:1), of Samuel (1 Sam. 9:6), and of David (2 Chron. 8: 14). By the ninth century it was obviously of very common occurrence. For instance, both Elijah and Elisha were actually addressed as "man of God" as well as so designated in biography (e. g., 2 Kings 1: 9, 11; 4:16, 21, 22). However, this term, which in the ninth century was equivalent to "prophet," dropped out of use in later centuries. Why, we cannot be sure; perhaps

the prevalence of so many prophets in later times who were clearly not "men of God" but political hacks or mere men pleasers (e.g., Micah 2:11; 3:5-7; Jer. 23:16, 17) hastened the decline.

Not I, But Christ

As it does with other terms, the New Testament takes over the primary Old Testament concept of the "man of God" and invests it with new meaning in the light of the revelation of God given in Jesus Christ. With the coming of Christ, the idea of God is given a breadth of meaning far beyond the Old Testament concept, though not in any way contradictory to it; the "man of God" becomes the one who will speak and act in God's name, but "God" now has special reference to Christ so that the minister is really a "man of Christ." He is to walk in the pattern of service laid down by the great Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4); he is to bear the message of what God has done in Christ (2 Cor. 5:18-21); he is to be so identified with Christ that it is "not I, but Christ" (Gal. 2:20).

Check Yourself

We would suggest that the following features will be pre-eminent in the SDA minister who is truly a "man of God."

1. A God-Centered Life. Being a "man of God" means, first of all, that we are God's man—He always has first claim on our time, our talents, our service. We live to please Him first; as the old gospel song says:

I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord, Over mountain, or plain, or sea;

I'll say what you want me to say, dear Lord, I'll be what you want me to be.

Of course, every Christian is to make God first in his life, but the minister is in a pre-eminent sense to be God's man. He is from God in that the Lord has placed His hand on him for a special task, a task that is to give direction to all his energies and his endeavors.

If we have such an inner life, it will be impossible to conceal it. Without any formal clerical dress (although our dress will surely be consecrated with the rest of the "whole man"!), we will have a certain bearing, an unconscious "atmosphere" so that we will find people asking us, "Are you a minister?" rather than our having to parade the fact.

On every plane or train or ship as we travel there are people whose hearts are breaking. There are people who are yearning for a word of hope or comfort. There are souls looking wistfully to heaven. It is God whom they need; but God may only be found through one of His appointed agents, and the "man of God" is surely to be a pre-eminent agent. Many such people often desire to find a minister to whom they can unburden their hearts. Will they recognize us as men of God? Will they come like the Shunammite to us for help and guidance?

"The servants of Christ are not only to be instruments through the preaching of Jesus to lead men to repentance, but they are to continue their watchcare and interest by keeping before the people, by precept and example, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. They are to sanctify themselves that their hearers also may be sanctified. Thus all will grow in godliness, going on from grace to grace, until the ambassador for God can present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Then the ministerial office will be seen in its true, sacred character."

—Testimonies to Ministers, pp. 152, 153.

2. A Forsaking of Other Interests. "But as for you, man of God, shun all this; aim at righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness" (1 Tim. 6:11, R.S.V.). What the "all this" is that we are to shun is made clear earlier—it is conceit and a craving for controversy (verse 4) and especially a "desire to be rich" (verse 9)—the "love of money" (verse 10).

A well-known Christian magazine recently carried an advertisement for a plan by which ministers could supplement their stipend by thousands of dollars annually at part-time work. While we are well aware of high living costs, especially educational, is it necessary for SDA ministers to resort to various side interests? Are we not in danger of falling into the condition pictured in Wordsworth's sonnet:

The world is too much with us; late and soon, Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers.

One early morning, as we were wearily passing through airport customs, I said to the customs officer, "You needn't worry about us—I'm a minister." To which he replied in all seriousness, "We find that they are the ones we have to watch!" A certain country, after it was discovered that members of the clergy were personally smuggling gold, ordered that all priests

and missionaries be carefully searched—even to the extent of making them undress! (Fortunately for us, the customs officer we mentioned above proceeded to say, "You're O.K. You can go through"!)

It is tragic that a "man of God" should ever compromise his devotion to the Lord's service for the sake of Mammon.

3. The Task. "All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17, R.S.V.).

Here is the positive side, for which the laying off of all other interests was the negative preparation. God's ministers are to be complete, lacking nothing "for every good work" as they go forward in God's name. And this task, in all its varied facets, whether the minister preaches from the public platform, directs departmental activities, or teaches the Bible to the youth, is summed up in one work—soul saving.

There are plenty of social workers; there are politicians who are greatly concerned about uplifting humanity; there are thousands of educators and teachers. But only in the church is man's soul given its rightful place—a pre-eminent worth for time and for eternity. Only the church is concerned with saving men to a better life now and an unbroken fellowship forever with God. This is the primary raison d'être of the ministry, and let us never forget it: "I am a debtor . . ." (Rom. 1: 14, ff.).

Every Adventist minister would do well to ponder the phrase "man of God." It is a high calling; and who can say he has attained to the heights of office that God designs for him? Nevertheless, while admitting our frailty and inevitable shortcomings, we should constantly examine ourselves by the following standard:

- 1. Does the stranger in need feel drawn to me as a "man of God"? Will he intuitively recognize that I am a minister?
- 2. Do I represent God aright in all my dealings?
- 3. Does God and His work come first in my interests, hopes, and desires?
- 4. Am I daily consecrated to the supreme task of the minister—soul saving? Do I help at least one soul each day nearer to the kingdom?

May each one of us be characterized as "men of God."



THE guidelines listed below were presented at the Autumn Council as an enlargement of the official action taken on "North America Evangelistic Crusade." The official action appears in bold type. The particulars will be worked out by committees appointed by the officers of the General Conference and should clear the way for the greatest, most imaginative advance in the history of the work in this division. We are confident that every church member will want to unite his efforts with those of the church officers and pastors and give wholehearted, enthusiastic support to this dynamic plan for evangelism in North America.

WHEREAS, The time has come for a united coordinated effort to be put forth to reach the entire population of the North American Division,

We recommend, 1. That we launch a division-wide evangelistic campaign simultaneously in North America, using churches in every city or where desirable, other facilities. This campaign is to begin

on the same night with division-wide advertising materials being used to announce the meetings. All advertising materials would be identical with the exception of the place of meeting and the local speakers. This advertising is to include (a) bill-boards, (b) newspaper ads, (c) special invitation, (d) radio-TV spots, (e) window cards, (f) and handbills where desired.

2. That this be a full-message evangelistic crusade and that we plan Sabbath afternoon meetings as well as special messages in all of our churches on Sabbath mornings during the period. Suggested beginning date, March 4, 1972.

3. That our missionary journals and the Review and Herald be asked to participate in this program by having special articles on the principal points of our faith appearing in each issue from the first of the year on or as soon after the first of the year as possible, and that these magazines be asked to carry representative announcements of the meetings, as the time approaches.

4. That our radio and TV programs be used to the maximum to help prepare for

these meetings and to advertise them when they are to be launched. This would include Voice of Prophecy, Faith for Today, It Is Written, Amazing Facts, et cetera.

5. That we begin preparations for this crusade in January of 1971 by using literature distribution, gift-Bible programs, and all other approaches that the various departments have to offer in the preparation of the field for such a meeting.

6. That our literature evangelists aid in this preparation period by placing as much of our truth-filled literature as possible in the homes of the people across the division, watching especially for special interests, former members, and openings for Bible studies.

- 7. That camp meeting time be used to make special spiritual preparations for this campaign by revival-type messages and with prayer and study groups organized, and that special training be offered, to all members attending, in "how to do it" courses.
- 8. That the churches be organized into prayer groups several months before the meetings, praying for God's special blessing upon the church and for specific individuals for whom our hearts may be burdened.
- 9. That special efforts be put forth to prepare our churches—the physical plant, as well as the attitude of our members—to receive new converts and to manifest loving concern for all.
- 10. That there be division-wide sharing of names of interested people, former and missing members, and loved ones. These should be secured on a blank specifically printed for this purpose and our pastors and church officers are to be especially guided in making contact with every home in the church to secure the names of loved ones wherever they may be living. It is our belief that if this plan is followed, thousands of names should be made available to us from this source. The General Conference Ministerial Association would be the clearing house for such a gathering of names.
- 11. That special printed messages be prepared for distribution at the close of each meeting, covering the topic presented that night. For twenty-five nights this would mean twenty-five pieces of literature. This could be the basis for the messages given with no credit being given specifically to the author so that each minister could dis-

tribute this as the summation of his message for the evening.

12. That the special emphasis of these meetings be on the "blessed hope" of Christ's return, the nearness of this glorious experience, and the need to be prepared for it.

13. That regular baptismal days be scheduled to coincide with the close of such

a series of meetings.

- 14. That we explore the possibility of a special TV program to be launched division-wide, at prime time, presenting a gripping message on the coming of Christ as the blessed hope, and announcing the meetings to be held simultaneously all over North America. (Details of this project to be studied by a committee appointed by the General Conference officers and presented to the Spring Meeting of the General Conference Committee.)
- 15. That capable youth and lay preachers be organized to participate in such a series of meetings so as to take advantage of the division-wide advertising and other coverage.

16. That our ministerial students, in cooperation with the Bible teachers in our colleges, be involved in this program by planning evangelistic teams to go out into areas not reached by the pastors.

17. That it shall be the responsibility of each conference to work out its own schedule with men and places designated, including as far as possible the officers and

departmental secretaries.

18. That a carefully developed program of follow-up be provided to the ministers so that every interest is fully developed and newly baptized people are welcomed into the church and assigned their post of duty.

19. That this program if approved, be also offered to our brethren in other English-speaking countries with the same type

of materials available to them.

20. That the above outlined program be in addition to the regular program now carried on by our conferences and that it not result in any slackening of evangelistic effort during the rest of the year.

21. That the General Conference officers appoint necessary committees to work out the details of the various items suggested

in this plan.

22. That a carefully developed countdown program be provided the churches so that proper preparation shall be made preceding the evangelistic crusade.

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Sunday, June 14—Emilio Knechtle, Layman, New York				
4 Sunday, June 14—W. R. Beach, General Conference Monday, June 15—M. K. Eckenroth, Columbia Union College				************
5 Monday, June 15—H. E. Douglass, Review and Herald				
Tuesday, June 16—C. B. Rock, Pastor, New York				
6 Tuesday, June 16-Gordon M. Hyde, General Conference				
Wednesday, June 17—H. M. S. Richards, Sr., VOP				
7 Wednesday, June 17-Wilber Alexander, SDA Seminary				
-R. R. Bietz, General Conference				
8 Thursday, June 18-K. H. Wood, Review and Herald				
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ROBERT L. ODOM

Research Consultant

HE so-called British Chronological and Astronomical Association was originally established as a society in 1879. J. B. Dimbleby was still the head of it as late as as 1897, when its quarters were at Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, London, E. C. Dimbleby was author and editor of the book All Past Time, on the title page of which he designated himself as "Premier Chronologist to the British Chronological and Astronomical Association, London," and as "First Enumerator of all the Eclipses and Transits." Indeed, he called himself "a chronologist and an astronomer" on page 22 of his All Past Time, ninth edition (1897).

In his book All Past Time not one real astronomer is cited by Dimbleby as either his associate or a fellow member of his British Chronological and Astronomical Association, and not one is cited as endorsing his views. On the contrary, that book bristles with unblushing hostility toward real astronomers. For example, Dim-

bleby says:

"It is owing to the use of unscientific methods of computing time that none of the chiefs of astronomical observatories, nor even our own Astronomers Royal, have ever published tables of eclipses of the sun or moon, or transits of the planets Mercury and Venus. They cannot do so, because their systems of time are not natural and have no accord with planetary motion."—Ibid., p. 7.

Again: "As at present constituted, the Observatory is entirely a nautical institution, and has nothing to do with the

Science of Time."—Ibid., p. 8.

Also: "Unfortunately, whilst there are professors of all other sciences at our Universities, there are none of the Science of Time. . . . Extravagant sums are annually voted from the public purse for making observations and calculations, pertaining to celestial phenomena, which practically are not worth a straw. Perhaps the only remedy for all this Egyptian darkness is, that either a new department for notifying scientific time must be added to the Greenwich Observatory, or a separate institution—already formed by the British Chronological and Astronomical Associa-

tion—must be moderately endowed."—Ibid. (See also pp. 137, 138, 153.)

Dimbleby complained that "a certain astronomer has been denying the accuracy of the eclipses given from the zodiacal circle [presented in All Past Time, pp. 157-167, whereas he is the erroneous enumerator and not the natural and scientific years of the Circle. This bewilderment has hitherto prevented astronomers from understanding the movement of eclipses and precluded the possibility of arranging them into cycles. These two facts are sufficient to prove that the Royal Observatory as at present conducted on the basis of unnatural years can be of no service to either history or astronomy."—Ibid., p. 161. (That astronomer is identified on the next page as "Mr. Christy, the Astronomer Royal.")

Dimbleby Complains of Criticism

Dimbleby said also: "Sir Robert Ball spoke disrespectfully of myself when lecturing at Cambridge in the autumn of 1896." — *Ibid.*, p. 194. (Sir Robert Ball was an eminent astronomer of that time.)

Dimbleby also complained of "the adverse criticisms raised by Dr. Grattan Guinness against a line of solar years by eclipses, namely, that they die out" (*Ibid.*, p. 198). And he replied: "If Dr. Grattan Guinness had been better schooled in astronomy he would have had no occasion to seek to enlighten men in London by quoting largely from a list of eclipses 'made in Germany,' in the construction of which [Theodor von] Oppolzer, their author, is evidently perplexed by not understanding the Science of Time."—*Ibid.*, p. 199.

Dimbleby answered Guinness by saying that "eclipses can be altogether dispensed with" (Ibid., p. 198). And concerning the work of the Astronomer Royal, he declared that "there is no reason that the science of astronomy should be confined to a few men who are mathematical scholars. Eclipses can be calculated in a better way by the simple plan laid down in these pages [of All Past Time], and thus made subservient to all men for purposes of history. In addition to this, it may be stated that mathematical calculations of eclipses do not give the A.M. year from creation." —Ibid., p. 153.

The Better Way

What was Dimbleby's "better way" of

doing the job? He explains it thus. "Mathematical calculations are admirable for continued uniform motion, but the movements of the moon are subject to increased velocities and disturbances, too technical to be explained here, so that when we cannot work with a motion 'straight off the reel,' but are hampered with what are known as 'the evection,' 'variation,' and the 'annual equation,' outside computations have to be adopted to rectify the longitude of the moon, and numerous minor inequalities allowed for, all of which tend to make mathematical calculations unreliable."—Ibid., p. 154. (See also

Thus we have it in Dimbleby's own words, that his system of chronology did not and could not mathematically harmonize with the true astronomical phenomena which he assumed and even alleged to be the basis of his work. He threw the mathematical calculations of astronomical science to the winds, adopted "outside computations" of his own devising, and employed whatever juggling he deemed convenient in his paper work in order to give it a semblance of scientific basis. He says his investigations "had not proceeded far when a splendid discovery was made by which it was seen that eclipses can be altogether dispensed with, inasmuch as the simple motions of the sun and the moon in the firmament always determine for us the amount of all past time in years, months, and days" (Ibid., p. 198).

His was a pencil-and-paper scheme in which he assumed that prior to the Flood men added an intercalary period of 77 days (11 weeks of 7 days each) at the end of every cycle of seven lunar years of 354 days each in order to synchronize this lunar period with a solar period of seven years of 365 days each. Seven solar years of 365 days each make a total of 2,555 days. Seven lunar years of 354 days each, plus an intercalary period of 77 days, make a total of 2,555 days! (See pp. 16, 23, 27, 101, 110, 128, 130.)

Adding and Subtracting Time

He used that seven-year cycle for the Biblical chronology of the first 1,721 years of world history. But from the year 1722 onward he employed a 15-year cycle, in which an intercalary month of 34 days was added at the end of every third lunar year to synchronize lunar time with solar time.

However, he admits "that when some other adjustment was required by the accumulation of fractional excess or loss of time, an extra week was taken or thrown off at the end of the middle intercalary period (table i) of the Ancient Hebrew Solar Cycle, arising from the necessity of using there 35 instead of 34 days" (*Ibid.*, p. 110. See also p. 23). That method of adjustment he called "clever manipulation" (*Ibid.*, p. 86).

He resorted to such means because he found the tropical year—the interval between one vernal equinox and the next—with its average length of 365.2422 days; and the synodic lunar month—the interval from one new moon to the next—with its average length of 29.5306 days, too difficult for him to use in his chronological calculation.

In his All Past Time, ninth edition (1897), Dimbleby did not fix a precise date for Joshua's "long day." He speaks of Herodotus and certain Chinese writings as mentioning it (Ibid., p. 95), and he announced: "Joshua commanding the sun to stand still is likely to be soon one of the brightest evidences of Scripture history."—Ibid., p. 131. Totten, using Dimbleby's tables, had already done so.

Dimbleby declared also that "the Great Pyramid [of Egypt] is a monument of stone confirming Biblical History" (Ibid., p. 51). Alleging that it was built in the time of Shem, son of Noah, he affirmed that "when the Egyptian priests discovered that Biblical periods and prophecies were the same as the astronomical measurements in their great pyramid, they would close it, lest their religion and worship should come into disrepute" (Ibid., p. 50).

Following Dimbleby, Totten appealed to the Great Pyramid, saying: "I intend to prove that this is the most stupendous monument to universal metrology that the human mind can realize, and I want to impress upon you that chronologically (a most important element of the vast science of metrology), the Great Pyramid indicates the one and only true system."—A Scientific Spike Through Noah's Ark, p. 247. (See also pp. 18, 32, 243-259, 263-265, 280, 293.)

Totten taught that the earth was created long before the seven-day creation week of chapters 1 and 2 of Genesis, and that it was originally populated by "a pre-Adamic people" (Ibid., pp. 6-8).

Dimbleby reckoned that 58961/2 Anno Mundi was 18981/4 Anno Domini, and that then the times of the Gentiles would end, and Turkey would fall. And he said that during 30 years thereafter—that is, in A.M. 59261/2 or A.D. 19281/4—the Jewish times would end, and events ushering in the millennium would start. (See All Past Time, pp. 202, 205.)

In fact, Dimbleby says in commenting on verses 7 and 8 of Revelation 20: "He will not raise this rebellion, etc., in less than 30 years. Neither will the final resurrection, or general judgment, at which the saints assist, be completed in a few years. But by the millennium beginning at the end of the Jewish times, 59261/2 (our 1928), it will be completed in 69261/2 [A.D. 2028] and thereby allow 70 years or more for the subsequent events before 7000 A.M."—Ibid., p. 203. (See also p. 205.)

Totten likewise said concerning his own work and that of Dimbleby: "In our own work we differ only in minor matters of judgment (within those limits where it is justified) with some of the chronological conclusions of this [British Chronologi-

cal] Society, but we recognize the inestimable value of their fundamental system, and follow it in all of our work. That we are at one in our general conclusions as to 'the Coming Crisis' the following quotation from a recent publication of Mr. Dimbleby will demonstrate, to wit: 'What then is the lesson that the Scripture and the Science of Time reveals? We may expect that all civil governments and "isms" will be overturned in less than seven years hence (I write these lines, says Mr. Dimbleby in Sept., 1891) and that Divine authority will follow. We must also expect that most of the righteous persons now living will never see death."—A Scientific Spike Through Noah's Ark, pp. 313, 314. (Italics his.)

In the light of all that, we urge everybody in general, and Seventh-day Adventists in particular, not to accept as reliable the news story that the Biblical accounts of Joshua 10:13, 14 and 2 Kings 20:11 have been corroborated by scientific discovery. Furthermore, we caution everyone not to use the unsound tables and calculations of either J. B. Dimbleby or C. A. L. Totten for work on Biblical chronology.

AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

for

All Ministers and Teachers

The popularity of the H. M. S. Richards Lectureship on Preaching held annually at Columbia Union College, Washington, D.C., has led to the establishment of another lectureship—the R. Allan Anderson Lectureship on Theology, which will alternate with the Richards lectureship. From now on there will be one set of lectures on preaching followed the next year by lectures on theology.

The first of these presentations was delivered in 1969 by the one for whom the lectureship is named. As Dr. Anderson plumbed the depths of Christology a unanimous request came from those in attendance that the material be made available for further study. The result is a new book published by the Review and Herald under the title:

The God-Man; His Nature and Work

Those who preach and teach the Word will find in these pages a mine of truth. Do not fail to study such chapters as "The Transfiguration," "The Incarnation," and "The Atonement." Your thinking will be challenged and your horizons pushed back. See advertisement on page 87.

J. R. S.

The real need of the church is not a new roof, but a new heart.



CHARLES H. BETZ

Director, Stewardship Services, Northern California Conference

NO MINISTER enjoys pleading for funds or employing gimmicks to squeeze money out of unwilling people. The pastor need not assume the role of a fund raiser if he will seriously undertake his commission, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." If you have financial problems in your church, may I suggest that you seriously undertake a program of STEWARDSHIP EDUCATION. Begin with a serious study of the theology of stewardship; it will be very

rewarding. It has been estimated that there have been more books written in the field of Christian stewardship during the past ten years than in the previous century. The book Counsels on Stewardship is an invaluable aid. God's remnant people should be taught to give willingly, regularly, and proportionately of the material possessions entrusted to them. "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him" (1 Cor. 16:2).

Liberality is not so natural to us that we gain this virtue by accident. It must be cultivated.— Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 271.

And had the ministers done their duty in educating every member, whether rich or poor, to give as God has prospered him, there would be a full treasury from which to pay the honest debts to the workers; and this would greatly advance missionary work in all their borders. God has shown me that many souls are in danger of eternal ruin through selfishness and worldliness; and the watchmen are guilty, for they have neglected their duty.—*Ibid.*, p. 375.

A consistent example of stewardship of material things on the part of the pastor, a permanent program of STEWARDSHIP EDUCATION within the life of the church will combat selfishness in the hearts of the people and produce a full treasury.

A shortage of money in the treasury is symptomatic. A red light on the dashboard of your automobile indicates that something is seriously wrong with your motor. So, a lack of funds in the treasury is an indication of a serious spiritual malady. If a red light indicates that your generator is not functioning and replace the fan belt you have not solved the problem. In like manner, if your budget is short, funds are low, and you plead for money to meet the subsidy or to fix the roof, you are not meeting the real need. The real need of the church is not a new roof, but a new heart. If you will come to grips with the disease, namely covetousness and selfishness, you will naturally take care of the symptoms—a lack of money in the treasury.

We are in a world of plenty. If the gifts and offerings were proportionate to the means which each has received of God, there would be no need for urgent calls for means.—*Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 410.

There is means enough in the hands of believers to amply sustain the work in all of its departments without embarrassing any, if all would bear their proportional part.—*Ibid*.

The greatest sin which now exists in the church is covetousness.—*Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 194.

Too often churches go from one financial crisis to another. Our people have become so accustomed to financial crises and emotional appeals that it has become increasingly difficult to move them.

To give or to labor when our sympathies are moved, and to withhold our gifts or service when the emotions are not stirred, is an unwise and dangerous course.—Counsels on Stewardship, p. 25.

God has devised a plan by which all may give as He has prospered them, and which will make giving a habit without waiting for special calls... Until all shall carry out the plan of systematic benevolence, there will be a failure in coming up to the apostolic rule.—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 411.

The American people today are under a constant barrage of advertising. People are flocking in droves to brilliantly lighted shopping centers, buying, buying, buying. Millions are in pursuit of material things with financial dedication; and many Seventh-day Adventists are among them. God is thus edged out to the periphery and "things" assume the supreme place in life. As a result most people today are unhappy. frustrated and As leaders God's people we must face to this frightening development. We must show the transitory nature of material things and call the attention of men to the attractiveness of our Lord and the eternal nature of His kingdom.

We do our people a distinct service when we present the superior claims of Christ upon them.

Self-sacrifice is the keynote of Christ's teachings. Often this is enjoined upon believers in language that seems authoritative, because there is no other way to save men than to cut them away from their life of selfishness.—Counsels on Stewardship, p. 25.

If we will seriously undertake the work of educating our members in the field of stewardship and come to grips with the selfishness and materialism rampant in the church the sword of the spirit will unclog the springs of the heart that the waters of generosity may flow.

As we appeal to our people to give, let us appeal to the highest motives. Certainly our members should be made keenly aware of the nature of our financial needs. The need of a new roof on the church is important, but let us lift the eyes of our people to a higher good than the roof. A roof is only a temporary shelter. David had a clear concept of man's real shelter. "For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy" (Ps. 61:3). Perhaps this is why he said upon another occasion "I have set my affection to the house of my God" (1 Chron. 29:3). Let us "seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God" (Col. 3:1).

If in dealing with financial problems we will place the emphasis on people and their need to give—thus extending the kingdom—then "all these things shall be added."

(In this article Pastor Baldwin draws further success principles for the church from the historic Moon Walk of July 21, 1969.)

Total Compliance With Guidance System

AS THEIR space craft sped toward the moon, the crew continually demonstrated a willing cooperation with and dependence upon their guidance complex. For example:

Houston: We have a request for you . . . as a precautionary measure we'd like you to momentarily cycle the four switches to the closed position and then release . . .

Apollo: Good idea. Will do.1

The guidance complex consisted basically of two vital components: (1) Mission Control at Houston, and (2) the amazing on-board computerized inertial reference platform which continually informed the crew of their speed, direction, and location in space. These components can typify the two most important subjective guidance sources available to the Christian to assist in every situation: (1) the live guidance of the Holy Spirit—our "Mission Control," and (2) the properly educated conscience —our own "on-board computerized inertial reference platform."

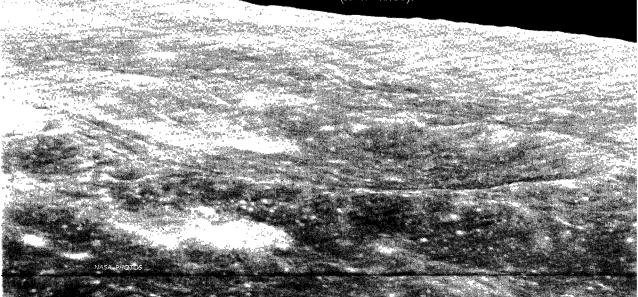
Concerning the contemporaneous directive potential of the Holy Spirit, Isaiah and John teach respectively: "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it" (Isa. 30:21). "The Spirit of truth . . . will guide you

into all'truth" (John 16:13).

The following texts show the guidance capacity of the conscience: "And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted

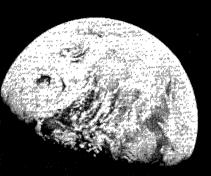
Giant Leap for the Church

by their own conscience, went out one by one" (John 8:8, 9). "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God" (1 John 3:21). "I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men" (Acts 24:16).



From a sermon by

JOHN T. BALDWIN Pastor, Huntington, New York



(Concluded)

Our challenge is to comply with these spiritual directives as faithfully as the crew of Apollo 11 complied with their human and mechanical directives.

Saved by the Human Touch

Just before lunar touchdown, the Eagle was literally headed for the rocks, and would have crashed on them had not Armstrong personally intervened. Those tense moments are described as follows:

Dead ahead, only several hundred feet below his rapidly sinking craft, he reported, was a football field-sized crater, with a large number of big boulders and rocks."3

Armstrong quickly took over control of Eagle and directed the fragile silver-black-and-gold craft to a better site.4

At no other point during the flight is the importance of direct human involvement better illustrated than during this crisis. Applied to the fulfillment of the gospel commission, the manner in which the emergency was handled shows that in order for the gospel to "land" successfully on human hearts, it must be gently guided there by the human touch. By the exclusive use of remote control, the good news can be sent just so far and no farther simply because it needs person-to-person involvement to carry it all the way—"Go ye" (Matt. 28:19).

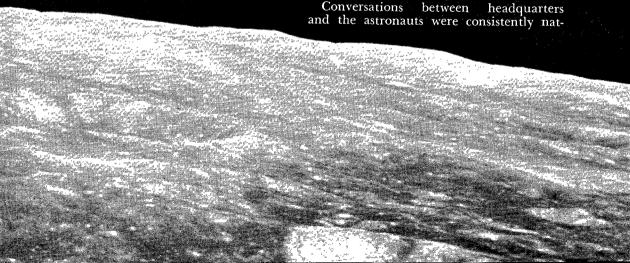
Detail Adherence to Set Course

The cause for the nearly disastrous alteration in the lunar touchdown course illustrates why God is wisely concerned with details. Scientists attribute this deviation not to one major fault, but to the "accumulation of very small errors." 5

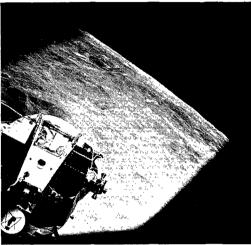
By ignoring divine advice, we too may find ourselves eventually off course not because of major infractions, but because of the accumulation of many uncorrected "little fox" departures from His will. James follows such a negative course of action to its logical conclusion by warning that "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of (James 2:10).

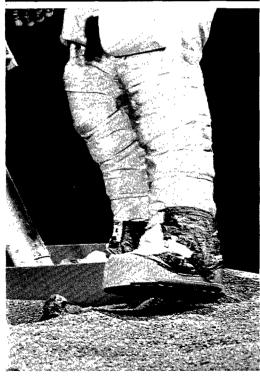
Frequent Communication

Conversations between









ural and frequent. However, communications sharply increased in frequency and intensity during the lunar landing. The Eagle transmitted a torrent of moment-bymoment progress reports for Houston's approval. Here are the final exchanges:

EAGLE: Lights on; down 2-1/2 feet . . .

drifting to the right a little.

HOUSTON: Thirty seconds. EAGLE: Contact light . . .

HOUSTON: We copy. You're down, Eagle. Eagle: Houston, Tranquility Base here, the Eagle has landed.

Houston: . . . We're breathing again.

Thanks a lot.6

As God's mission enters its final stage, these crucial landing exchanges become significant reminders to the Christian of the importance of frequent prayer. Ellen White rates the value of personal communication with God in two classic statements:

Prayer is heaven's ordained means of success in the conflict with sin and the development of Christian character.—Acts of the Apostles, p. 564.

Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence?—Steps to Christ, pp. 94, 95.

Teamwork of Thousands

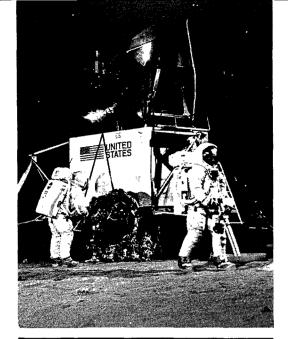
That was a team landing . . . with Neil at the controls and Aldrin calling out the readings of velocities and altitudes in the cockpit, with the guidance officer calling out "go's" . . . and with the capsule communicator calling all this up to the crew.

The next quotation shows what made this thrilling landing possible:

The Apollo management process is to integrate hundreds of thousands of people at, literally, thousands of institutions into an organized relationship with one another, and to provide them with means to insure progress at a planned rate and cost to attain the specific objective. . . . Some 300,000 people were involved at the peak.

From the technician tightening screws to the scientist programming computers, there existed a commendable dedication and harmony made possible by the humility required for good teamwork. Each activity, large or small, received equal care.

The success of this splendid teamwork supports the truth of the following assurance, "If Christians were to act in concert, moving forward as one, under the direction of one Power, for the accomplishment of one purpose, they would move the world."—Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 221.



Dressed for Life

Armstrong and Edwin E. Aldrin dared not venture onto the moon without the protection of proper space attire. Their \$100,000° coverings can be likened to another kind of life-sustaining garment.

Free to us, the robe of Christ's righteousness has been purchased at infinite cost and is lovingly placed around each individual by God Himself as pictured by Isaiah, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, ... for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness" (Isa. 61: 10). This essential, protective clothing which we are to purchase by faith from Iesus (Revelation 3:18) is described as our new way of life, "The fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints" (Rev. 19:8,

The astronauts were not reluctant, but thankful to wear their peculiar-looking suits because they were dressed for life in another world. Likewise, the Christian should be eager to "wear" his distinguishing way of life regardless of world opinion because he too is dressed for life in another world.

Musical Celebration of Moon Landing

"Duke Ellington has been commissioned to compose and perform an original score to mark man's landing on the moon . . . it 'Moon includes vocal music entitled, Maid,' to be sung by Mr. Ellington." 10

As a vocal performance celebrated man's landing on the Sea of Tranquility," so there will be a beautiful vocal outburst when the redeemed step onto the sea of glass. This singing will not be performed by proxy, because each redeemed sinner will participate personally. Although we might have sung the triumphant lines of the "Song of Moses and the Lamb" long before the performance of the "Moon Maid," God is graciously waiting for us to learn the words through experience.

The amazing mission of Apollo 11 magnificently succeeded because it consistently applied these success principles described to the church long ago:

- 1. Rigorous final preparation.
- 2. Semi-quarantine living.
- 3. Thorough knowledge of flight plan.
- 4. Complete trust and willing total commitment.
- 5. Use of proper propellant.
- 6. Distributed power.
- 7. Total compliance with guidance sys-
- 8. The human touch.
- 9. Detail adherence to set course.
- 10. Frequent communication.
- 11. Teamwork.
- 12. Dressed for life.

Perhaps the most important over-all spiritual effect of the voyage can be the motivation and assurance generated in us as we watch God's basic mission-success principles beautifully applied and thoroughly vindicated. The demonstration assures us that if we, through Heaven's energizing power, personally display these principles, our mission will move rapidly toward the moment of the "glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13), and the "one giant leap" to the sea of glass. May we each renew our decision to reflect these principles.

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CLIFTON A. WALTER

Evangelist, Northern California Conference

WHY is it so hard for some people to see the Sabbath truth? Why do people want to believe in an eternally burning hell? What are the best nights of the week on which to hold meetings? What seems to be a good worable length for a campaign?

All of us have asked these questions (many more, too!). Conducting more than seventy-five evangelistic campaigns has given me some ideas about possible answers. Sharing experiences and ideas concerning methods has always been helpful to me.

Much has been said about the length of campaigns. For the past three years most of our series have been five weeks in length. Meetings are held every night except Wednesday and Thursday. By opening and closing on Saturday there are twenty-six nights in the series. There are several advantages to such a schedule. It is short enough to allow us to hold six campaigns a year. It allows a much stronger visitation program in two ways.

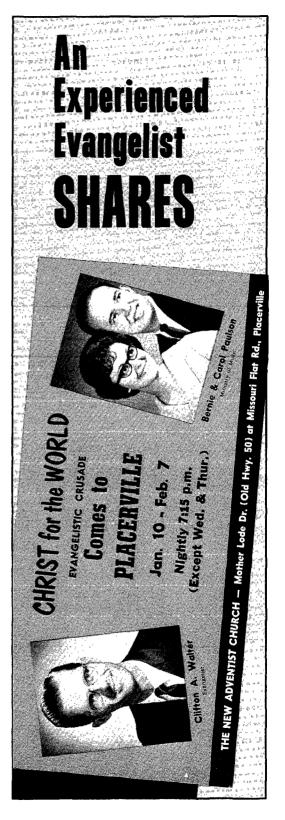
1. The two open nights give ample time to visit all those who cannot be vis-

ited during the day.

2. There is time for the pastor to go into every home of those who show a real interest in the truth. This makes a stronger tie between the pastor and those who are baptized. And it gives the church members two evenings to do shopping, housework, and other things that must be done. The program is concentrated enough to give good impetus for decision. We like the schedule very much.

Which Nights Are Best for Meetings?

Experience has convinced me that there is great benefit to conducting meetings on consecutive nights. We formerly held on Friday, Sunday, and Tuesday or Wednesday. The midweek meeting was the hard one in which to maintain attendance. Now if we were holding three meetings a week it would be Friday, Saturday, and Sunday; Saturday, Sunday, and Monday; or Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. By keeping the nights together we can help achieve



a much better, steady attendance. Friday night is best for our people. Saturday is best for non-Adventists. You can build up a good psychological momentum over the weekend to carry you right on through the week to the break. If we hold six times a week, and we do occasionally, Thursday would be the "off" night. It is much easier to carry the crowd from the weekend with you through the early part of the week than to break early in the week and then try to pick up again later. If Monday is the "off" night it is hard to begin on Tuesday or Wednesday. We often have a larger attendance of non-Adventists on Monday than on Sunday.

When I began my work in the ministry no one ever held evangelistic meetings on Saturday night. Sunday was considered the big night. But someone (Fordyce Detamore, I believe) discovered that people would come to a meeting on Saturday night. We just completed our seventy-sixth campaign, Without one exception, Saturday has always been the best night of the week. Many people attend their own church on Sunday evening. Most people are free from binding engagements on Saturday night. Because this is the best night for attendance, I believe we should present the most important truths at that time. If the Sabbath is advertised without disguise it will draw the largest crowd during a series. People are increasingly interested in the Sabbath, and our members will make a greater effort to bring visitors to hear this message.

Which Night Is Best for the Sabbath Message?

There are some who present the Sabbath on a night of the week that is usually low in attendance. They point out that putting a vital subject on a low night will keep the attendance up. This is no doubt true. However, there is another thing to consider. Let me illustrate: If the average weekend attendance is 250, you can present the Sabbath on a week night and have a crowd of approximately 250 rather than the usual weekly attendance of 200. However, if you present the Sabbath on Saturday night the group may well exceed 300. We want the greatest possible number of people to hear this message. Why not present it at the time that has the greatest potential?

Order of Subjects

The order in which you present subjects should be given careful study. My convictions on this have come from our visitation program. The questions people ask and comments they make indicate how well the preacher is presenting the message. Receiving many questions on a particular subject indicates that more study is needed to present that truth in a logical, clear, and convincing way.

We need to try to understand how our message will be received by one of another faith. There are two phases of the truth that illustrate this very forcefully.

- 1. Many other Christians have a very strong bias against the Sabbath. This is usually, if not always, centered in what they consider strong arguments against the law of God. Because of this, we present the Sabbath truth before we present the law. If we present the law first some people will not return to hear the Sabbath truth. They will not accept the truth about the law. because they are afraid of having to believe the Sabbath. When we present the Sabbath first we mention the law only in passing, with no appeal to its authority at all. The results are gratifying. As we visit in the homes long discussions about "law and grace" do not occur. When the law is presented the prejudice is gone because the Sabbath has already been established.
- 2. The question of immortality is of increasing interest. The rapid growth of spiritism is evident. When we approach this truth in a logical way it is rarely a problem. However, in many Bible-study lessons and evangelistic handbills the study on the millennium and spiritism often precedes the study on the nature of man. When a person believes that "the immortal soul of man" goes to either heaven or hell at death how can he accept the truth about the millennium and spiritism? He cannot. But when they learn the truth about the nature of man there is no obstacle to accepting the other two.

"And they read from the book, from the law of God, clearly; and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the (Neh. 8:8; R.S.V.). The same should be said of our preaching.

The ESIDEN T SPEAKS



HARRY ANDERSON, ARTIST

1970 **1975**

Goals **Objectives**

ROBERT H. PIERSON

President, General Conference

HIS is the first Autumn Council since the past General Conference session, and this meeting should set the tone for the next five years.

We find ourselves drawing ever nearer the coming of the Lord, nearer the close of probation, and nearer the end of time on this earth. So that which we plan and do during the course of these ten days is URGENT! In view of this urgency, I believe we need some goals, some objectives, and then we need to keep our eyes on those goals and objectives and earnestly attempt to achieve them.

With this in mind, let me place before you twelve goals which, in my opinion, should be uppermost in our minds as we move forward in faith during the days ahead.

1. Lift Up Jesus Before the World and Before Our Church Members

There is nothing of greater importance than that in our preaching and our living we hold Jesus high before those to whom we minister. The Saviour said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32). It was on the

Existentialism

A Survey and Assessment

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Faith as an Existential Experience

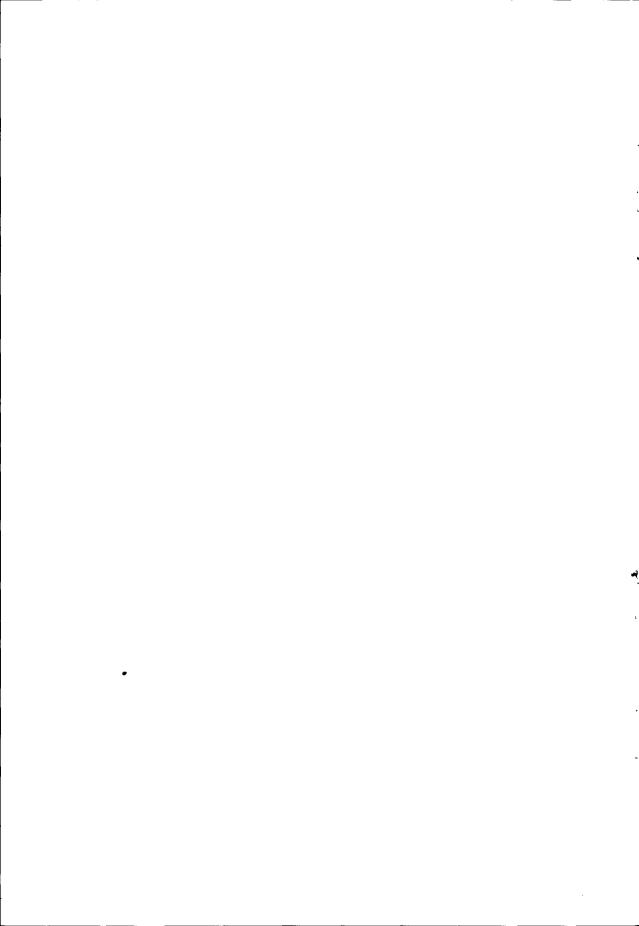
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Existentialism and the Basic Christian Doctrines

HARRY W. LOWE

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PREFACE

During recent years various forms of existential philosophy have swept through college campuses, both secular and religious, in North America. Younger men have found enormous appeal in some forms of existentialism. At times the reaction has suggested the discovery of something new, and in theological circles, the discovery of something not accessible through orthodox religion.

Existentialism is almost as difficult to interpret as it is impossible to describe. It may be wholly secular and totally atheistic, or it may appear as Christian philosophy that fits into the milieu of Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, or the Orthodox establishment. It can also be at home with Judaism.

The support of intellectuals in each of these persuasions has made existentialism something "faddish" in educational and theological circles during the last two decades. This was especially so under the glamor of famous European exponents, such as Dostoevsky, Kierkegaard, Kafka, Sartre, Camus, Jaspers, Tillich, and a host of others. Not all who bandied these names about had read their works of course, but the vogue swept on nonetheless.

When our own SDA college campuses felt these currents, it was inevitable that many questions arose. It was for the purpose of answering some of these questions that certain men were asked to prepare papers for full discussion by an augmented research committee in October, 1967. These men were assigned topics, but were otherwise unfettered in their writing and, since they were in different parts of the world, there was no collaboration between them, and their assessments were quite personal and independent.

After free discussion of these papers, during which Dr. D. W. Holbrook of the Home Study Institute was the Moderator, the following conclusions were reached:

- 1. Existentialism cannot be precisely defined. In fact, an exact definition is usually avoided by existential philosophers, since to define it would be to lose it in the bondage of too restricted confinement.
- 2. It is a somewhat radical philosophical departure that was foreseen by Pascal and worked out more methodically by Kierkegaard and his successors in this area.
- 3. Existentialism, as the name suggests, relates the destiny of the individual thinker to the ideas that engage and can be understood by his own mind.
- 4. In Christian existentialism this philosophy means that Christian beliefs are valueless except as they are vital experience in everyday life.
- 5. This vital existential experience has, however, always been a major emphasis in the doctrine of regeneration, so that by the new birth in Christ, all beliefs fundamental to

the soul's salvation become, through the Holy Spirit, a cohesive, vital and continuing daily experience.

- 6. In the area of dogma, fundamentalist Christians of all persuasions are confronted with the fact that the Christian existentialists, especially the later ones, were of the modernist schools of thought. Instances are given in these papers.
- 7. Existentialism stresses some vital lessons for the Christian believer. For instance, doctrinal beliefs can be but ice-cold declarations unless they come alive and warm in a believing heart and a victorious life. Having said this, we must conclude that (a) these vital lessons are found in the New Testament commands and exhortations to live our beliefs and to be what we pretend to be, (b) in the area of doctrinal belief, there is little or nothing in existentialism that is not offered to us in Biblical teachings as we Adventists understand them.
- 8. Existentialism does appear to stimulate spiritual curiosity and concern among college students, but it has to be admitted that a large percentage of them arrive at confusing arguments against the validity and importance of the teachings of the Christian church. To them there ceases to be a clear, convincing structure of objective truth expressed by a "Thus saith the Lord." The over-emphasis on relationships and processes tends to destroy a conviction that absolute truth exists for the purpose of man's redemption.
- 9. In the broad spectrum of truth, ranging from absolute objective truth to subjective relationships, the existential enthusiast tends to emphasize only the one extreme of subjective feelings as compared to absolute objective truths. Some existential enthusiasts would contend that Ellen G. White was one of their number, and it would require no great scholarship to compile a list of supporting quotations to this end. It would, however, be just as easy to put together an equally impressive list showing her belief in, and the importance of, absolute unchanging truth. Which means that Ellen G. White really stood in the middle of the road, removed from extremes in these matters. That is where we think we should all join her in our search for eternal values.

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Dangers of Existentialism

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The perils to be found in Christian existentialism are neither obvious nor easily discerned. On the contrary, existentialism's claim to relevancy and involvement of the whole of man's existence in truth offers much that is desirable.

The word "existentialism" is an extension of the word "existence." The crucial issues which face modern man require that he discover the true nature of his existence. For centuries the approach in philosophy has reduced the world of persons, including God and man, to mere objects of thought, as concepts set forth in the categories of language. The result has been the application of man's rational powers to control and direct life on the horizontal plane economically, politically, scientifically, and religiously. The consequence is the dehumanization of the individual. The Christian religion has been emptied of its vital meaning and its relevancy to life. This is due largely to the church's concern with and search for rational certainty, rather than with living truth. Because religious truth has become objectivised, man has been separated from God.

There is much truth to this critical observation by existentialism. The church has long operated principally in the context of ideas and doctrines, giving priority to formal utterances by church and school. It is possible to answer many questions about religion and life without dealing with the main issue: that of being personally involved in the whole of one's being. A rational philosophy of religion can be a substitute for the real thing. In the juggling of words and ideas, it is possible to reduce God to an idea. The effort to formulate a creed can get man nowhere. The God that people claim to believe in may become to them no more than an intellectual

abstraction. This is the great tragedy of philosophy according to existentialism.

Existentialism is a revolt against the attempt to get at the meaning of life through ideas. The assertion is that God cannot be made an object of human thought without distorting the truth about God. To deal with truth as an object to be grasped by the logic of mind and language is to lose the vertical relationship with God; that to believe reality is something to be known rather than lived is an illusion, denying to man the true nature of Christian meaning and existence. Man thereby becomes the captive of rational categories, rather than experiencing freedom through a personal relation with God.

Existentialism is a philosophy which shatters all rational security. It condemns all claims to truth which avoid or abdicate personal involvement. To interpret the Christian religion in terms of ideas and doctrines is to distort the truth and make participation in it impossible.

How does truth become relevant? Existentialism aims to answer that question. What is at stake is the very nature of man's being. The reality of truth is experienced when man faces decisions that constitute in essence a matter of life and death. Existentialism is a philosophy of crisis, where man is driven to vital decisions, thus penetrating to the inner meaning of life, facing up to the crises and anxieties that confront one's very existence.

The contrast is between being a participant and being a spectator. One may state his belief objectively about the nature of man, that he is mortal, subject to death. He can write that statement down, put it in doctrinal form, argue it as the basis of his own logical conclusions about man, all this without being involved. But let the doctor declare a man a

victim of terminal cancer. He is now involved in death itself. Death is no longer a theory to be discussed. It is now part of man's very existence. Consequently, truth must fail if it stops short of securing the involvement of the whole man.

WHAT IS TRUTH?

The crucial problem in Existentialism centers in the question of how to arrive at truth. Soren Kierkegaard, the Danish Philosopher, regarded as the father of Christian Existentialism, wrote that "Truth is Subjectivity."

"Here is such a definition of truth: an objective UNCERTAINTY held fast in an appropriation-process of the most passionate inwardness is the truth, the highest truth attainable for an existing individual... Truth is precisely the venture which chooses an OBJECTIVE UNCERTAINTY.... The paradoxical character of truth is its UNCERTAINTY is an expression for the passionate inwardness, and this passion is precisely the truth." 1

According to this, man discovers truth, not by the certainty of objective knowledge, but only by personal decision, a "passionate inwardness." Man's involvement comes first. Truth depends for its validity upon man. Truth comes from within, not from without. Man's decision creates out of itself what is existentially true. The rational consistency of Biblical content as doctrine is not essential in order to know the truth. Truth is not objectively given in the Bible so that it is eternally true. The Word of truth has never been given once for all. Truth is always contemporaneous. Only the Word today, existentially, can be the Word of God. The same word tomorrow could be demonic once the encounter and the involvement with God is lost.

The crucial question is: at what point are men actually confronted with truth: at the point of knowledge or at the point of decision? At the point where the objective truth of Scripture is brought to bear upon the mind, or at the point of personal involvement through an act of decision? What is the basis of a right decision? At what point is a man able to tell whether or not he has made the right passionate commitment? If a Biblical concept or doctrine is not truth until man becomes involved by personal commitment, then what is it? Is the falsity or the truth of the idea or doctrine no longer relevant to the intrinsic meaning of truth itself?

The objectivity of the truth of Scripture, fixed by the very nature of divine revelation and inspiration, is incompatible with this subjective approach. Existentialism is unwilling to be bound by the normative character of the Word of God. Is the truth of Scripture autonomous? Existentialism denies this. What is prior, says traditional Christianity, is the knowledge of and from God, not the decisions of men. The latter is tested by the former. Truth stands apart from man's decision. It possesses a pre-established harmony with the God of the Bible and His Son Jesus Christ. Consequently, belief on a knowledge basis is essential to and prior to personal involvement in truth. It can be depended upon regardless of man's participation in it.

To believe that the source of truth can be found in the human situation, in the decision of man, rather than in the movement of God towards man through the apostles and prophets is perilous in the extreme. God alone is responsible for the gift of truth. God nowhere leaves sinful man to grope around within himself for the norm or the experience of truth. Existentialism shatters faith in objective truth, moral absolutes, and eternal principles revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

The traditional Christian position states that belief in the Bible as the revealed Word of God is, first, a statement, not about human existence in a contemporary situation, but an objective knowledge of truth given by God existing in and of itself. Granted that existentialism has a point in warning against abstract intellectualism. Undoubtedly, the vital importance of deciding for truth cannot be overestimated; but how shall man know that what he decides for is in reality the truth? In Scripture, the principles of truth, morality, God, and man, are fixed for all time and for all men. Here God tells man about Himself, who He is, what He has done, is doing, and what He will do, and what He requires men to believe and do. This is the given knowledge content of truth. He addresses man personally and calls for an intelligent personal response, an involvement in harmony with the knowledge given and present to the mind. True involvement requires obedience to that which is objectively given. The knowledge of Biblical truth involves more than mere thinking. It requires the bringing of man's whole

life into captivity to and harmony with the revealed truths of God's Word. Subjectivism can lead only to a moral relativism and an irrationalism without a firm foundation.

"When the question of truth is raised in an objective manner, reflection is directed objectively to the truth, as an object to which the knower is related. Reflection is not focused upon the relationship, however, but upon the question of whether it is the truth to which the knower is related. . . . When the question of the truth is raised subjectively, reflection is directed subjectively to the nature of the individual's relationship.... THE INDIVIDUAL IS IN THE TRUTH EVEN IF HE SHOULD HAPPEN TO BE THUS RELATED TO WHAT IS NOT TRUE. . . . The paradoxical character of the truth is its objective uncertainty."2

Thus there is no universal truth for all men. The discovery of truth for each man is unrepeatable in anyone else. The truth for one man constitutes no norm for another. The peril here is that man will attach himself to that which is false. Here exists the unbridgeable gulf between existentialism and the traditional Christian religion. For existentialism refuses to be bound by the eternal truths of the revealed Word of God.

The traditional Christian view is that the historical events and doctrinal truth of the Bible have significance for men in every age on the basis that they constitute the eternal and fixed truth of God. A trustworthy approach to the truth is both objective and existential. If men are to discover the truth for heart, mind, and life, harmony between the given Word and the existential experience is essential. When only the latter is required, truth and knowledge have passed over into sheer subjectivism.

If Christian existentialism is to become aware of its responsibility to make truth relevant to life, it must speak with the voice of certainty. But this is the one thing it cannot do, and denies as a possibility.

"The paradoxical character of the truth is its objective uncertainty... without risk there is no faith, and the greater the risk the greater the faith; the more objective security the less inwardness, and the less objective security the more profound the possible inwardness." 3

In direct opposition to this, the Christian church says to men everywhere: There is the sure word of God. No man lives by what ap-

pears to be right in his own eyes and in his own experience. God has spoken both in His Son and in His Word. Life in commitment to this Word alone has real meaning and certainty. If the Christian Church of today ever does anything to make the Christian religion meaningful, it will occur only by a return to revealed truth as given by God; for a given truth from God alone is sufficient to give birth to spiritual life and to awaken in man an existence that is in harmony with God.

SHATTERING OF AN OBJECTIVE AUTHORITY

Existentialism's dependence upon and appeal to the subjective repudiates the authority of any body of beliefs, or the fixity of the eternal truths of Scripture. It is a revolt against fixed systems and doctrines on the basis that such a set formula tends to separate thought from life. Absolutes, universals, are simply verbal expressions, and do not possess actual reality. Only the existential word is real and relevant. The word of truth is always contemporaneous. It has never been given with finality for all men.

"If Christianity were a doctrine, the relationship to it would not be one of faith, for only an intellectual type of relationship can correspond to a doctrine.... The realm of faith is thus not a class for numskulls in the sphere of the intellectual, or an asylum for the feebleminded. Faith constitutes a sphere all by itself, and every misunderstanding of Christianity at once may be recognized by transforming it into a doctrine, transferring it to the sphere of the intellectual."

"If I am capable of grasping God objectively, I do not believe, but precisely because I cannot do this I must believe. If I wish to preserve myself in faith, I must constantly be intent upon holding fast the objective uncertainty, so as to remain out upon the deep over seventy thousand fathoms of water, still preserving my faith."5

In existentialism, faith and doubt belong together. In Scripture, faith depends upon the certainty of what one believes. The principles of truth in Scripture are certain for all men, believers and unbelievers. If they are not, then how can one communicate with an unbeliever at all? If truth cannot be understood without faith, all discussion with unbelievers would be impossible. Truth is truth for the believer, because it is knowable and valid for all men irrespective of personal faith.

For existentialism it matters little what a man believes so long as he believes it with passionate involvement. In the light of the sinfulness of man, extended to the whole of man's being, personal decision needs some moral and spiritual context, some authoritative norm, some guiding principle to test and try every claim to have experienced truth. How is one to distinguish between "I choose" and "I feel" since truth is subjectivity? In shifting the emphasis from objective truth to the individual's inwardness, who or what is going to correct any deviation from truth or save from self deception?

IMMEDIACY

Existentialism involves a return to immediacy with God in terms of an intensity of feeling, passion, and often ecstasy. These emotional involvements are claimed to have significance for man's relationship with God, bringing man into the very presence of the divine. This achievement of a religious faith is by way of ontology (being), which affirms that man possesses deep within his being the capacity for immediate access to God and religious reality, an inner awareness whereby man can know God directly. Immediacy magnifies the miracle of some immediate encounter with God.

Martin Buber declares:

"What is the eternal, primal phenomenon, present here and now, of that which we term revelation? It is the phenomenon that a man does not pass, from the moment of the supreme meeting, the same being as he entered into it... At times it is like a light breath, at times like a wrestling bout, but always, it happens... Man receives, and he receives not a specific 'content' but a Presence, a Presence as power." 6

Emil Brunner asserts:

"Revelation, as the Christian faith understands it, is indeed, by its very nature, something that lies beyond all rational arguments. . . which can be attained only through divine self-communication,"

We know God only through personal confrontation, no longer identified with concepts of any kind. "Truth is encounter."8

The problem raised by existentialism is not an easy one. The Bible speaks of the inner witness of the Holy Spirit as an essential factor in Christian experience. The chief concern of the Church, however, is for the genuineness of fellowship with God. Why should the Church oppose the claim to immediacy if it leads to an encounter with God?

Since encounter with the supernatural is the claim common to all religions, including those which are non-Christian, how shall man determine what is true and what is false?

Existentialism does not relate itself to the categories of the infallible Word of God. It therefore sets forth a view of man's relationship to God far different from that revealed in Scripture. The God of the Bible is the speaking God. Communion with God is possible only between persons as rational beings. Once it is insisted according to the Bible that human reason must think harmoniously with the revealed truth of Scripture, the necessity for a given objective truth becomes obvious. God confronts us, not in ecstasy or emotional passionateness, not only as subject, but as object in terms of the revealed will and Word of God. Any claim to fellowship with God that dispenses with the rational category of fixed truth in the Word of God is open to the charge of demonic confrontation.

"And when they shall say unto you, seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter; should not the people seek unto their God?... To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."9

In rejecting the revealed truths of Scripture and the objective nature of revelation, existentialism deprives man of any criterion whatever to distinguish between truth and error, between the Holy Spirit and a false spirit. If Satan confronts man as an angel of light in some form of immediacy, how would man be able to distinguish between the voice of God and the voice of the devil? If Christ is any judge at this point, His appeal to Scripture "It is written" in exposing the devil himself, still holds true for Christians in every age. Any religious philosophy which conceives of man's relationship with God above and outside the sphere of conceptual revelation in Scripture lays men wide open to the deceptions of mysticism, sentimentalism, spiritualism, and every form of questionable supernaturalism. Instead of recovering the relevance of truth, it involves the surrender of the eternal truth of the Word of God. Existentialism is the rallying ground

for the growing trend of our day towards a professed supernaturalism which could easily substitute the Spirit's witness to the truth of Scripture for extremes of emotional and psychological fantasy.

Traditional Christianity has always insisted upon the personal and intimate nature of God's relationship to man. But this relationship is not born of uncertainty about the truth of Scripture. All the "passionate inwardness" of man's initiative alone cannot attain to the God who speaks to man through his Word.

Any claim to immediacy apart from the fixed word of truth in Scripture easily becomes deceptive, unrelated to the reality of truth at all. If there is no fixed truth in Scripture, what guarantee can men have that the immediacy they claim to experience corresponds to the reality of truth itself? By what standard are men to test and correct this "passionate inwardness? How are men to know that these involvements constitute the truth?

Obviously, existentialism's only standard for testing its "passionate inwardness" is its own passionate commitment. But since sinful men are prone to pervert the truth, this immediacy can only leave man in a state of utter uncertainty. Unless man has direct access to truth normatively given by God by which men may test and correct their own fallible feelings, they are left to their own devisings. When existentialism asserts that the only certainty man has is his own passionate involvements, it exposes him to a thousand and one false claims to know God in some other way than that revealed in Scripture.

The very nature of sinful man involves restrictions and limitations to the nature of divine-human communication. One of the chief concerns of the Christian church must be for the genuineness of communion with God, because of the possibility of a counterfeit at the very point where truth and trustworthiness are so essential. The church must not countenance any immediacy which cannot stand the test of the Word of God. The Biblical communion with God brings the mind and

life into harmony with the given truth of Scripture. Here man gains his true being and the purpose of God's revelation is realized. Here exist eternal categories that need no demythologizing. These categories belong to men in every age.

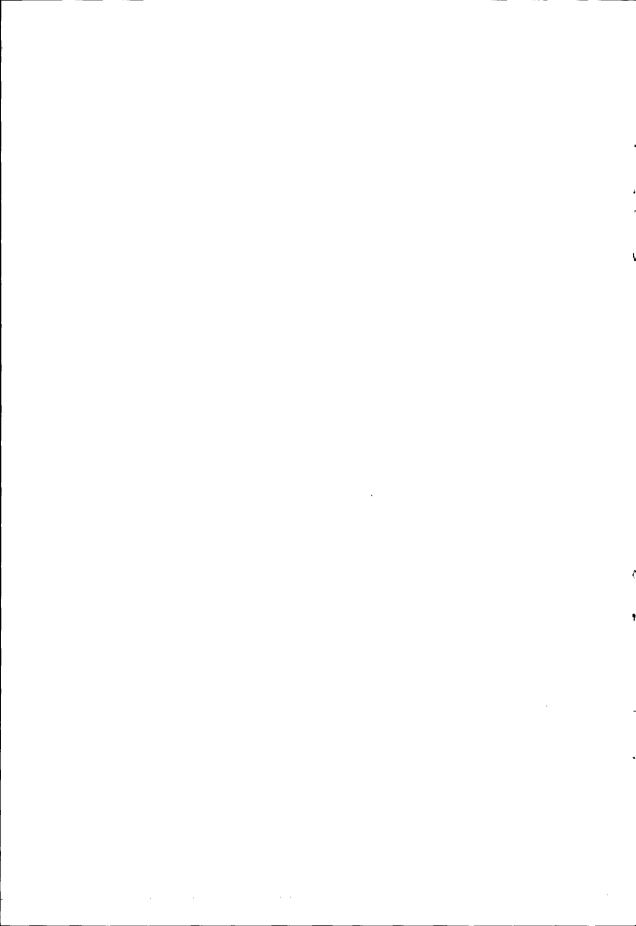
In Scripture, when God condescends to draw near to man through the Spirit, the prophet, or the apostle, the mind's grasp of rational knowledge given by God is both heightened and clarified. Everywhere the Spirit confirms the Word. It insists that the God man claims to encounter be the God of Scripture.

Existentialism rejects the a priori knowledge of God in Scripture in favor of an inward immediacy. In so doing, it is in grave danger of becoming the victim of other supernatural powers that fight against God.

Men come to a true relationship with God within a conceptual frame of reference by the inspired Word of God. God comes to man in His Word through the Holy Spirit. The rational categories of truth are not belittled. Rather is the mind exercised so that, by means of a trustworthy knowledge of God, man can choose truth intelligently and become involved to his ultimate salvation.

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Goals and Spiritual Values of Existentialism

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The existentialist philosophy holds today an important, almost an overwhelming, place in our society. Moreover, the feeling is there that it is destined to exert in the near future an ever more profound influence on the thought and the conduct of the masses of our fellow-men, just as much as on philosophy, literature, or theology. Some rejoice in this, and others deplore it. In order to form an objective opinion on the subject, it is necessary to give it a close examination. We shall approach the problem first by trying to define the existentialist philosophy negatively, that is, by stating what it is not. Then we shall be able to state precisely its goals, and finally we shall touch on a few of its unquestionable spiritual values.

I. WHAT EXISTENTIALIST PHILOSOPHY IS NOT

To be able to judge existentialist philosophy at its true worth, at least five errors are to be avoided.

1. Fashionable Existentialism, or the Eccentricities of our Time

The first, the crudest and the most common error, consists of judging the philosophy simply according to appearances, according to certain worldly eccentricities which have no philosophical tie-in with authentic existentialism. In fact, it is easy to remember the fashion launched by a certain segment of student youth who haunted certain Parisian cafes and called themselves existentialists simply because they hung around Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir. The existentialism in fashion was then the utmost absurdity of the century, and if it contributed to making known to the public the name of the latest philosophy it was truly most detrimental to

the existentialist philosophy itself. For, an existentialism adopted because it is the talk of the town can be nothing but a caricature of true existentialism.

2. Existentialist Literature, or the Triumph of Despair

It would be no wiser to make a general evaluation of existentialism, as a philosophy, according to the literary tendency which claims this title. For when it left the society of the philosophers to launch out in the world governed by the novel, existentialist thought found itself deeply altered. Without denying the quality of some of these authors, we must still recognize that this literary tendency, by making anguish, absurdity, and nothingness into the warp and woof of existence, has only retained the purely negative facet of existentialist philosophy; and this is a generous statement. As for an over-all judgment of this literature, this is what a competent critic has to say:

"On top of the tragic consciousness of our age has been proliferated a shadowy and obscene literature, in which psychological truth is systematically sought at the level of the beast, in which a lucid recognition of disorder has turned into a delectation of evil, despair into rage, sensual drunkenness into erotic madness, and often, disgust with life into obsession with suicide." (1)

Now, precisely nothing has done more to increase the prestige of what is believed to be existentialism than this outbreak of novels; nothing did more to assure its triumph than this literature of despair. Obviously it is not necessary to explain why we are not dealing with that type of existentialism in this essay.

3. The Existentialism of Sartre, or the Philosophy of the Absurd

A third wide-spread error is that of generally

evaluating existentialism according to our personal opinion of its individual representatives. And when existentialism is not judged according to the eccentricities of fashion or literature, most people think immediately of Jean-Paul Sartre. He seems to be today's best representative of existentialism; first, because he went to the pains of presenting his thought in a system of doctrines; next, because he knew how to propagate his ideas outside of philosophical circles, using the most efficient propaganda methods: literary criticism, short stories, novels and the theater, and thus became the source of inspiration for the most popular literary tendencies. However, to be honest, we have to admit that except popularity and the tumult of the fashionable, authentic existentialism owes nothing to Jean-Paul Sartre. It is not in the least our intention to exclude Sartre from existentialism, "because the worldly wing of his influence is guilty of fraudulently claiming an identity." (2) But it is logical that the serious seeker be objectively put on his guard against the wide-spread tendency to almost automatically reduce the philosophy in question "to this mixture of existentialism and inexistentialism which makes up Sartrism." (3) Not only is the latter not a faithful expression of existentialist thought, but rather an outgrowth, or as Emmanuel Monnier put it so well, "the last shoot off one of the existentialist traditions, tradition which originated with Heidegger and which formed a radical opposition to the founders of the modern philosophy of existence." (4)

4. Existentialist Philosophy or a New Way of Philosophizing

A fourth error is often committed by those who condemn existentialism, be it rightly or wrongly. We may welcome it or deplore it, but we cannot deny that this philosophy represents the most modern literary, philosophical, and theological mode of thinking, and is at the same time the most authentic, realistic, and occasionally the cruelest expression of the age in which we are living. Trying to ignore this fact is one of the most serious errors that can come from one who is trying precisely to obtain a hearing from the men of this century. Speaking the language of his contemporaries, using the vocabulary of the people of his time,

providing answers for the philosophical preoccupations of his century: these were some of the characteristics of the preaching of the great apostle Paul. But here we have more than a question of method. A deeper study of existentialism is all the more necessary, since its origins are to be found in Christian thought and since, in certain cases, its representatives claim to be Christianity's most faithful witnesses.

5. Existentialism or Another Way of Talking Christianity

A deplorable confusion exists precisely between existentialism and Christian thought that we must do our best not to foster. The more one is capable of rightly evaluating how much contemporary theological thought owes to existentialism, the more this error is easy to commit. However, it would be a serious misunderstanding not to see that the identity is essentially valid vis-a-vis the form of thought and that there is often a radical distinction in the fundamental meaning. No one doubts the Christian origins of existentialism, and Kierkegaard was perfectly right in presenting Christian truth as the model of existential truth. But is this sufficient reason to conclude that existentialism is just another way of talking Christianity?

This was certainly the first intention of the father of existentialism. We know to what pains Kierkegaard went in trying to re-establish the spirit of authentic Christianity. For he felt that, under the influence of the great Protestant philosophers such as Kant and Hegel, the spirit of the Reformation had been covered over by the rationalist tendency which was sweeping current philosophical and theological thought in its train. Desirous to follow up the work of Luther, Kierkegaard reacted against this alteration of the spirit of the Reformation and by returning to the original thought of Christianity, he hoped to wave the banner for a new Reformation.

But alas, existentialism is not limited to Soren Kierkegaard's thought, neither to the purely Christian expression of his thought. Other branches have sprouted out of the common trunk, and even if we held to the branch fed by Christian sap, we would still have to admit that it has not brought forth Christians who are assured and calm in their doctrinal edifice. If Christian existentialism were the authentic expression of Christian thought, would it have such a peculiarly Protestant color with Kierkegaard, Catholic with Gabriel Mercel, Orthodox with Berdyaev and Jewish with Buber?

We have said enough, we feel, about the necessity of an infinite amount of caution in order to have an objective evaluation of existentialist philosophy. It would be unjust to make a decision based on appearances, or to judge it only on its negative side exploited by one brand of literature. It would be just as sorry to foster prejudices against it based on a particular case, or to condemn the entire system en masse without even taking the trouble to examine it beforehand. But the most subtle error, as far as we can see, would be not to discern the limits between existentialist thought and Christian thought with the pretext that the former originated in the latter, or simply because throughout all the variations of existentialist thought, an eminently Christian form of thought is to be found.

II. GOALS OF EXISTENTIALISM

As precarious as the connection between the different existentialist traditions may be, nevertheless they have in common a certain manner of stating problems, a certain sound in the subjects they choose, a certain seeking after common goals which permit us to speak of them from a global point of view.

1. Man as an Individual

And thus, in very general terms, we can characterize existentialist philosophy-

"as a reaction of the philosophy of man against the excesses of the philosophy of ideas or of the philosophy of things. In it, it is not so much existence in all its extension, but rather the existence of man which is the first problem of philosophy. It accuses traditional philosophy of having too often misappreciated it, to turn to the philosophy of the world or of the products of the mind." (5)

Modern philosophy had been a humanism, that is a philosophy of man, but of man in a general way, man as a being gifted with reason. Rather than man, it had considered human reason. Now, the worth of the existentialist philosophers was precisely to remind humanism of the existence of man. Over against Hegel's rationalism, over against the idea that the object of philosophy is reason in its uni-

versality, Kierkegaard was the first to oppose what he himself called the existential philosophy, that is, a philosophy which considers above all the individual, the human individual in his tangible life, not the knowing individual, the thinking subject, but the existing individual, with his suffering, his anguish and his passion. For to exist, as he says, is above all being an individual. What is essential, is not therefore a general principle, universal Reason, Humanity or Man with a capital, or even human nature in that which it has in common with all individuals, but the tangible man, the human individual. For this reason, Berdyaev was able to assert:

"Existentialist philosophy is a personalistic philosophy: the subject of knowledge is the human person." (6)

2. Priority of Existence

But if it is first of all a reversion to man and even to the tangible man, existentialism is more than just that. What is interesting in man, what forms the foremost object of its research, is existence. From its very beginnings, existentialism has been characterized by its tendency to accentuate that which exists, or even better, the existence of that which exists. It is not the individual's being which must be attained, but rather his existence. Only this existence provides the true being. Every subject is first an existing subject. The existence is what actualizes man's essence. Our words prove this. When we say, "I am a man," "I am" asserts the existence; "man" designates the essence. In man, therefore, existence precedes essence and this assertion, with its variations makes up the fundamental thesis of all the existentialists.

Before the arrival of existentialism, philosophy had always judged that the essence of a thing was anterior to its existence. Thus it was taught that the individual man was derived from the concept of man, which is found in divine intelligence, or which simply makes up human nature, of which every man is an example. But once again existentialism upsets the relation established by philosophy between essence and existence. There is at least one being whose existence precedes his essence, one being who exists before being able to be defined by any concept: This being is man. Man exists first of all, he appears in the world, and only hereafter can he be de-

fined. Man is first of all nothing; he will only be after being nothing, and he will be what he has made of himself. This is the basic principle of the new philosophy.

3. Existence is in Interiority

But what must we understand by "existence?" The answer is not easy, for unless we seize man existing, existence will always be a pure abstraction. In the existentialist vocabulary, to exist is not a synonym of to be. To be designates a state, whereas to exist designates an act. Existence is the very act by which the passage from possibility to reality is accomplished. Now, it is only man who can carry out this act, because he alone, in the world of our experience, is free, and also because he alone is a conscious subject. Nature is, but does not exist outside of the mental act of the subject who thinks it and makes it exist. By seizing himself in the consciousness of self, the subject seizes himself existing, he seizes his own existence. That is why every subject is an existing subject; existence is the subject himself in his interiority. For the existentialist philosophers, the only true objectivity is therefore that of his own subjectivity, because it is in the depths of himself, in his interiority, that he discovers the only true reality, existence. To exist is his first worry, existence his supreme interest.

4. Man and his Becoming

Existence is therefore made up of interiority; it is the act by which the subject makes himself and forms his own essence. However, this act presupposes liberty. Only he who freely chooses himself exists authentically; only he who makes himself according to the image of the person he wants to be. And thus choice is never once-and-for-all: one cannot anchor himself in existence as in a position that has been acquired once and for all. He who is existing and who stabilizes himself in the type of what he wanted to become transforms himself into an object and by that very act stops existing. Now, existence is what never becomes an object. We can only speak of it in terms of springing forth. It is the original appearance whereupon the subject thinks and acts. In short, existence is man in his becoming, in his incessant effort to outdo what he is. Consequently, existentialism puts

on man's shoulders not only the entire responsibility for what he is, since he is what he makes of himself, but also for his own destiny.

5. The Dramatic Conception of Man's Destiny

This responsibility explains, on the one hand, the importance accorded to the problem of liberty by all the existentialist philosophers, as well as explaining, on the other hand, the singularly dramatic conception of human existence which characterizes them all. In fact, with the very vivid feeling that he has of making himself, the existentialist thinker cannot stay at the level of abstract and theoretical speculation: he lives his thought, it is the latter which engages him directly, he can only take upon himself the different situations of his existence. An example: Socrates whom Kierkegaard makes into the model of the existential thinker. He had come to the conclusion of immortality by one proviso, but in this proviso he engages his life, by assuming death in all liberty. This is authentically living. But out of this obligation of life flows, for different reasons, the anguish which is so characteristic of all the existentialists as well as their basically tragic understanding of the destiny of man.

That is, briefly, what the representatives of existential philosophy have in common. It is true that concerning every one of the several points of this common objective, the opinions are infinitely varied. We cannot go over every one of the different aspects to try to pick out one here, one there. Our judgment can only be general and touch on the form of thought which all the existentialist philosophers have in common, rather than on their completely different systems. Moreover, the essential worth of existentialism for us is to be found in this general judgment.

III. SPIRITUAL VALUES OF EXISTEN-TIALISM

We cannot here discuss the value of existentialism as a whole, nor even take up some of the most justified criticisms which are commonly made concerning it. No one particular system can be accepted without reservations, and some of them—and this includes the most widely known, those of Heidegger and Sartre—are affected with a basic fault. These are,

however, at the bottom of existential thought, truths of capital importance which come straight from Christianity. One of the merits of existentialist philosophers is precisely to have brought them to the forefront, and by doing this, to have brought contemporary theology to a better understanding of Biblical thought, particularly in the area of Christian anthropology.

1. The Knowledge of Man as an Individual

And thus the first value of existentialism for us is found in the very object of its greatest study and in the way this study was carried out: man, man as a tangible being, the existing individual, human personality. The Bible knows no other than this. In it there is no knowledge of man as such. The sacred writers were totally ignorant of an abstract, theoretical knowledge of human nature, the product of philosophical speculations. Their representation of man is breath-takingly realistic, and it is always the outline of the real life of types of men whose names we know. This is such an essential truth that the ideal image, the perfect stature of man, is incarnated in the life of Jesus Christ, which means that the definition of the conception of man, according to the Bible, can only be based on the living reality of existing individuals.

Existentialist philosophy has shown a remarkable acumen in exploiting for its own use this fundamental Bible truth. And thus it presents to us a representation of man radically different from that to which classical philosophy, and in turn all of Christian theology, had accustomed us. By this observation of men, the existentialist philosophers led us to an anthropology remarkably akin to that of the Bible and which as well is harmonious with a realistic observation of the facts. We esteem this result to be the first great merit of existentialism.

2. Biblical Thought Basically Existential

The pre-eminence of existence is without the shadow of a doubt another Biblical notion enhanced by existentialist philosophy. It is asserted in the Bible's first mention of man, when the author of Genesis defines man as "a living soul." The drama of man, of which the Bible is full from Genesis to Revelation, is nothing less than an existential drama. Every-

thing, absolutely everything, boils down to a problem of existence. God himself gives his own definition as the Existing One par excellence: The Eternal One. He calls himself "I am Who I am." In opposition with idols he is also named "the living God." The incarnation of the Word is, in the highest degree, a demonstration of the existential basis of Christianity. For the salvation of man, it was made "life-giving spirit." Not only does Christ present himself as "the living One," "the Prince of Life," but as being life itself.

The existential characteristic is also found in Biblical truth. It resembles not in the least the abstract speculation of philosophy or even of traditional theology. Biblical truth only makes sense to the extent in which it is lived. Christ himself gave the example: "What He taught, He lived. . . . Thus in His life, Christ's words had perfect illustration and support. And more than this, what He taught, He was. . . . Not only did He teach the truth, but He was the Truth" (Ed. 78, 79). The same principle is valid for his disciples: "Only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven," says Jesus, can claim his name. Only those who listen to the truth and practice it are his authentic brothers and sisters. In his hymn on charity, Paul contrasts the uselessness of theoretic knowledge with the only real value of practical knowledge. Truth is really known only when it becomes inner life.

And there we have another existentialist merit, that of having grasped the existential basis of Christian truth, truth that is communicated more by testimony than by reason. Kierkegaard, especially, considered Christian truth to be the type of existential truth. For him, the "how" one adheres to truth seemed less important than the "what" is received as truth. He felt that truth known or memorized is nothing more than a cadaver-an object without value. The importance lies not so much in the truth as in the attitude of the knower. Without the inner attitude, the knowledge is vain, it trickles away into the simple act of knowing. He even says, "It is not truth which is truth, but it is the path which is the truth, that is, truth is only in the becoming, in the process of appropriation." (7)

3. The Notion of Becoming

The notion of becoming is another Biblical

value forcefully affirmed by existentialist philosophy. It is no secret how this problem of the Christian becoming occupied the last years of the life of Kierkegaard. It was in the name of this principle that he denounced as the most formidable illusion of modern time the idea that Christianity is the same thing as Christendom, that all the inhabitants of a country are Christians because of the sole fact that they have been baptized, and that they do not need to become Christians. In the name of the same principle, he also spoke out against the ultra-conservativeness of the established Church, of the official, national Church, coinciding with the State. To the contrary, the true Church is a Church that is becoming, he says, just as each one of her members must be.

Do we need to demonstrate how right these assertions are or to emphasize how well they reflect one of the dominant characteristics of the Biblical concept of man? (8) The creation story marks conspicuously the privilege accorded to the human creature-" . . . and man became a living soul." This expression indicates clearly that man does not exist as does an object, that he is not a given substance of being, but rather a soul whose existence depends at every moment on the activity through which he makes himself, a soul who not only has life, but is himself living. In other words, man did not come from his Creator's hands a finished being, possessing from the beginning an acquired character, a well determined personality, in a word, an immortal essence. The perfection of man did not lie in a finishing, a fullness accorded from the beginning by the Creator, but rather in the possibility of an infinite development, that eternity itself cannot exhaust. To realize his being, to make himself, as it were, to become a being in the likeness of God, this is the privilege of man as well as the special grace of the Creator. For in creating him, God gave man the possibilities necessary to attain all the fullness to which he was destined, provided that the free creature consent and cooperate in the realization of God's plan for him.

The trial of the Garden of Eden must be considered in this light, as well as the pilgrimage of God's children since the fall, the sanctification of Jesus for those who obey and the never-finished perfecting of those who want to

be like Him. God has accorded to man the grace of becoming what he has resolved to be. By consenting to the plan of God and his cooperation with divine power, man has the possibility of creating himself as that which he wants to be, to work toward his transformation according to the representation which he makes of his model, by participating in the very life of his creator.

This idea of the progressive becoming of man, that of the Christian included, this idea of a maturation, of a necessary development and of a transformation foreseen by God in the primitive economy, so that man might attain adulthood, his fullness, his form as son of God, stands out just as clearly in the over-all Biblical conception of time and history. The process of gradual revelation, just as the progressive realization of the plan of salvation, confirms this law of becoming for everything that touches man's being. Christian ethics is founded on this principle; it is the highest form of open-end ethics. It fixes no arrival, no leveling-off for the Christian; far from stopping, in his forward march, every progress becomes a means of going higher, of ever coming closer to the ideal. The Christian can never be content with what he is since he is told to be perfect as his heavenly Father is perfect.

4. Existentialist Realism and its Theological Meaning

To be complete, only as far as anthropology is concerned, we must add a few lines concerning the particularly dramatic conception of the destiny of man found in the writings of existentialist philosophers, conception which is not entirely foreign to the Biblical notion of man, a mortal creature, drawn from nothingness, threatened with returning there at every step, and even more, loaded down with an original fault which makes death inevitable. No philosphy has ever grasped with more reality this natural fragility of man, the reasons for his deepseated anguish and tragic feeling about life, faced with death and nothingness. There is no trouble understanding how the existentialist thinkers of the atheistic branch could do nothing better than launch out into nothing, to be faithful to nothingness, to joyfully embrace death or absurdity and to consider that "the history of any life is the history of a failure." (9)

However that may be, even this negative aspect of existentialism contains something

interesting for the knowledge of the individual man. All this human reality made up of misery, anguish, contradiction, vanities, that the existentialist authors have taken so much time to write out so loyally and so precisely, sometimes even brutally and cynically, illustrates perfectly what the Bible tells us about the natural man, separated from God and in revolt against Him. The consciousness of this tragic situation of natural man, abandoned to his own forces and impotent because he is "sold unto sin," led Paul to exclaim in a strangely existentialist cry, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" However, the apostle does not stop with the anguished cry of the writers of despair; on the contrary, he knows the remedy, and he hastens to give it. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Rom. 7:14-25).

5. The Existence of God and His Relations with Man

This reference to God, and to the God of Jesus Christ, leads us naturally to the greatest value, on which all the otheres depend: the existence of God and his relations with man. On this most important point, it is true enough, the existentialist thinkers have a radically divergent attitude. And here, for each one of them, the test of authenticity is situated. The question of God provides the distinctive mark of the different existentialist systems: those which are truly faithful to existential thought and those which betray it.

The radical opposition between existentialism and classical philosophy which was based on reason and abstract theories, has been abundantly emphasized. It would be just as correct to say that the new philosophy has contradicted traditional theology, a close imitation of classical philosophy. For just as it had lost man, the human individual, from sight, modern humanism had also lost from sight the connecting line between God and man. And it was precisely the reaction of Kierkegaard which marked out both a return to individual man and a return to the God of the Christian revelation in whom man possesses the eternal source of his existence.

In fact, for Kierkegaard, Christianity supposes not only the existence of man but also the existence of God. The object of Christian faith, he says, is the existence of God. But here again, as with man, it cannot be a question of an abstract God, of the god of philosophical speculation. It is vainly that the latter claims to grasp and demonstrate the existence of God. The demonstration can never, moreover, touch on the existence itself. It is impossible to really demonstrate that something exists. Nothing is more improper than trying to demonstrate the existence of someone who exists. Thus, for him, the efforts of speculative thought to demonstrate the existence of God are nothing better than a mockery of God himself. And therefore Christianity rests, according to Kierkegaard, beyond all the rational proofs of the existence of God. Of course God is everywhere in creation, but he is not there directly visible. It is only by descending into himself, into his own inner abyss, that the individual is prepared to see God. "God discernible in the heart," as Pascal said, this is the reality of God according to Christian existentialism. Even more, the fact that God has existed as an individual man, born into time, makes Christianity to the highest degree a "message of existence," an "existential message."

It is true that in this major point, existentialism, with Heidegger and Sartre, has not stayed in the line that its founder had pointed out. Because of the overwhelming position accorded to the thought of these philosophers, existentialism is affected with a fundamental fault. By wanting to again consider man as depending on no one but himself and by cutting him off from his relations with God, who according to Sartre, does not even exist, these thinkers have simply betrayed the intentions of the new philosophy. With them existentialism, which was born as a vigorous reaction against modern humanism, has gone back to humanism and thus risks being swallowed up by this great rationalistic current of modern thought. Everything depends on the final solution which will win out concerning the great question of the existence of God and his relations

"If it escapes this grotesquerie of spiritual poverty where some seem to be pushing it, if it rediscovers without playing on words the fullness of existence, existentialism can renew the face and the spirit of occidental rationalism." (10)

Otherwise, it will simply be necessary to keep from taking as the classical conception of life the caricature that the atheistic existentialists propose.

But alas, we cannot help fearing that the tendencies of atheistic existentialism are winning out more and more, and that, finally, the term may only designate the eccentricities of our age, the literature of despair, the philosophy of the absurd, and even the theology of a post-Christianity without God. In this case, existentialism will truly be, as has already been asserted, the clearest expression "of the doctrinal collapse which characterizes our era," or else "the consciousness of a lack" which authentic Christianity will be all the better qualified to satisy because it is not a stranger to the mode of thinking which favors such an understanding. The gospel message could then well be, for a society which has kept only the negative aspect of existentialist philosophy, what a well applied remedy can be for an illness which is dangerous but has been clearly diagnosed.

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Whatever the future may have in store for existentialist philosophy, it is nonetheless impossible to deny the Christian nature of its original reaction, which betokens, as E. Mounier has said, "a return of religion in a world which has tried to find its meaning in what is purely manifest. Christian existentialism is an obvious defense against the secularization of faith. A sort of prophetic awakening on a philosophical plane." (11) And it is not totally lacking in interest for us to notice that the beginning of this awakening is situated exactly in 1843, the

year of the publication of the first protest from the founder of existentialism. It would therefore be unjust not to recognize the very real value of the goals striven for by the existentialist thinkers as well as the spiritual values of several of the Christian truths on which this philosophy has been founded. To be perfectly honest, we must even add that contemporary theology owes a debt to existentialism for several of its most essential discoveries, especially in the domain of Biblical anthropology.

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NOTES

- P. H. Simon, l'Homme en Proces, p. 21, Paris, 1965.
- (2) E. Mounier, Introduction aus Existentialismes, p. 8.
- (3) Ibid.
- (4) Ibid.
- (5) Ibid, p. 9.
- (6) N. Berdiaef, Cing Meditations sur l'Existence, Editions Montaigne, p. 74.
- (7) S. Kierkegaard, Post-Scriptum, p. 50.
- (8) We studied this notion of the Christian becoming in Christian Perfection According to the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, Paris, 1965. It is particularly discernible in the writings of Mrs. E. G. White.
- (9) J. P. Sartre, L'Etre et le Neant, p. 631, Paris, Gallimard, 1943.
- (10) E. Mounier, Op. cit., p. 189.
- (11) Ibid., p. 189, emphasis ours.

Faith as an Existential Experience

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Faith is set forth in the New Testament as an existential experience. However, the rational unfolding of authentic Christian faith discloses a thought content radically different from that developed in philosophical existentialism.

This radical difference between New Testament existentialism and much of modern existentialism is possible because existentialism is primarily a way of thinking rather than a discrete system of thought. Existential thinkers may differ widely regarding their concepts of God, the cause for man's anxiety, or the meaning to man's existence. Yet, they all share a common approach to these fundamental questions.

For example, existential thinkers, including Biblical writers, agree, above all else, that there is a basic distinction between essence and existence (that is, between the worlds of thought and reality), and that the world of reality, or existence, is primary. They believe that the truth about existence is not grasped by mere reason but by reflecting on the individual's actual experience as a hoping, fearing, loving, willing, anxious person. Truth, for existentialists, is not grasped until the thinker experiences the impact of the vital questions of existence, such as death and ethical responsibility, in his own life of decision. In fact, insight into the basic problems of existence remains walled off to that person who refuses to involve his whole self in decisionmaking. Theoretical detachment is mere playacting when existential questions are at stake, and thus does not lead to truth.

Yet, the chasm exists between a Biblical understanding of God, of life, truth, faith, subjectivity, anxiety, death, essence and existence, and what philosophically-oriented existentialists mean. The thought content of authentic New Testament faith is radically different from that of Sartre, Camus and Heidegger, on the one hand and that of Tillich and Bultmann on the other,

because the existential experience of authentic Christian faith is, as developed in the New Testament, *sui generis*. It is unique primarily because the experience is God-initiated and not maninitiated.

Although Biblical writers agree with most other existentialists that truth must be inwardly appropriated, that man is unique and must not be de-humanized into organizational cogs or mere biological units, that anxiety must be recognized and dealt with constructively, that belief in God is not at the end of rational effort, etc., the vital difference and thus the fundamental issue that makes the Bible unique is that the Biblical writers insist that man cannot answer the basic questions of existence by self-reflection or mere decision-making. Christian faith begins as a personal response to a self-communicating God and the knowledge gained through this encounter is such that it can be learned in no other way that is, neither through reason, intuition, feeling, or historical research.

For the man of authentic faith, existence does precede essence. Only the Christian knows the meaning and purpose of human existence but this knowledge is his only after he realizes that he is a responsible person (that is, one able to respond), and that he has inescapable anxieties until he is reconciled with his Creator and Lord. But this information about his essential nature is not a matter of reason or even passive acceptance of someone else's testimony. It is a knowledge which comes to him, that apprehends himnot knowledge which he "discovers" or apprehends by the normal methods of mental activity.

FAITH—A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONS

The New Testament pistis (faith) is employed to describe the right relationship of responsible

man to the Lordship of the self-communicating God. Theology, as set forth in the Bible, is the story of a personal relationship between the Creator God, the Eternal Person, and men and women who were created to be His personal counterparts. Regardless of the nature of man's response to God's self-communication, man can not escape being in some kind of relationship with his Maker. He cannot ignore the call of God; man can be responsible or irresponsible, but not un-responsible. Man is always responsible.

From the moment of creation the infinite dialectic from God's side has been on one hand God's self-affirmation as the Holy One (the One for whom there is no other), and on the other God's self-communication, as the One who loves unconditionally. From man's side as he responds to this eternal dialectic in God's nature, the emphasis is Lordship and Fellowship—the central themes of the Bible and the whole point of Christian proclamation.

Because God can be Lord only over those who are able to respond with their decisions and loyalties, He made man "in His image" so that there could be fellowship between them. God can fellowship only with persons who can respond to his love with love. Thus man's destiny was to exist as a loving person, a being in right relationship to all other persons. Man, in his freedom, thrived and fulfilled his destiny only when he remained in accord with his essential nature as created by God. To reject this original destiny for some other of his own making was to rebel against the will of a personal God. When "existence-for-love" did not become "existence-in-love" the original fellowship between God and man was severed; man had turned from God as his Lord and set himself up as autonomous.

Yet, because man was by nature made to relate to others (that is, an essence which fulfilled its purpose in the right kind of existence), he could not shake off his essential relationship to God even though he did his best to ignore or evade it. Man remained responsible because his flight from God was a personal decision (an existential decision) and because, in his rebellion, God did not leave him "without excuse." In many ways, God has reminded men of their lostness, and also of His continuing desire for fellowship.

Thus, the aim of God's self-communication has been to woo back the free response of trust-

ing, loving human beings. His Word goes forth and faith responds: the personal act of faith becomes the correlate to the personal act of God's self-communication. This personal transaction of fellowship is not the mere acceptance of something that happened in the past. It is not the me tal assent to even true statements about God. Authentic faith is a contemporary event in the life of modern disciples in which the Word (the personal address of self-communicating God) speaks today through the Word of History and the Word of the Spirit just as vividly as in the past. In this experience a responding man knows that God has accepted him as a forgiven son with the same comparable self-authenticity shared by any of the gospel writers.

Ellen White understood well this existential nature of faith, that the faith experience lies on the existential level rather than the intellectual:

"The faith that is unto salvation is not a mere intellectual assent to the truth. He who waits for entire knowledge before he will exercise faith cannot receive blessing from God. It is not enough to believe about Christ; we must believe in Him. The only faith that will benefit us is that which embraces Him as a personal Saviour; which approprictes His merits to ourselves. Many hold faith as an opinion, Saving faith is a transaction by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. Genuine faith is life. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which the soul becomes a conquering power." 1

RELATIONSHIP OF FAITH REVEALS TRUTH ABOUT MAN AND GOD

In linking faith with knowledge something other than normal cognition is being considered; authentic faith is not achieved by the means of normal intellectual or intuitive processes. From one point of view, the man of faith, instead of the knower, becomes the known and God is the knower. What faith learns is that God has spoken with unique authority and man's best response is to believe what he hears-a belief which leads to an entirely new way of relating to reality, or existence. Often Ellen White emphasizes that "it is contrition and faith and love that enable the soul to receive wisdom from heaven. Faith working by love is the key of knowledge, and everyone that loveth 'knoweth God.' 1 John 4 1 John 4:7."2

First, faith is the awareness of God as Lord who merits obedience and as Love who merits responding trust and love. When God says, "I am the Lord thy God, the Creator," this means "Thou art my property." There is something inherently absurd when a created being elects to disregard his Creator's design for his life. But to understand God as Lord without knowing Him as Love would over-power man and lead to the most profound despair. At the heart of the Biblical presentation of salvation is faith as man's answer to God's claim and assurance. Man hears God call him, not as mere property, but as His son, accepted with all the privileges of a son. Thus the Holy Lord is also the Loving Father. This information is known for a certainty only by the man of faith.

But there is more that is learned. Faith is also the awareness of man's state as rebel. Before God is known as Lord, man knows no other authority but his own to which he is responsible. But in the act of faith man learns Who alone it is Who has the right to call man to account. To turn from God is to reject not only legitimate authority but the truth about existence. When God is seen as Lord, the appeal to autonomy is seen in its powerlessness and ultimate collapse. The response of faith includes the disclosure and the removal of this deluded human craving for autonomy. Faith says, "Thou art the Lord, I belong not to myself but to Thee."

Faith does not arise until a person realizes how desperate his need is and in this negative disclosure (not only of human distress but also his guilt in rebellion) there springs the hope that exactly where he is in need, a Person meets his personal needs. As with the centurion, so with all men, "in the teaching of Christ...he found that which met the need of the soul."3 A personal God breaks through the perimeter of man's autonomy and is accepted as the loving invader who desires only the reclamation and restoration of property lost for awhile. For the authentic Christian, the anxieties of life are not natural to his existence and something to be bravely endured. He sees anxieties as an unnatural state which can be overcome by the grace of God.

Such was Nicodemus's problem, and his experience is common to all men:

"Nicodemus had come to the Lord thinking to enter into a discussion with Him, but Jesus laid bare the foundation principles of truth. He said to Nicodemus, It is not theoretical knowledge you need so much as spiritual regeneration. You need not to have your curiosity satisfied, but to have a new heart. You must receive a new life from above before you can appreciate heavenly things. Until this change takes place, making all things new, it will

result in no saving good for you to discuss with Me my authority or my mission."4

Such disclosures in faith accentuate the existential nature of faith—that faith is not something discovered by ordinary mental processes and thus possessed by man. Truth here possesses man but only when the man of faith responds wholeheartedly by living in and doing the truth. (John 7:17).

TRUTH DISCOVERED IN EXISTENTIAL DECISIONS

Truth is existentially apprehended because truth itself is a description of the right relationships which on the one hand should exist within all creation, and on the other hand, between all creation and its Maker. Nothing is static—all creation is in some kind of dynamic relationship with its counterparts. To thwart the proper or destined relationship is to reject life and to invite disaster. For this reason, "genuine faith is life." 5

God is not understood as Lord except to the man who recognizes his human impotency and who chooses to accept His claim and demands as well as His offers and assurances. The act of faith is a decision of obedience in response to God's own personal encounter with man. The last words in the letter to the Romans seem to sum up well this encounter aspect of faith:

"Now to him who is able to set you on your feet as his own sons—according to my Gospel, according to the preaching of Jesus Christ himself, and in accordance with the disclosing of that secret purpose which, after long ages of silence, has now been made known (in full agreement with the writings of the prophets long ago), by the command of the everlasting God to all the Gentiles, that they might turn to him in the obedience of faith..."6

Pistis, carrying in its meaning the fullest dimensions of trust and confidence, is the predominant relationship between the authentic Christian and God. "Faith includes not only belief but trust." That trust leads to loving obedience only when man is convinced that God's foundation for his life is more secure than his own. Pistis awakens only when man is confident that God will be as gracious with mercy and power as He has promised; trust awakens when man sees how God in His acts has proved Himself worth trusting.

Mis-trust (a-pistis of Hebrews 3:19) is the basis of all sin. Rebellion, the decision to set up some lord other than the Lord of Heaven, springs from mis-trust, and state of broken personal re-

lations. Such was Paul's argument in Hebrews 3 and 4:

"Yes, it is all too plain that it was refusal to trust (apistis, lack of faith) God that prevented those men from entering his rest. Now since the same promise of rest is offered to us today, let us be continually on our guard that none of us even looks like failing to attain it. For we too have had a Gospel preached to us, as those men had. Yet the message proclaimed to them did them no good, because they only heard and did not believe as well. It is only as a result of our faith and trust that we experience that rest."8

Reconciliation with God, "his rest," is knowledge that can be gained only through personal decision. Neither keen logic nor breadth of intellect can grasp the truth about man's essential nature or his destiny. Only when man begins with his existence, sees his nature as a dynamic tension of contradictions, studies the lamentable consequences of these contradictory inclinations and the human inability to cope with them, will he be prepared to receive the ever-present reconciling, problem-solving gospel of Jesus Christ. This personal analysis of the human situation may tic Christian faith was revealed. The response of be either elementary or sophisticated but the very act of drawing the conclusion of human impotence in the face of God's gracious offer is in itself an all-encompassing act of the whole man in decision. The accompanying fulfillment of God's personal answer of "yes" to man's "yes" is knowledge sui generis, beyond human comprehension on one hand but profoundly simple and self-authenticating on the other.

Ellen White could write the following only after her own existential experience of faith:

"The perception and appreciation of truth, He said, depends less upon the mind than upon the heart. Truth must be received into the soul; it claims the homage of the will. If truth could be submitted to the reason alone, pride would be no hindrance in the way of its reception. But it is to be received through the work of grace in the heart; and its reception depends upon the renunciation of every sin that the Spirit of God reveals. Man's advantages for obtaining a knowledge of the truth, however great they may be, will prove of no benefit to him unless the heart is open to receive the truth, and there is a conscientious surrender of every habit and practice that is opposed to its principles. To those who thus yield themselves to God, having an honest desire to know and to do His will, the truth is revealed as the power of God for their salvation."9

FAITH ARISES IN RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Here especially does the Biblical witness cut across all other forms of existential thought as

well as any philosophically based epistemologies. The man of faith does not discover the truth about existence by any form of human activity, initiated by reason, intuition, feeling, or historical research. Authentic faith is first confronted by a Thou who stands over-against man and who presents himself as One worthy of trust. God, to the Christian, is not an inner power, or a "ground of being" but a Person who is infinitely other than man from the standpoint of time and being. The clearest expression of His address to man was conveyed in God Incarnate, in Jesus Christ as an historical event. For Christians, this historical encounter is bed-rock for Christian faith.

However, Jesus as the Man from Nazareth, the historical Person, is not, as such, the all-sufficient Word whom to know would evoke faith. If this were true, all those who saw and heard His daily witness would have recognized Him to be their Lord. The remarkable aspect of Beter's testimony at Caesarea Phillipi (Matthew 16) was that here, for the first time, the nature of authen-Jesus to Peter's affirmation reveals that Christian faith is the product of a marvelous union of the historical Word and the interior Word.

"The truth which Peter had confessed is the foundation of the believer's faith. It is that which Christ Himself has declared to be eternal life. But the possession of this knowledge was no ground for self-glorification. Through no wisdom or goodness of his own had it been revealed to Peter. Never can humanity, of itself, attain to a knowledge of the divine.... Only the spirit of adoption can reveal to us the deep things of God, which 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man."10

Faith could not arise without the historical Word; yet, neither could it arise apart from the interior Word which Peter was willing to acknowledge as the Word of truth. Peter acknowledged that what Jesus said historically and what the Spirit said within was the truth about Him as a man and that he needed what they offered as man's solution.

Because the historical witness is fundamental to Christian faith, the apostles became the foundation of the Christian church. Without apostles there would be no Christian church; the apostles are distinguished from all later believers by the fact that he received his faith in direct, immediate, historical encounter with God and not through the mediation of other human beings. Their faith, as they witnessed to it, helped to

generate the faith of others who through them found their own personal encounter with God.

The apostles were the first of the many communities of faith fo follow. Those early believing communities considered it their responsibility to protect and preserve the historical witness of the apostles; they collected their writings and distributed them with a clear demarcation between them and all other religious writings.

the presence of Him who cru Himself present in His gifts.

"By faith we behold him daily experience we discern compassion in the manifesta" We recognize Him in the character Himself present in His gifts.

But the transmission of the gospel was not merely a matter of conveying historical information. It was not only the message about Christ and His encounter with the first-hand apostles which the Church transmitted through the years. If the Church merely passed on the Bible as a factual document there would have been no "believers" in the days which followed. Genuine faith was not and is not "belief about" but an on-going response to the contemporary selfbestowing love of God which every generation may receive afresh. Peter's confession, which became the paradigm and bed-rock of all faith to follow, accepted both the historical witness and the interior witness and this combined encounter brought Peter to his knees and transformed his life. The truth Peter learned through both the historical and interior Word was that he would solve his human problems if he learned how to love others as God had loved him, as well as to trust God for the answer to his most pressing existential needs. This was the gospel which shook the first generation.

THE EXPERIENCE OF FAITH IS SELF-AUTHENTICATING

The interior Word is the Holy Spirit. Jesus made clear that the chief function of the Spirit is to bear Him witness. The beautiful truth about the work of the Holy Spirit is that He not only makes the person of Jesus Christ present, but also personally packages the truth in such a way that it answers the special needs of each individual. This is basic to the existential dictum that "truth is subjectivity." If truth is not individually appropriated, if truth does not speak meaning and solution to each particular individual, there will be no abiding conviction. There would be no personal faith and a personal Saviour.

John stressed the function of the Holy Spirit as that of witnessing to Christ but the "witnessing to" is not accomplished by mere referral to an historical event. Faith is no mere memory of a past event but life and activity in the presence of Him who creates anew and is Himself present in His gifts.

"By faith we behold him here and now. In our daily experience we discern His goodness and compassion in the manifestation of His providence. We recognize Him in the character of His Son. The Holy Spirit takes the truth concerning God and Him whom He hath sent, and opens it to the understanding and to the heart." 11

The work of the Holy Spirit is to make faith self-authenticating. The Biblical witness itself is the product of faith; it speaks of a God-man encounter which can be experienced by any man who is willing to listen to the God who is speaking. But the Bible remains pure history to the man who does not share its faith; its meaning is not grasped. However, when man responds to the Lord of the Scriptures, just as the Biblical writers once did, His Spirit within makes personally real the truth which gladdened the hearts of the apostles-"God is with us." No line of logic, no appeal to to heterogen authority is now needed. The self-validating interior witness of the Spirit to the exterior historical witness requires nothing more in the way of proof; it is a selfauthenticating witness no less real to men today than it was to the apostles.

"Thus through faith they come to know God by an experimental knowledge. They have proved for themselves the reality of His word, the truth of His promises. They have tasted, and they know that the Lord is good.

"The beloved John had a knowledge gained through his own experience. He could testify:

"'That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.'

"So everyone may be able, through his own experience, to 'set his seal to this, that God is true.' He can bear witness to that which he himself has seen and heard and felt of the power of Christ. He can testify:

"I needed help, and I found it in Jesus. Every want was supplied, the hunger of my soul was satisfied; the Bible is to me the revelation of Christ. I believe in Jesus because He is to me a divine Saviour. I believe the Bible because I

have found it to be the voice of God to my soul." "12

The self-authenticating experience of faith verifies the validity of the Holy Scriptures. Archaeology, linguistics, history or even prophetic interpretation do not, in the last analysis, establish the fact that the information contained in the Bible is incontrovertibly true. All such human efforts to recover the past and to devise rational evidences, necessary and helpful as they certainly are, remain subject to the contingencies and relativities of anything humanly reconstructed or performed. Ellen White points out that "he who has a knowledge of God and His Word through personal experience has a settled faith in the divinity of the Holy Scriptures. He has proved that God's Word is truth, and he knows that truth can never contradict itself." 13

The Bible was written after an existential experience and can be rightly understood only when the words written lead the reader into the same kind of experience which once prompted the written witness. The perversion of faith occurs when faith is reduced to an intellectual exercise of memory and assent. The arguments for such a misunderstood faith rest on the shifting contingencies of history and dogmatic reasonings and when the test comes, the perverted faith will be found insufficient. "Without a personal acquaintance with Christ, and a continual communion, we are at the mercy of the enemy, and shall do his bidding in the end." 14

For those who are concerned with the perennial problems of ancient history, such as the flood, creation, etc., the surest foundation for spiritual stability is the self-authenticating test of faith which verifies the validity of the apostles. "He who has gained a knowledge of God and His word through personal experience is prepared to engage in the study of natural science." 15

In summary, theoretical intellectualizing can not validate or even understand existential experiences. The contingencies present in the human understanding of knowledge have been apparent for centuries. The existential experience of faith possesses a logic far more satisfying than the normal processes of human argument, leading Ellen White to observe: "The truth as it is in Jesus can be experienced,

but never explained. Its height and breadth and depth pass our knowledge." 16

FAITH TRANSFORMS EXISTENCE

Men of faith have restored the right personal relationship with God and with their fellowmen. They are fulfilling the purpose of revelation in that they are reciprocating God's initial invitation to fellowship. Thus, the man of faith glorifies God—he mirrors God's way

Hence, again, we are forced to use existential terms to describe the nature of faith. Faith is dynamic and involves the whole man in decision as he decides again and again to do God's will, to relate to other persons as God has shown the way. Faith is not a means to a greater end; it is the great end which is also the great beginning. God can ask for nothing more than for the response of faith. Faith is not "believing something" but a happening which grips and changes the whole person.

"Genuine faith will be manifested in good works; for good works are the fruits of faith. As God works in the heart, and man surrenders his will to God, and cooperates with God, he works out in the life what God works in by the Holy Spirit, and there is harmony between the purpose of the heart and the practice of the life. Every sin must be renounced as the hateful thing that crucified the Lord of life and glory, and the believer must have a progressive experience by continually doing the works of Christ. It is by continual surrender of the will, by continual obedience, that the blessing of justification is retained." 17

Faith as related to God is trusting obedience and when related to man, it is love as God has loved us. According to Galatians 5:6, love is the experimental proof of faith. Love not only accepts other men as persons but also "as they are." Sin treats persons as though they were objects of exploitation or enjoyment. Faith is the positive relationship—sin, the negative. Both are existential and when the Christian Church let both sin and faith slip into the intellectual, legalistic realm, untold damage was done to the Christian witness.

"A legal religion is insufficient to bring the soul into harmony with God. The hard, rigid orthodoxy of the Pharisees, destitute of contrition, tenderness, or love, was only a stumbling block to sinners. They were like the salt that had lost its savor; for their influence had no power to preserve the world from corruption. The only true faith is that which

'worketh by love' (Galatians 5:6) to purify the soul. It is as leaven that transforms the character.,,18

Faith does not consist in becoming free from the law; on the contrary, faith presses through the its claims are realized and validated in the lives of abstract character of the Law to the personal will which stands behind it, to the personal will of God who is Love. Faith hears God's gift of grace but not without the simultaneous summons to obedience. With the indicative ("You are my son!") there is always the imperative of discipleship ("Be my son!").

"Faith is inseparable from repentance and transformation of character. To have faith means to find and accept the gospel treasure, with all the obligations which it imposes."19

The task of "being what you are" is the Biblical program of sanctification. Faith and ethics are indissolubly entwined. Ethics become the manward side of the faith experience. Herein there is no cheap grace where man accepts the gift without attention to the claim of God's Lordship.

"A profession of faith and possession of truth in the soul are two different things. The mere knowledge of truth is not enough. We may possess this, but the tenor of our thoughts may not be changed. The heart must be converted and sancti-

"The man who attempts to keep the commandments of God from a sense of obligation merelybecause he is required to do so-will never enter into the joy of obedience. He does not obey. When the requirements of God are accounted a burden because they cut across human inclination, we may know that the life is not a Christian life. True obedience is the outworking of a principle within. It springs from the love of righteousness, the love of the law of God. The essence of all righteousness is loyalty to our Redeemer. This will lead us to do right because it is right-because right doing is pleasing to God."20

It is not enough for us to believe that Jesus is not an impostor, that the religion of the Bible is no cunningly devised fable. We may believe that the name of Jesus is the only name under heaven whereby man may be saved, and yet we may not through faith make Him our personal Saviour. It is not enough to believe the theory of truth. It is not enough to make a profession of faith in Christ and have our names registered on the church roll. "He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us.' 'Hereby we do know that we know Him if we keep His commandments.' 1 John 3:24; 2:3. This is the genuine evidence of conversion. Whatever our profession, it amounts to nothing unless Christ is revealed in works of righteousness."21

The ethical transformation of the Church is the reason for the delay in the second advent of Jesus Christ. The gospel is vindicated only when its adherents. Christianity is more a matter of exhibiting a product than of proclaiming news about God. The grand purpose of the life of Christ on earth was to demonstrate that man in his sinful existence can be elevated into a new existence which solves the twin human problems of meaning to life and the inter-personal relationships. Whether or not even the story of His beautiful life is true, for modern man at least, will depend upon the living witnesses to that power which the Church can exhibit. The world is tired of listening to words without power, and to power without meaning.

"Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven's chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world. We are to acknowledge His grace as made known through the holy men of old; but that which will be most effectual is the testimony of our own experience. We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine. Every individual has a life distinct from all others, and an experience differing essentially from theirs. God desires that our praise shall ascend to Him, marked by our own individuality. These precious acknowledgements to the praise of the glory of His grace, when supported by a Christ-like life, have an irresistible power that works for the salvation of souls."22

"The gospel is to be presented, not as a lifeless theory, but as a living force to change the life. God desires that the receivers of His grace shall be witnesses to its power."23

CONCLUSION

Faith is an existential experience because it is concerned with moral decision and ethical transformation. Authentic faith cannot exist unless the whole man is involved in radical decisions daily. The most pressing human problems-death, anxiety, love, hate, etc.,-are the central concerns of authentic faith. At the heart of faith is the unshakeable self-authenticating conviction that God has spoken to him, through both the historic and interior witness, in mutual corroboration. The man of faith is no detached spectator watching the game of life. His convictions regarding existential problems are not the products of human reasoning. He is a man who has been confronted and apprehended by his personal Lord. His destiny in faith is God-oriented and in the doing of his

Lord's will, he finds genuine freedom and the solutions to human existence.

- 1. Desire of Ages, p. 347.
- 2. Ibid., p. 139.
- 3. Ibid., p. 315.
- 4. *Ibid.*, p. 171.
- 5. Ibid., p. 347.
- 6. Rom. 16:25-26, Phillips.
- 7. Selected Messages, Book 1, p. 389.
- 8. Heb. 3:19 to 4:2, Phillips.
- 9. The Desire of Ages, pp. 455-456.
- 10. Ibid., p. 412.

- 11. Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 26.
- 12. Ministry of Healing, p. 461.
- 13. Ibid., p. 462.
- 14. The Desire of Ages, p. 324.
- 15. Ministry of Healing, p. 461.
- 16. Christ's Object Lessons, p. 129.
- 17. Selected Messages, Book, 1, p. 397.
- 18. Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 53.
- 19. Christ's Object Lessons, p. 112.
- 20. Ibid., pp. 97, 98.
- 21. Ibid., pp. 312, 313.
- 22. The Desire of Ages, p. 347.
- 23. Ibid., p. 826.

Existentialism and the Basic Christian Doctrines

HARRY W. LOWE General Conference Biblical Research Committee

Of all the contemporary efforts to transform man's understanding of his own being, the existential philosophy is among the most notable. Bernard Ramm calls it "a radical new departure in philosophy that was anticipated in Pascal and worked out more systematically by Kierkegaard." 1

In order to appreciate this radical new philosophical approach to life, it needs to be borne in mind that almost all the philosophers of the nineteenth century were intent on solving the mysteries of the universe by an objective examination that would, it was confidently predicted, eventually solve these problems, even that of life itself.

Hegel spoke of "The Hidden Spirit of the Universe" which was "powerless to resist the the might of thought; it must unclose itself before it, revealing to sight and bringing to enjoyment its riches and depths." "God the Universal" and "God Exists for Thought" were two dominant thoughts in his famous The Philosophy of Religion.²

Contemporary scientists developed this attitude to the point where all mysteries would bow before the power of thought, and the whole universe would stand naked and revealed to the mind of man.

It was due in part to this Hegelian philosophy, and in part to the pretense and formality of institutional religion, that Soren Kierkegaard, the introverted, brilliant Danish writer, offered his resounding protests,—disturbing protests almost ignored at the time, and unknown to the English-speaking world till Karl Baarth's Epistle to the Romans revealed and re-interpreted this "Danish Pascal" to the theological world.

Leslie Paul, professor at Queen's College, Birmingham, England, comments as follows on the scientific outlook of the nineteenth century, which was to naive for Kierkegaard to accept:

"Sooner or later, the average scientist thought, everything will be known: there will be nothing left in the universe which is not explained. Man had only to pursue untiringly the scientific studies he had already begun in order to account for everything. The astronomical discoveries, the evolutionary hypothesis, the vast progress in both vital and mechanical sciences promised not only that soon man would know everything, but would more or less be able to do everything. This scientific world view also confidently expected that it would in the end account for man: that he too would be scientifically explained and objectively known."

Soren Kierkegaard set in motion a train of thought, largely ignored by his own century, on which subsequent existential philosophies are built. He categorically refused to objectify everything in the universe; he vehemently and persistently refused to ignore the subjective, and to regard everything, even God, as an object to be scientifically examined. To him, what mattered above all else was the transcendence of a living inward experience. A man must believe what he professes; he must be what he pretends to be.

Blaise Pascal had acknowledged human reason, and also the realm of the heart as the two highroads to the acquirement of knowledge. Reason reigned where objective knowledge was concerned, and the heart dominated in religion. Kierkegaard, knowing nothing of Pascal, also developed two roads to knowledge. First was the way of approximation whereby objective knowledge of physical surroundings, science, mathemathics, become known to man. Then came the way of appropriation, by which the

existent man could know the salient facts of religion,—Christ, God, salvation.
Kierkegaard was averse to mixing these two highways to knowledge.

THE PRIMACY OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

In the existential philosophy, existence precedes essence. That is to say, personal being, selfhood, is basically more important than any ontological or metaphysical processes by which a man comes to understand the realities of the surrounding world.

Kierkegaard grasped this as he searched for truth, and he said,

"... truth exists for the particular individual only as he himself produces it in action.... Truth has always had many loud preachers, but the question is whether a man is willing in the deepest sense to recognize truth, to let it permeate his whole being, to assume all the consequences of it and not to keep in case of need a hiding place for himself, and Judas-kiss as the consequence."

He was so insistent on the primacy of personal sincerity and dynamic experience, that he even went so far as to say that as existents we need not be primarily concerned with true propositions, but we should be supremely concerned about being personally "in the truth." When we respond with faith and passion to Christ as the Incarnate One, then we are in truth.

"Only when a man is alone can he face the Eternal. And the act that is called for at this point is not one of mere noetic recognition. When all is known that can be known, the responsible core of the will in the man has still to yield. He must act, he must choose, he mustrisk, he must make the leap. For in an existence where qualitative differences remain, there is no other entry into the deepest level of existential living as an individual. Only by this leap on faith could one know the release of guilt, the sense of commitment, the acceptance of a vocation, of a calling in whose service is perfect freedom." 5

To read Purity of Heart in long sessions is to catch the author's haunting refrain embodying the prayer to know God as the one thing that matters, to possess "a life that has willed one thing," to experience sorrowing repentance and "victory in the day of need.... to will only one thing." and to do the same with Kierkegaard's Edifying Addresses is to hear his cry across the years to live before the Eternal "as an individual." Unfortunately, this

personal "self" does not mean the same thing in the hands of some other philosophers and theologians. To one man "self" is tangible, to another intangible; to one it is "body" and "soul," to another a unity, or a psychosomatic unity; still others have talked of the substantiality of self, but Heidegger and others have severely criticized this. Many avoid definitions and speak of self as a unity.

The Christian student recognizes, of course, that, beautifully as some Christian existentialists have expressed themselves on the importance of self in relation to God, their ideas are not new. They are, though not intentionally so, a reemphasis of the Christian doctrine of conversion and regeneration, which embodies confrontation, total commitment, as expressed also in various other experiential terms in the existentialist vocabulary. Men are groping for terms in which to express their helplessness, their dread (to use a frequent existential term), and their desperate need. A recent issue of The Ecumenical Review refers to "the current revival of interest in conversion among Christian communions,"6 and states that "an impressive array of books has been published on the subject."7 The differences between existential commitment and Christian conversion serve only to denote the search for reality and authenticity in the moral and spiritual forces dominating the life of man.

The Seventh-day Adventist Christian will acknowledge the vital necessity of living faith and complete personal surrender of the individual. He knows that his denominational literature is replete with the appeal for "unconditional surrender" of the self to Christ, for acknowledgment that "all that we have and are is consecrated to Him."8 At the same time he will confess that his trouble is not to find official theoretical expression of such ideals, but to find adequate response in his own living experience. He knows that he must fight the tendency to settle into a nominal or dead Christian adherence, and he must ever seek a vibrant, living, personal faith. Can we as Christian existents galvanize ourselves into this existential dynamism, or do we need outside help provided through the Holy Spirit? Only in some such a way or ways can doctrinal beliefs be translated into a semblance of relevance to the contemporary situation.

It is precisely at this point of specific stand-

ards of belief and conduct that modern theology, including Christian existential philosophy, falters in its attempts to provide struggling humanity with anything like secure anchorage. Confrontation must be more than an ecstatic experience; and the subsequent commitment must be to some ideals and standards of life, or all ends in futility. Commitment must be to a transcendent God whose revealed standards are requirements NOT under man's control. C. S. Lewis maintained the futility of setting up human reason or the self, as the yardstick by which all is judged. "Unless the measuring rod is independent of the things measured, we can do no measuring." Lewis was a scholar, lecturer, author of repute, who was also a thorough-going supernaturalist who to the end remained an apologist for Christian fundamental beliefs. It is seriously open to question whether Kierkegaard's dictum that truth is reached only as a man "produces it in action" is correct, except in the sense that a man must live known truth in order to perceive more truth. This requires an initial revelation which is beyond human contrivance. It is untenable to us that man creates his own moral standards.

A glance at some of the basics in Christian belief as viewed by modern existentialists reveals some things which should suffice to bring concern to Seventh-day Adventists.

I. DIETY

From the time that Nietzsche proclaimed that God is dead, and non-Christian existentialists like Jean Paul Sartre declared that the idea of God was impossible, modern philosophic theologians have tended in many cases to drift into a "God is dead" consciousness. They assume that gods have died continuously throughout human history, and now Christian institutionalism and the Christian God are on the decline. Thus John Wild, a distinguished philosopher, teacher, member of the Society for Phenomenological and Existential Philosophy, says:

"That this is happening once again is indicated by the sense of the absence of God which is expressed by several discerning and sensitive religious thinkers of our time, such as Heidegger, Paul Tillich, and Simone Weil. God has withdrawn from the realm of machines and . . . these great systems of technology are unable to help us in understanding ourselves as responsible persons, to say nothing of transcendence, the source of our human freedom.

We cannot even conceive of God in this way. So he has withdrawn, as the philosophers have seen and have said in their own peculiar way." 10

If, as John Wild suggests, existentialism is one of several alternatives to modern radical theology, it surely needs something more to offer to restless, lonely mankind, than the uncertain philosophy that God may be absent, even though He is not dead.

Paul Tillich, prince of modern existentialists, was strongly averse to the Christian doctrine of a personal God, and declared:

"Many confusions in the doctrine of God and many apologetic weaknesses could be avoided if God were understood first of all as being itself or as the ground of being." 11

"'Personal God' does not mean that God is a person. It means that God is the ground of everything personal and that he carries within himself the ontological power of personality. He is not a person, but he is not less than personal. It should not be forgotten that classical theology employed the term persona for the trinitarian hypostases but not for God himself. God became 'a person' only in the nineteenth century, in connection with the Kantian separation of nature ruled by physical law from personality ruled by moral law.

"Ordinary theism has made God a heavenly, completely perfect person who resides above the world and mankind. The protest of theism against such a highest person is correct. There is no evidence for his existence, nor is he a matter of ultimate concern. God is not God without universal participation. 'Personal God' is a confusing symbol." 12

This is not intended to attach any atheistic stigma to the brilliant Paul Tillich. Nevertheless, any Seventh-day Adventist Christian who does extensive reading of Tillich is certainly left with extremely attenuated ideas of the Deity, the divinity of Christ, the miraculous, etc., and if Rudolf Bultmann's ideas on the supernatural are added, then the conclusion seems inevitable that simple Christian faith as the Seventh-day Adventist understands it, cannot comprehend such negative witness.

Martin Heidegger presents the views of many neo-orthodox existentialists on the doctrine of a personal, sovereign deity. In objecting to the universality of a highest being, he comments:

"Whoever has come to know theology from within its development, both that of the Christian faith as well as that of philosophy, prefers to remain silent today in the realm of thought about God." 13

In the same article Wolfhard Pannenberg

calls attention to the idea of a dispensable God to which existentialists, as well as many others, are contributing:

"Whoever tries to speak of God today can no longer count on being directly understood. At any rate, this is the case if one has in mind the living God of the Bible as the reality which determines everything, as the creator of the world. Talk of the living God, the creator of the world, is threatening to become a hollow sound today, even a hindrance, in understanding the reality of the world in which we exist, determined as it is by science and technology."

The attack on Christian ideas of God has always existed, and in Protean forms, but in the long years of church history, the attack from within has probably never been as virulent as it is today. Man suffers from a sense of alienation, and the more he submits himself to philosophical examination, the more he feels like "an alien in an alien universe." A hostile universe complex has led a vocal minority to attack the idea of a person, superintending Deity. When this idea is surrendered, then, as one editor recently commented:

"We have the paradox of a Church that, according to certain influential spokesman, does not know what it is and what it is to do, presuming to speak to men and women who do not know who they are." 14

Small wonder that so many people no longer believe our Lord's prediction concerning His church: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." ¹⁵

In the discussion of existential alienation, Christian men might be expected to exercise restraint, lest they be logically compelled to take the succeeding steps that surrender all belief in a personal God, whose superintending control, though not always seen and understood, leads on to pre-determined ends. The disruptions brought upon us by the mystery of rebellion and perversity, have produced inexplicably confusing conditions of life; and nothing but faith in the unseen but guiding hand of God can solve the problems of the individual self under these conditions. Call this "the Kierkegaardian leap of faith," or the "total commitment" of existentialism, it remains true that God is known only to the man who exercises faith to the extent of total surrender of the self to Him.

Helmut Gollwitzer, in his recent book, The Existence of God as Confessed by Faith ¹⁶ asserts anew the idea that God becomes known only

through "Christian proclamation," and that all Christian ideas about God come from "the concrete and contingent experience of being addressed by God," Karl Barth has propounded the view that "God can be known only through God."

How does man get to know God? Does "Christian proclamation" connote a previous "address by God?" Could this address by God be identified with the orthodox Christian doctrine of grace, which is God's initiative in seeking man? These are some of the questions which we Christians must answer if we hope to place the basic Christian beliefs in a relevant contemporary existential context.

II. REVELATION AND THE SUPERNATURAL

Exploring and elucidating the Christian faith in a perplexed and hostile world is both thrilling and hazardous. Beliefs must be intelligently held, and they must withstand some scrutiny, even though they may be beyond complete human rationalization. The only source of Christian basics is in the New Testament, and the modern philosophical theologian finds it hard to believe some of its content. He is presumably prepared to accept some historicity and facticity in salient events such as the existence, ministry, trial, and death of Jesus of Nazareth. But he soon feels caught in a web, for there are miracles, such as the incarnation, wonders like angels sent by God, and resurrection from the dead,-and these things are incomprehensible to modern man. The attitude of the existential theologian has quite recently been set forth by John Macquarrie:

"But we soon discover that even those passages which seem to be readily intelligible are closely entangled in other passages with which the case is very different. The general picture which the New Testament offers is a strange and almost fantastic one to anybody with a modern outlook. What do we make of the stories of wonders and miracles, of voices from heaven and angels sent from God? How do we understand the mysterious 'principalities and powers' those demonic forces of darkness under which the world is said to be held in subjection? What does it mean to speak of the death of Jesus as a 'ransom for many,' or as a 'propitiation' for the sins of the world? Can we attach any significance to the story of Christ's descent into the underworld, where he preached to the 'spirits in prison'? Can we make sense of the strange incidents that are reconciled inconnection with his resurrection? With our ideas of the universe, can we understand his ascension into heaven, where he is exalted at the right hand of the Father? And

what are we to say of those pictures of the coming end, when the Son of Man will return in the clouds and the faithful will meet him in the air?" 17

Emil Brunner is prepared to accept his own version of the New Testament tradition, provided he can delete the virgin birth, the empty tomb, the forty-day post-resurrection ministry, and the bodily ascension into heaven. And there are many other existential theologians to share his views. How far can we go in these attempts to de-historicize the New Testament, and to undermine its facticity?

Macquarrie mentions a comparison with our fathers' ideas of a compact three-tiered geocentric universe with heaven above, the underworld beneath, and man's earth in the middle. In the hands of less careful men, this comparison becomes a furious iconoclastic attack on almost everything sacred to Christian belief.

The problem becomes a very real one when such vitals as the ascension are said to have been 'perfectly intelligible to men who entertained the old picture of the world, but it has become unintelligible to us in the post-Copernican era." 18

In its wider aspects this tends to vitiate the the whole question of revelation, so far as the evangelical Christian is concerned. He may accept this and thereby surrender his loyalty to the church's historic teaching on Biblical revelation, or he must find an adequate defense of orthodox Biblical faith against these sweeping assertions.

It is clear that such things as confrontation with, and commitment to, a divine Person, takes on new meaning in an existential philosophy which tends to destroy the God with whom the orthodox Adventist has practiced daily communion, the One in whom he lives and moves and has his being. Conversion, meditation, the study of the revealed Word is to him the immediate confrontation. Death is to him the gateway to the ultimate confrontation with the Person, and is not the dread that is was, and is, to so many philosophers. In fact, Kroner records that Heidegger's Sein und Zeit dealt so much with death that it "transformed this philosophy of life into a philosophy of death," and even gave it academic respectibility. 19

III. ESCHATOLOGY

Among evangelicals generally, the last things play a meaningful, climaxing part in Christian theology, but it is difficult to escape the conviction that existentialist liberalism, in the hands of admittedly earnest and brilliant men, has dimmed "the blessed hope" not a little. Bultmann's treatment is set forth succinctly by George W. David:

"To be sure, he [Paul] does not abandon the apocalyptic picture of the future, of the parousia of Christ, of the resurrection of the dead, of the Last Judgment, of glory for those who believe and are justified. But the real bliss is righteousness, and with it freedom. The reign of God, he says, is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. xiv. 17). And that means: the conception of bliss is thought of with regard to the individual: and this state of bliss is already present. The believer who has received baptism is 'in Christ.'... The time of bliss, promised by Isaiah, is present.

"In Bultmann's understanding, eschatology is that which opens the door to authentic life; that is, to that which overcomes sin and death, making the future sure. In this sense, the [first] coming of Jesus is eschatological in character, as are also his death and resurrection, since these events profoundly affect the life of man both in this world and in that to come,"20

In R. H. Fuller's translation of Bultmann's Primitive Christianity and Its Contemporary Setting, 21 he refers to New Testament eschatology as a "renunciation of the world," "escapism," "asceticism," "otherworldliness," and says that "Jesus was mistaken in thinking that the world was destined soon to come to an end." He views the first advent of Jesus Christ as "the eschatological event" which brought the old world to an end, and the second advent is to him, in the first instance, the coming of Christ into the human life by the act of faith, and in the second instance, it is "continual obedience" and readiness for the "inevitability of divine judgment." It is incomprehensible to Bultmann that a dead body can rise again, and bodily resurrection is to him "the legendary concretization" of the early church that God had exalted the crucified One.

Bultmann is admittedly a happy hunting ground for such modernistic views. But other existential philosophers and theologians provide similar views,—views that destroy the evangelicial conceptions of divine transcendence, of the primacy of external revelation of truth, of an inspired Holy Word, of terminal judgment of the world, and the life to come. It would be possible to deal with other doctrinal emphases, such as redemption, atonement, grace, sin, faith, creation, the last judgment, the incarnation, and to show in every case that liberal existential philosophy is permeated with modernist conceptions that are far removed from fundamental

evangelical doctrinal teachings. In suggesting that existential philosophy offers some profitiable ways of making New Testament truth relevant to our time, John Macquarrie makes this admission:

"A Christian existentialism has its own gaps and unsolved problems. It runs the danger of so subjectivizing the historical element in the New Testament message that the distinction between history and fiction gets blurred, and one would have to inquire about the importance of this problem. Again, while it saves dogma from a sterile intellectualism, it might seem to sweep away any ontological implications of dogma, and one would have to inquire about the importance of this problem also. It is doubtful whether existentialist philosophy in itself would be adequate for investigating either of these problems." 22

CONCLUSION

We have acknowledged in this paper, and in others in this series, that Christian existentialism has some lessons of value in the realm of dvnamic living. The most difficult thing in Christian ministry is to get people to live according to their profession of truth, to meet God in absolute commitment. This commitment must involve standards of truth. If we accept the self-revelation of God as the source of spiritual and doctrinal truth, then at that point we shall be compelled to steer away from any philosophy that does not accept some basic Christian conceptions in this area of revelation, and of divine superintendence. The Biblical conception that a universal Deity can be at the same time personal to every believer, should not be impossible for the man of faith to accept. It has found acceptance, with certain modifications, in Roman Catholicism, Calvinism, Armenianism, and in most branches of Protestantism.

Somewhere between the Calvinistic and the Arminian conception of the sovereignty of God we must take a firm stand on this basic divine sovereignty, out of which most of our other basic Christian conceptions are derived. We Adventists are not one hundred per cent Arminian in this writer's opinion, and we are even more surely not one hundred per cent Calvinistic. The exact intermediate point does not matter, but basic truth common to both does matter.

It is interesting to note two not dissimilar statements on divine sovereignty, the first from a Calvinist and the other from an Arminian source:

"The sovereignty of God! What do we mean by this expression? We mean the supremacy of God, the kingship of God, the Godhood of God. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that God is God. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the Most High, doing according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, so that none can stay His hand or say unto Him. What doest Thou? (Dan. 4:35). To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the Almighty, the Possessor of all power in heaven and earth, so that none can defeat His counsels, thwart His purposes, or resist His will (Ps. 115:3). To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is 'The Governor among the nations' (Ps. 22:28), setting up kingdoms, overthrowing empires, and determining the course of dynasties as pleaseth Him best. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the 'only Potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords' (1 Tim. 6:15). Such is the God of the Bible."23

"In the annals of human history the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as dependent on the will and prowess of man. The shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, behind, above, and through all the play and counterplay of human interests and power and passions, the agencies of the all-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will." 24

These are strong assertions, but they contain some undergirding truths that are clearly Biblical, and they have given assurance to Christian saints throughout the ages, Can we surrender them to the onslaughts of modern philosophy which would leave us with a well-nigh meaningless explanation of life?

If we could concentrate on dynamic living that embraces the practice of truth as we now undertand it, we could lead the church through the stormy seas that bring us to deeper faith and love, and to increasing light and truth,—all based on the reassuring, undergirding truth that God is still "the Sovereign of the Universe."25 In other places in our own church literature He is called "the Sovereign of the world, the Ruler of the universe." 26 The assurance of "the guiding hand of God"27 is needed among us, otherwise philosophy which is not based on the external Source of Truth will eventuate in unavoidable experiential and doctrinal confusion. Existentialists do not like to be described or classified, which has led some writers to call their philosophy a state of mind, an obsession with self, or even "a symptom of acute spiritual exhasution."28 As such it

cannot give spiritual stability to the life.

We are not depreciating the existential philosophy when we say, on the one hand, that whatever is bright and alluring in its teachings we can find already in the Christocentric presentation of our Biblical teachings, and, on the other hand, whatever is lacking in its modernistic doctrinal emphasis is offered to us in the balanced, conservative, reassuring content of the Advent Message.

It is said that in Hebraic thought the word "truth" conveyed fundamentally the ideas of solidity, security, faithfulness, steadfastness. In New Testament Greek thought the word suggests that which is disclosed and free from falsifying appearances. Both meanings are seen in such expressions as "Thou God of truth;" "29" "thy testimonies are very sure." "30 Jesus Christ is called "the true" because He completes the purposes of God in salvation and

judgment. Truth is found in the written Word. 32 and the gospel is called "the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation." 33

"The knowledge of the truth is not theoretical, but 'existential,' a living reality rooted in the self-committal of the whole man." 34

Truth, above all else, is something to be believed, and then acted upon. Only thus can Christian existentialism find a true and satisfying meaning.

If we have lacked the holy fire of dynamic Christian commitment, the altar is still aflame for our rekindling; if our emphasis on dogma has been untouched by the divine agape and has therefore tended to be as cold as the stars in the wintry sky, there is still eternal and redeeming love to inject into meaningless doctrine to make it meaningful and attractive in a dedicated life.

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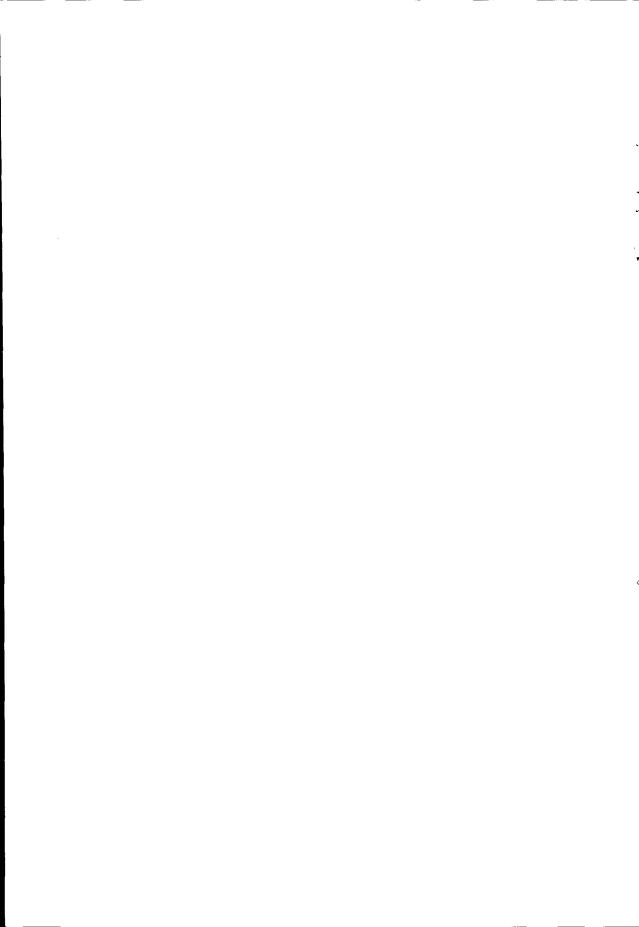
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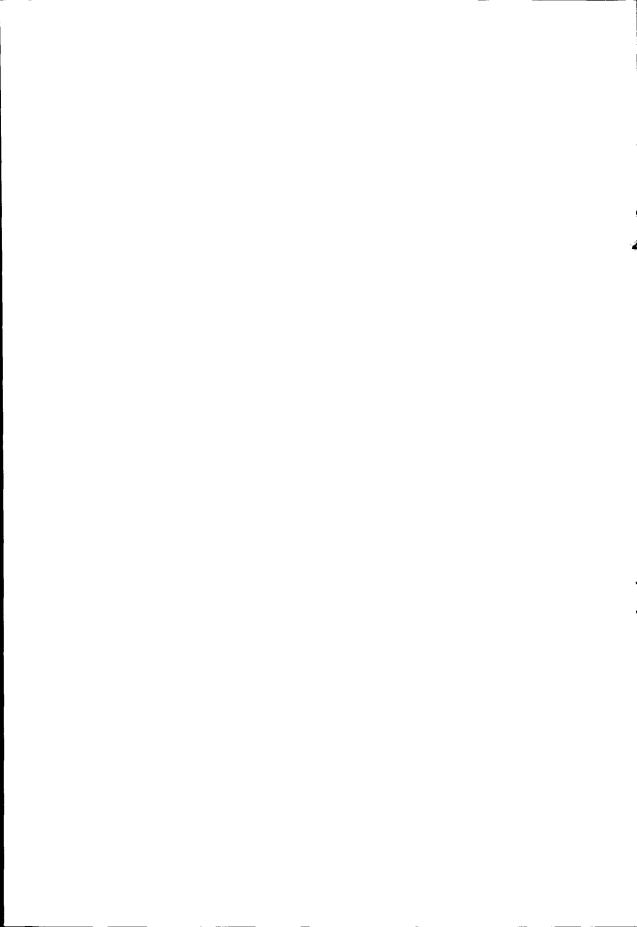
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magnet of the cross that Jesus pinned His hopes. His death upon the cross took Him into the hearts of men from every age, and from every land, forever.

2. Keep in Sharp Focus the Unique Mission of the Church and Its Institutions

Too many Seventh-day Adventists have forgotten, if they ever fully understood, just why they are here. We are not here as just another church, but we are here with God's message, in God's hour, to prepare a people for the coming of God's Son in the very near future. Let's remind our people why we are here: that we operate medical institutions to point men and women to the Great Physician; that we operate educational institutions to turn boys and girls and young men and women to the Master Teacher. Unless we keep our vision clear in this respect, we have failed to grasp the genious of the Advent Movement.

Re-emphasize and Follow Through on the Call to Repentance, Revival, and Reformation

This must be our program until the Lord comes! May the Spirit of God do for us inside the church what needs to be done. The servant of the Lord extends to us in the following statement the assurance that revival and reformation are coming: "Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times."—The Great Controversy, p. 464. And reports from around the world indicate that the Spirit of God is even now at work. But revival and reformation will never come until you and I have seen the Lord on the cross of Calvary. Then with the realization that our sin placed Him there, our hearts will break in repentance.

4. Give Pragmatic and Persevering Attention to Discovering Solutions to Outstanding Problems Before the Church at This Time

Here in North America we have problems—financial, organizational, spiritual. The cost of operation is rapidly escalating in our conferences and institutions. As we give attention to discovering solutions to these problems we must clearly outline our approaches and decide upon priorities. We must place the most important problems first, set target dates, and perseveringly stay

by until we find God's answer to our needs. It is going to require much praying and a lot of perspiration. Miracles are not plucked out of thin air. Miracles are made of brains and brawn and courage.

5. Maintain an Unswerving Commitment to Sound Fiscal Policies and Efficient Operation of Church Business

It is a temptation to overextend when money flows freely. We must keep in mind the need for conscientious operating and not embark on projects that are not carefully funded. If we keep in mind the source from which these hard-earned dollars come, we will be more thoughtful in spending them.

Give Unprecedented Emphasis to Soul Winning in Every Phase of Church Activity With the Aim of Adding One Million Fully Converted New Members

There is no program in the General Conference to rush people into baptism. It will count nothing if we get people into the church but don't get them into the kingdom. The only reason for our existence is to share our faith and help others find the Lord Jesus Christ and prepare for His coming. With God's help it should be possible for us to reach one million fully converted new members during the next quinquennium. But it is going to take every worker, every member, every department, every institution, every conference, every person, in soul-winning endeavor. We are told: "If His people are watching the indications of His providence, and stand ready to cooperate with Him, they will see a great work accomplished."—Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 24.

7. Encourage the Spirit of Sacrifice in Every Aspect of Individual and Institutional Life

The love of Christ and the knowledge of the times in which we live ought to challenge us as leaders to sacrificially participate in giving and encourage us to set an example. In our personal living, in our homes, in our traveling, in our cars, and in all that we do, let us practice sacrifice.

8. Establish Some SDA Presence in Every Country, Province, and Major City Yet Unentered by the Third Angel's Message

"Go... to everyone, everywhere" (Mark 16:15, L.N.T.).* It is all inclusive, and yet we have many unentered areas of earth. I would like to challenge every division, every union, and every conference to a well-defined plan to get into these unentered areas during the next quinquennium. In a time when we should be pushing back our frontiers and spreading out, there are about 30 per cent of the Seventh-day Adventists in North America living in California, especially in the southern part. There are other concentrations in Michigan and in the Baltimore-Washington area.

At this same time, 44 per cent of the General Conference budget is spent on capital investment, and about 90 per cent of the \$300 million investment in school buildings is here in North America, 10 per cent overseas. Perhaps we need an agonizing reappraisal of some of our financial policies.

Recently I read in *Christianity Today* these words: "Many missionary societies are no longer sure of who they are or what their task is. Some of their leaders say one thing and some another." We need to roll back the frontiers and reach out and establish some presence in every country, every province, every major city, that is yet unentered by the third angel's message.

Devise New Methods to Give Unprecedented Circulation to Denominational Literature, Particularly Our Church Paper and Our Missionary Journals

"My word . . . shall not return unto me void" (Isa. 55:11). Many conversions are traced to reading a book or a magazine. Our army of literature evangelists should be doubled or tripled with qualified, competent, and dedicated men and women. Some evangelical preachers are blanketing the the world with their literature. Perhaps we need a new approach in some of our publishing concepts.

10. Give In-Depth Study to Organizational Structures of Our Church, With the View to Operating More Economically and More Efficiently

There is no question but that God, through His chosen messenger, played an important role in the organization of this church more than a century ago. It has been 70 years since the last major organizational change was made. Since that time there have been great advances in the fields of

technology, transportation, and communication. Distances are no longer a major barrier. We need to study carefully where there may be duplication of effort in administration, departments, institutions. In all our planning it is imperative that we maintain a closely knit unity in our organizational relationships. Only through close cooperation and counsel between all levels of our organization, from the local church to the General Conference, will we be able to present a united front to the world and accomplish the task entrusted to us.

11. Establish a Clear Denominational Identity With the Public

We challenge our public relations people, who are already doing a good job, to achieve even greater accomplishments so that newspapers, radio, television, and institutional and church signs will speak clearly of our wonderful message. Do not be ashamed in any way to use the name Seventh-day Adventist. It is a God-given name with a message. We are to keep it before the public. Our image in the community is ever to be that of a church with a mission—but most of all the image of bornagain Christian members of the community, seeking to make our area a happier, healthier, better place to live.

12. Make the Absolute Commitment to God That Is Represented by Paul's Statement, "This One Thing I Do"

God is calling members and workers alike to a renewed commitment. Shall we not pray that the Lord will enable us to recapture the spirit of the pioneers and give ourselves as members and workers wholeheartedly to this great cause—no sidelines, no diversions—"This one thing I do"?

God grant us the spirit of the men and women who laid the foundation of this movement, the spirit of zeal that possessed our Saviour when He declared, "'My devotion for your house, O God, burns in me like a fire'" (John 2:17, T.E.V.).† With such a spirit, and with the help of our God, we can and must move forward to a finished work in our generation.

^{*}From The Living New Testament, Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois. Used by permission.
†From the Today's English Version of the New Testament.
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[[]Editorial Note: This article is a condensation of the opening sermon given by Elder Robert H. Pierson at the Autumn Council which convened October 7, 1970, in Washington, D.C.]

From BUILDER TO WRECKER

BERNARD F. PINGHE

Secretary, Ceylon Union Mission

ENTURIES ago a king in Ceylon employed the most famous painters of his day to paint the portraits of the beautiful ladies of his harem on the walls of his rock fortress. In order to satisfy the exacting demands of the king, the men consumed much time and spared no pains to make the portraits treasured works of art. When these paintings were discovered centuries later they became a part of the national heritage. A few months ago a few men daubed the portraits with green paint. It was an act of vandalism that tore the heart of the nation. The earlier workmen had used their brushes for many years in the creation of a national treasure. Other men in a few moments had used their brushes ruthlessly in destroying it.

The sudden diversion from noble participation of building to active engagement in damaging the product of years of labor is described in Psalm 74: "A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees. But now they break down the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers" (verses 5, 6).

There is a science and an art in cutting down big trees. The positioning of the tree when it falls depends upon every blow of the ax. Years of patient toil develop in a lumberman the rhythm of confidence and ease. These lumbermen become specialists in their trade and as a result become famous. But David maintains that these men could in a few moments become enraged ruffians and use the tools of trade to destroy the precious works of art.

There were many soldiers in Nebuchadnezzar's army who were reputed lumbermen, but these men turned savage when they entered Jerusalem and used their axes and hammers to destroy the workmanship of master craftsmen. Solomon had lavished his fortune on the building of the Temple. The articles of furniture and the altar he overlaid with gold were carved by men with a supreme sense of beauty (1 Kings 6:22, 29, 32, 35). It took many years to bring perfection to each article. But reputed lumbermen diverted their powers and used their axes and ruthlessly pillaged the Temple and its beautiful carved works.

The Case of Ahithophel

Ahithophel was one of David's trusted counselors. His predictions were considered divine by the men of his time (2 Sam. 15:12). David must have placed complete reliance upon him. The guidance and counsel of this man had been of incalculable worth. The victories and triumphs of David in the field of politics, war, and general administration may be attributed in a large measure to this counselor. Ahithophel had contributed to the success of God's chosen king and thereby to God's cause on earth. But later the loyalty of Ahithophel underwent swift change. He supported Absalom against David. His talents, once used to maintain balance and progress of the kingdom of the chosen king, were now directed to sustain the cause of a rebel. At the end, in disgrace, he committed suicide.

Asa, King of Judah

Among a host of others who changed their affinity from a good cause, to damage it, the name of King Asa, the third king of Judah, is prominent. At the beginning of his reign, he removed his grandmother Maachah from the office of queen mother because she had made an image to an idol. He was so devoted and loyal to God that he destroyed the images and all the other idols of his predecessors. He rededicated the altar of burnt offering in the Temple.

The early years of his reign are marked by

events that are evidence of his desire to work in harmony with God's principles. He started a great religious reformation and called upon the people to renew their covenant with God (1 Kings 15:1-5). But toward the closing years of his reign he became fearful of his enemy Basha, the king of Israel. Instead of continuing to trust in God he sought the aid of Benhadad, king of Damascus. Here we see the departure of this once loyal man to a relationship that was hurtful to God's cause. God was displeased, and Hanani the prophet was sent to reprove him. In a rage the king jailed the messenger of God. Further acts against God and His people were perpetrated in the closing years of his

What a tragedy that benevolent kings should become bloodthirsty murderers! That a benign teacher should become a traitor to students and community! That

God-fearing ministers should succumb to malpractices, thereby bringing disrepute to the church.

None of us can rest smugly or securely in our position. We must ever be on the watch lest we too should fall.

Constancy

Disraeli, renowed British prime minister in the Victorian age, said, "The secret of success is constancy." Addison states, "Without constancy there is neither love, friendship, nor virtue in the world."

It is necessary to maintain constancy in purity. There should be no engagement in tasks that corrode the soul. Every attempt must be made to continue in spiritual purity without ever giving occasion to soil and blacken the soul. It would be well for all to heed the words written in Oliver Cromwell's Bible, "He who ceases to be better ceases to be good."



"Give Us Men"

The greatest want of the ministry today is MEN-

Men who know God through personal experience. Men who can reach the throne of God in prayer. Men who are filled with the Spirit of the living God. Men who know God's Book, the Bible. Men who have been called by God as ministers. Men who visit the flock of Jesus without discrimination. Men who teach the messages of Jesus with authority. Men who hold high the standards of Jesus' church. Men who feed the flock with real spiritual food. Men who take time to laugh and play. Men who remember the aged and feeble saints. Men who dare to get involved in evangelistic pursuits. Men who can lead the bereaved past the dark valleys. Men who smile from their hearts through their faces. Men who are faithful husbands and good fathers. Men who can listen to problems and point to Jesus as counselor.

Men who can live within their budgets.

Men who train their members to witness and win souls.

Men who love the youth and guide them.

Men who can live above hypocrisy and deceit.

Men who encourage the people in denominational loyalty.

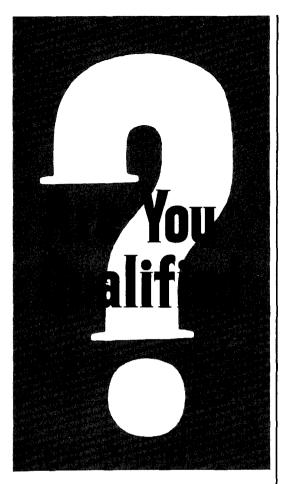
Men who recognize and use the power in the red books.

Men who believe the Bible with all their hearts.

Men who will stay on the battlefront until Jesus comes!

O God, give us such men!

TED T. JONES, Ministerial Assn. West Indonesia Union Mission



W. J. PAYNTER
Secretary-Treasurer, New Hebrides Mission

THE pastor who preached our sermon on Sabbath left school when he had finished only grade 4 of the primary level. He has never been to secondary school or college. He has never written a thesis or obtained a diploma.

He is not naturally eloquent, nor has he ever learned pastoral psychology or the art of preaching. He is not of commanding stature or of particularly handsome features. He has no money, no house or nice furniture, no car. His library consists of about a dozen well-thumbed books, which have been given to him over the years. No education, no qualifications, no training, no aids—you might well say he has nothing.

But you could not be more wrong. He is "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed" of his work. He has not received an education, but he has received an edification—and in the last analysis, which is the more important? This pastor moves among his flock with diplomacy, and speaks with the wisdom of Solomon. He counsels each one as if he were the last soul to be saved in this world. He understands each one individually, all of them—their background, their abilities, their spiritual health. I know of no other pastor who does a better job of reaching the hearts of his people.

Whence cometh this understanding? Nowhere more vividly than here in the Pacific Islands is illustrated the truth that "God giveth . . . wisdom." Our Lord said, "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." And these national pastors know where to start seeking. They ask of God wisdom, and they ask it not for selfish reasons of status or income or respect. They seek wisdom from above, that they may accomplish God's work more successfully. And God gives in full measure. There is no other way to explain the work these dedicated men do and the way they do it. Their textbook is the Holy Scriptures, and their only qualification is consecration.

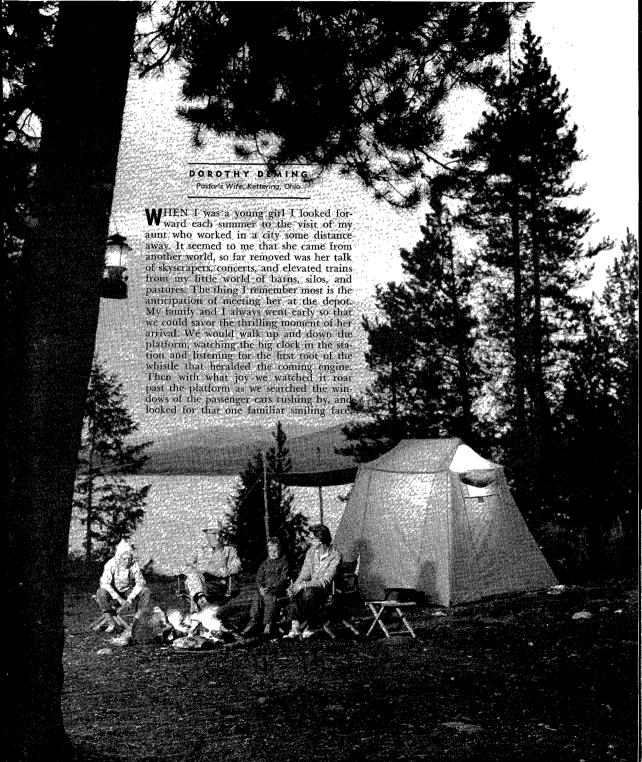
Let us who have the benefits of a good education not lose sight of the fact that God gives us qualifications for His work, too. If He wants us to do a job, and we trust in Him alone, not in what we are or what we have, He will give us what it takes to get the job done. His biddings are enablings.

When these men deliver a sermon it reaches the heart. It does not always please the ear, but it reaches the heart. They have nothing on which to rely, except God. They do rely wholly on Him, and He does not fail them.

Consecration is the most important qualification for any worker for God. Without dedication of heart he is poor, notwithstanding the letters and diplomas he may have.

Of course, education does not exclude consecration. Education and training are important—provided they are mixed in the right proportion with consecration. One can still be mightily used of God without education, but his work is sure to fail without consecration. Are you qualified?

don't forget to remember of the second secon



Soon we would see her alight, suitcase and umbrella in hand, and we would run eagerly into her arms. The moment was so delightful that I can still feel the thrill of it after more than fifty years have passed.

Similar anticipation should accompany our preparation for the Sabbath. We are privileged to have as our guest none other than the great Ruler of the universe. No matter how humble the home or the person, our great God has promised to meet with us during the hours of the Sabbath. What a fellowship!

And this fellowship can be ours anywhere. Preferably, of course, we should be in our homes, but sometimes we are away in a lonely hotel room, or we are camping with our family in some lovely nature spot, maybe visiting with relatives, or we are in a tent at camp meeting. Wherever the place, we can find that secluded spot to joyfully greet our honored Guest and welcome His arrival.

Is Sabbathkeeping deteriorating in Adventist homes as the rush and pressures of living increase? Is the glow and joy of Sabbathkeeping diminishing even in the minister's home through the hurry and bustle of the day? We need to be reminded that the members will often observe the Sabbath just as joyfully and sacredly as they see the pastor's family observe it—or just as carelessly.

How often have you planned something extra for Friday, saying, "I can still get ready for Sabbath; there isn't much to do, and no one will ever see." Or you actually leave a few small jobs for the Sabbath, like pressing a dress, folding the clothes from the last dryer load, or giving baths. You will leave more undone the next Friday, for Satan wants it that way. It is his purpose that you forget to "remember," and once you have slipped, there can come a down-hill slide all the way. He doesn't mind that you teach the truth of the seventh-day Sabbath to others, just so you aren't too particular how you keep the day yourself.

Let us take a resolute look at our preparation for and our observance of the Sabbath, and if necessary, start taking those steps back up the hill to meet our Saviour at the top. He waits each week to give us unlimited blessings during each of those twenty-four precious hours.

Our children need to hear us talk often about the Sabbath during the week days.

"There now, your dress is all ready for Sabbath; we'll hang it in the closet." "That's a good book to read together; remind me and I'll read it to you Sabbath afternoon." We must lead them to look forward to the Sabbath hours with special joy. They should have certain tasks to perform in helping to get ready, then they will feel this anticipation all through the week, and be willing to cooperate. Children will be hindrances or helpers—reflectors of our own attitude.

Simplicity is the key for meal planning. Good conversation, consideration and love expressed at mealtime make any good food seem even better.

Big jobs like washing, marketing, or bread baking should be completed before the preparation day. However, even too many accumulated little jobs can turn the day into a hectic race, and racing with the sun can be rather fatiguing, for its pace is predetermined and there is no stretching of those last few minutes. Besides, what joy of anticipation is there when you come panting into the station just after the train has arrived?

Not only must we plan the arrival of the Sabbath, but our plans must include all of its precious hours-from the special Friday evening worship to the long afternoons of summertime. This is a family "together" day; so whether it is church services all day for the minister's family, or guests-fordinner-day, let us not exclude the children by our adult conversation. Plan to spend time together singing or playing instruments, playing Sabbath games, or visiting a missing or sick Sabbath school member. Invite your guests to go along on a nature walk, join in some facet of a nature hobby, or deliver the literature on your regular route. Make the Sabbath a delight, a communing on the things you and your God like to do together. Your children will soon catch this Presence in the day, and learn to anticipate His arrival the same as you do.

Preparation of heart and spirit is probably just as important for the enjoyment of Sabbathkeeping as preparation of the house and person. And it takes all your best planning to do both!

In this troubled, busy world we have been given the Sabbath as an oasis in each week. It is a golden clasp that binds us on this earth to our Saviour in heaven. So, don't forget to "remember"!

For New Members!



let's Get acquainted LET'S GET ACQUAINTED?

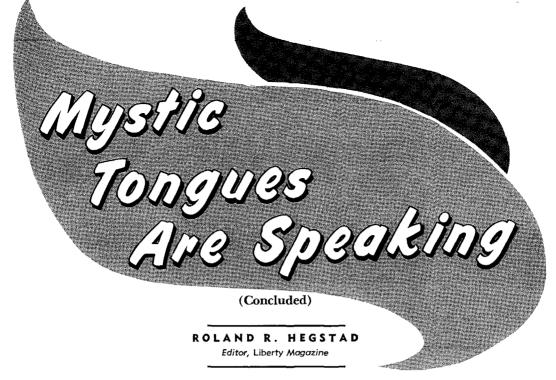
Administrators, pastors, and evangelists acclaim this publication an outstanding aid in integrating new members into the church family.

Let's Get Acquainted is a beautifully illustrated twenty-four page booklet, 6 by 9 inches, and is to be presented to new members at the time of their baptism and welcome into church fellowship. Following a warm welcome, is helpful information relating to the organization of the church and its various departments and functions. The object of the unique booklet is to acquaint new members with the church they have already learned to love. Included is instruction regarding membership transfers and suggestions for maintaining a vibrant Christian experience.

In the back cover of Let's Get Acquainted is a pocket in which the Baptismal Certificate is to be placed.

Every church should carry a supply of Let's Get Acquainted. The cost is only 25c each.

Order directly from The Ministerial Association, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.



Devils working miracles are speaking to Christendom today with new and compelling power: signs, wonders, healings, and tongues, experienced by participants in the charismatic movement and claimed to be of God, may be utter fraud. The neo-Pentecostal movement, which has sprung so quickly to prominence, crossing all denominational and social barriers, poses serious questions for the Adventist

In Parts I and II the author made three of four observations concerning neo-Pentecostalism:

- 1. The charismatic movement owes its growth to churches that have failed and are failing their people.
- 2. Miracles, healings, unknown tongues, psychic phenomena-these are no sure sign of God's
- 3. Speaking in tongues does not necessarily accompany baptism of the Holy Spirit, nor does its absence indicate that the believer is not possessed by the Holy Spirit.

TURN now to the healing ministry, prominent in charismatic meetings, to observe that:

4. Not all who pray for healing are healed and not all who are healed are healed by God.

Faith healers almost unanimously believe that God will heal all who call on Him in faith. Says one: "When two agree together in this way in giving any trouble or illness completely into the hands of the Father, He always takes it away." 22

Says another:

many seeking bodily healing in our day is the uncertainty in their minds as to its being the will of God to heal all." 23

Others declare that to pray "Thy will be done," constitutes lack of faith and is abhorrent to God.24

Perhaps it is this fallacious theology that accounts for the fantasy represented as fact by many faith healers. For example: The case of a one-eyed Oklahoma boy who, after being prayed for by a faith healer, found he could see through his plastic eye, and see whether it was in or out.25 Or the case of a young lady who died and went to heaven, where she was healed inside and out. She is still telling her story at faith-healer meetings.26

Neither Mountain nor Soapbox Car

Let us note three points:

A. God always answers prayer for healing. But He does not always say Yes.

You will recall that when Paul beseeched God that his "thorn in the flesh" eyes) be taken away, he was told, "My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Cor. 12:9).

In support of their presumption many faith healers quote Mark 11:24: "Whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours" (N.E.B.).* I tried this as a 12-year-old, pleading that the mountain behind our "The greatest barrier to the faith of | house be removed. It did seem a big

project, but the Bible said faith as large as a pinhead could manage it. It didn't. And so I prayed for a soapbox car—with lawn mower engine. And neither my father on earth nor my Father in heaven saw fit to give it to me. And in the end I didn't believe.

Wrote John: "If we ask anything according to his will he hears us. . . . we know that we have obtained the requests made of him" (1 John 5:14, 15, R.S.V.).

How did our Example pray? Jesus did not hesitate to make known His human desire to escape pain and death. But He then added, "Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39).

To recommend that the qualifying phrase, 'If it be thy will,' be deleted from our prayers is not to make progress in piety but to retrogress into paganism.

B. We note that education and reform were linked with healing in Christ's ministry. "When Christ healed disease, He warned many of the afflicted ones, 'Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee' (John 5:14). Thus He taught that they had brought disease upon themselves by transgressing the laws of God, and that health could be preserved only by obedience." ²⁷

If God were to work a miracle and restore persons to health who have brought disease upon themselves by impurity, self-indulgence, and disregard of the laws of health, "He would be encouraging sin." Those healed would "pursue the same course of heedless transgression of God's natural and spiritual laws, reasoning that if God heals them in answer to prayer, they are at liberty to continue their unhealthful practices and to indulge perverted appetite without restraint."

Don't Sell Our Medical School

There is a reason, you see, why we do not sell our medical school, and with the money realized buy a thousand circus tents, totally unsubsidized by Government, and hit the healing trail. There is a reason, I say, why we do not just pray for the sick.

And that reason must be understood if we are to appraise correctly the charismatic healing services. I emphasize it again: Education and reform are vital elements in the healing ministry of Christ. Thus our sanitariums were established as places where the sick might "find relief from disease by treatment and right habits of living, and . . . [where they might] learn how to avoid sickness." 30 Ellen G. White mentions a few practices that need remedying: intemperate eating, the use of tea, coffee, alcohol, tobacco, flesh foods, and so forth, and then she adds, "A reform must take place before treatment will effect a cure."

What, then, of a hospital that majors more in administering medicine than in educating patients in how to live? That cuts out bad tissue while leaving in bad habits? Is that hospital any more an example of true healing than the faith healer's tent? I come to this sobering conclusion: False healing is not a monopoly of faith healers; one can be a false healer in a Christian hospital or a private office or clinic.

C. Brethren, beware of healers, whoever they are, wherever they minister, whatever their degree, who make light of God's laws:

Many make great pretensions to holiness, and boast of the wonders they perform in healing the sick, when they do not regard this great standard of righteousness [God's law]. But through whose power are these cures wrought? Are the eyes of either party opened to their transgressions of the law? and do they take their stand as humble, obedient children, ready to obey all of God's requirements? John testifies of the professed children of God: "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." . . . If those through whom cures are performed are disposed, on account of these manifestations, to excuse their neglect of the law of God, and continue in disobedience, though they have power to any and every extent, it does not follow that they have the great power of God. On the contrary, it is the miracle-working power of the great deceiver. . . . We must beware of the pretended holiness that permits transgression of the law of God. Those cannot be sanctified who trample that law under their feet, and judge themselves by a standard of their own devising.32

In evaluating the charismatic move-

^{*} The New English Bible. © The Delegates of the Oxford University Press and the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press 1970. Reprinted by permission.



ment and its attendant phenomena, keep in mind the four observations I have made: (1) The movement owes its growth to churches that have failed—and are failing —their people (thus your evaluation will ever be tinctured with humility and char-(2) Miracles, healings, unknown tongues, physical phenomena-these are no sure signs of God's working. (3) Speaking in tongues does not necessarily accompany baptism of the Holy Spirit, nor does its absence indicate that the believer is not possessed by the Holy Spirit. (4) Not all who pray for healing are healed and not all who are healed are healed by God.

I conclude with a few minutes of prognostication.

Looking Ahead

If I understand correctly the sure word of prophecy, in the days immediately ahead, we shall see an increasing disregard for the written Word and an increased dependence on signs and wonders. We shall see an accelerated merging of Spiritism, Protestantism, and Catholicism. And we shall see at last that almost overwhelming deception, that, if it were possible, should deceive the very elect.

Indeed, I predict that the Adventist Church will soon be confronted by charismatic manifestations.

I do not look for them to appear again in Portland, Maine, but rather in one of our college or university centers, among men of ivory tower scholarship, who will present their new experience as evidence of the Holy Spirit's entrance onto campus.

Significantly, in the Catholic neo-Pentecostal movement, as the Evangelical Press Service has observed, "it is not the uneducated but the intellectuals, not the undiscerning but the critical exegetes, not the frustrated Puritans but quite normal Christians who take part in these meetings."

Worthy of note, as we look to the future, is Oral Roberts' account of a revelation he received on the occasion of his first healing service:

I heard myself saying things that I had never dreamed were possible for any man to say. The spirit of prophecy came to me and I began prophesying what God was going to do in the last days, how He was going to raise up men and give

them His power to set humanity free from one end of the earth to the other, that He was going to pour out the nine gifts of the spirit to heal the sick body of the bride, and that Jesus was coming soon. The words that flowed from my mouth were by the spirit of prophecy. I told the people that this last worldwide revival would be a revival of signs and wonders and that it would be characterized by a great wave of healing power coming down from heaven upon the sick bodies of mankind.33

Hear now another upon whom the prophetic gift rested:

Satan himself . . . will appear in the character of an angel of light. . . . Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and many undeniable wonders will be performed. And as the spirits will profess faith in the Bible, and manifest respect for the institutions of the church, their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power.34

By departing from the plain precepts and commandments of God, and giving heed to fables, the minds of many are preparing to receive these lying wonders.35 (Italics supplied.)

Is, then, the charismatic movement the spiritistically empowered forerunner of the last deception?

If we keep close to Christ and make the principles of His Word the principles of our life, I'm sure this question will be answered soon. Indeed, it must be answered! And not by a spoon-fed job from the pul-

For whatever this movement is, whatever it portends, I say again, the challenge to us is equally compelling, for in either case only a living experience with Jesus Christ will suffice to save us.

We must all now seek to arm ourselves for the contest in which we must soon engage. Faith in God's word, prayerfully studied and practically applied, will be our shield from Satan's power and will bring us off conquerors through the blood of Christ.36

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SHOP TALK

Shop Talk is for the sharing of ideas for a more effective ministry. Please make contributions or queries brief—but do make them. Materials printed privately or offered through personal addresses are not endorsed by the church.

NEW! BROADCAST SCRIPT SERVICE FOR PASTORS

Pastors who eye the broadcast media with anticipation, but who balk at the time involved in preparing material suitable for release, will rejoice at the new service begun by the General Conference Radio-Television Department.

A complete scripting service will be published by the department four times a year commencing May, 1971. Available May, August, November, and February, will be complete packages comprising thirteen weeks of broadcasting. Three separate packages will be available, or the service may be bought as a unit.

Five-Minute Daily scripts, 65 in number, will answer the need of the growing number of pastors wanting to release their messages daily. Scripts will be ready for reading over the air or may be adapted to suit the pastor's style. Emphasis of the material will be doctrinal-evangelistic. Topical, readable, simple, appealing, current are the adjectives that best describe the content of this and the fifteen-minute scripts. In one year the broadcaster will receive 260 scripts in all—a mine of valuable source and evangelistic material even if never put on the air.

With this package will go sample commercials for small books and Bible courses, as well as other aids to help the pastor get started.

Fifteen-Minute Weekly scripts, 13 per quarter, will provide the basis for a weekly fifteen-minute or thirty-minute weekly address. Again the emphasis will be evangelistic material ready to read onto radio. This package contains commercials and other aids also.

Thirty-Minute Continuity of Word and Music, 13 per quarter, provide a framework into which the fifteen-minute script may be worked to provide a half-hour broadcast. Music will be selected from five or six Chapel records for each quarter (which the pastor will need to purchase as well

as the script service). The script will contain song introductions, announcements, song titles, and timing.

Cost for the five-minute daily service is \$35.00; for the fifteen-minute weekly service, \$25.00; and for the weekly continuity service, \$20.00. The entire package of the three services will cost \$75.00. Subscriptions to the service are on an annual basis.

To add to the convenience of the service all script material will be double-spaced with wide margins for the final personal touch, and will be three-hole-punched to fit a large three-ring binder.

The service may be requested from the Pastor's Script Service, Radio-Television Department, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012. A check, or an official conference purchase order should accompany each order; or, you may ask for the sample package containing samples of the five-minute messages, the fifteen-minute weekly and thirty-minute continuity scripts.

Broadcasters or writers who would like to contribute to the service should send a sample script or request author's instructions. Authors do receive some remuneration for their efforts!

WALTER R. L. SCRAGG

SING UNTO THE LORD A NEW SONG

Church musicians looking for a new challenge will find it in the compilation Te Decet Laus, A Hymnal for the Musician. This project has been developing for years and it bears the evidence. We have hundreds of fine musicians, but they must be given the tools and the opportunity to develop good choirs. Dr. Beltz agrees with H. Scott Westerman that, "There is practically no limit to the hymns which people can learn to appreciate and love if they are given enthusiastic leadership." But it requires more than enthusiasm to raise the standard of our church music. We also need well-trained leaders.

A vast amount of excellent hymnic material is to be found in various places. It is not easy to locate and harder still to assemble with copyright permission. But the compiler of this collection has been successful in gathering a number of unusual yet excellent hymns. While some numbers date back to Ambrosian times, others are quite new.

There have been very clear objectives in building up this unique collection; most important, of course, being that our praise might more effectively ascend to the glory of God. In his preface to Psalms and Hymns for Public and Private Worship, Augustus Toplady of "Rock of Ages" fame, nobly expresses the high objectives of music in worship. He says, "God is the God of truth, of holiness and of elegance. Whoever, therefore, has the honor to compose, or to compile anything that may constitute a part of His worship, should keep



Evangelistic advertising photos are designed to catch attention

Shown here are some of the 25 8" by 10" glossy photos which comprise a part of the new evangelistic advertising layout materials now available from the General Conference PR Bureau or Ministerial Association. Subjects pertinent to the pictures shown here include from left to right: (Top Row) Can God's Law Be Destroyed? Mark of Doom, What Waits Beyond the Grave? Unpardonable Sin; (Second Row) The Body a Temple of God, Europe in Bible Prophecy, Saved, What Happens When You Die? (Third Row) Predestination, God's Sign of Authority, Graveyard of the Universe, Search for a Missing Text; (Fourth Row) Satan, Fact or Fiction? Christ's New Rule of Life, 7 Disasters Coming.
In addition to the 25 pictures the advertising

kit contains a glossy proofsheet of headlines to

go with the pictures and other topics, and a large sheet of sample layouts, showing how the pictures can be used in different dimension and with different treatments. The complete kit costs \$25 plus mailing.

No line art is included in this kit, because such art is available from existing commercial art houses. Photographs such as those included in this kit tend to draw reader interest more quickly than line art. Layout instruction will become part of future public relations workshops involving pastors. Future plans include making available message-filled advertising copy to be used with the photos and headlines provided in the kit. But for the present each evangelist will need to pre-pare his own. We recommend this new service to all those engaged in evangelism.

these three particulars, constantly, in view." These high aims have been met in this hymnal. The musicians will welcome the omission of the bar-lines which Dr. Beltz feels are "the strait jacket to both the tune and the text," however, phrase-bars are used. Literary quotations have been kept to a minimum, but a few hymns appear in the original Latin, German or French texts, with a number of English translations making them usable with English-speaking congregations.

In this compilation the minister of music and his choir will find something both educational and challenging. The sections on the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection and Ascension are particularly fine.

The compiler, Dr. Oliver S. Beltz, has held positions of responsibility in several of our own colleges, and was successor to the late Dean Peter Christian Rutkin, chairman of the Department of Church and Choral Music, Northwestern University School of Music. Although retired, he still is an inspiration to many musicians and singers.

Orders should be sent to: Dr. Oliver S. Beltz, 11538 Anderson Street, Loma Linda, California.

R. ALLAN ANDERSON Former Editor, Ministry Magazine

Attention Ministers!

DEAR EDITOR:

Elder Herbert Ford's article "Who Killed the Soul of James G. Thresher?" (The Ministry, May, 1970) makes one good point and overlooks another. It leaves us laymen with the impression that the minister is the only one who could have saved James Thresher. If you pastors are too busy to make missionary contacts, maybe it's because you aren't inviting us laymen to assist you.

But you say, "We are trying to get the laity involved in missionary contacts!"

That's the problem. You tell us to "go" before you say, "Follow me."

How can we lead when we haven't had a chance to follow? To be specific, how can we be expected to conduct a Bible study with strangers when we haven't even been asked to offer prayer in the church or house of our friends?

Start making a list of those in your congregation who are used week after week for the main prayers, reports, announcements, et cetera. Then start looking for the shy, the quiet, even the rebellious ones in your congregation who are neglected and who are dying spiritually from lack of participation in the Sabbath morning "exercises." Get us laymen involved in what is easiest before you expect us to challenge the difficult.

Our Sabbath morning "exercises" have, all too often, degenerated into mere entertainment. A small clique of elders and deacons, et cetera, are the performers, the rest of us are spectators.

I am not writing this letter in my own behalf, for I am a Sabbath school teacher, and am often asked to preach in our small church; I am writing for the thousands of overlooked strugglers in our

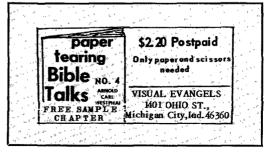
church who need a chance to develop—and development comes by exercise.

Yours for total involvement,
A FRIENDLY LAYMAN

DEAR EDITOR:

The article "Doctrine of Revelation and Inspiration" by Dr. Edward Heppenstall, and particularly the opening sentence, "This church has no clearly defined doctrine of revelation and inspiration," leaves me with just one question, If 2 Peter 1:21, "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and 1 Corinthians 2:13, "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" do not present a precise and concise "clearly defined doctrine of revelation and inspiration," what is it they do present?

DONALD F. HAYNES



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ACCIDENT-PRONE DRIVERS.

According to the Long Island Press a three-year study shows that drivers who cause fatal accidents are more emotionally disturbed than other motorists. The report by Medical Consultant Dr. Cyril Solomon revealed that, in 20 per cent of the fatal accidents studied, the drivers had acutely disturbing experiences, usually quarrels, within six hours DONALD W. MCKAY of the accident.



BOOKS

Facing the Issues—2, William J. Krutza and Philip P. Di Cicco, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1969, 140 pages.

This is an excellent booklet dealing with current issues. It presents the pros and cons of each issue discussed and follows with a page or two of Bible passages on the matter. Each current issue section concludes with a section of questions and observations for discussion. Generally, a fundamental approach is pursued by the authors.

J. S. DAMAZO

The Promise of Power, DeWitt S. Osgood, Southern Publishing Association, Nashville, Tennessee, 1970, 143 pages.

A book written to remind the reader that without "the fellowship of the Spirit" the inner man is but an orphan in the universe. It is only as he responds to the promptings of the Spirit that he can know Christ and the good life. And the ministry of the Spirit is necessary in order that man might be born again and might glorify Christ. One prerequisite to the receiving of the latter rain is a practical knowledge of how the Spirit leads the believer into all truth and guides into all service. To meet the soul's vital spiritual necessities, *The Promise of Power* offers a personal confrontation with the third person of the Godhead.

This book will serve as an invaluable evangelistic aid for the minister as it appeals to the reader to listen to the still small voice of the Spirit and to respond to His gentle pleading and promptings. Other evangelistic uses include preparing interests and others for the presentation of the message; sustaining interest during a series of meetings; or to make a serious appeal for obedience toward the end of the series.

The Promise of Power is entirely Bible based and noncontroversial, and has proved to be an effective bridge to ministers and church workers of other faiths. The positive message it presents serves as a remedy for extremism. Surely those who might share this book can expect fruit even from among the clergy who, as devout followers of Christ, can-

not help responding to the Spirit's pleading and accept God's special message for our day. Remembering, of course, that the Spirit uses men but can never be used by men.

J. R. SPANGLER

Theological Bibliography, Sakae Kubo, Charles Sadefur, Jim Walters (editors), Student Forum, SDA Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1970, \$1.50.

Have you ever wondered if you are spending your book money for the right books, or if you are reading those works that are most significant? An aid to answering such questions has just been published by the Student Forum of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. The bibliography itself has been prepared by the Seminary faculty, and is arranged under six general headings: Church and Ministry, Mission and Comparative Religion, The New Testament, The Old Testament, Systematic Theology, Church History. Each of these headings, in turn, is further divided for greater convenience. For example, a few of the subheadings in the New Testament section include: Background, Christology, Church, Church Order and Worship, Dictionaries, Ethics in the New Testament, Hermeneutics, Kingdom of God, Parables, Paul's Theology, Resurrection, Holy Spirit, Life of Jesus, Teachings of Jesus, Commentaries, et cetera. Those works considered particularly significant are marked by an asterisk. One of the most helpful features is the brief description and evaluation that follows each entry. For example, under E. Schürer, A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus, we are told that: "Although old, Schürer's work is still one of the best in the field. He is concerned especially with the political situation in Palestine in the time of Jesus."

Some may wonder why such a bibliography is necessary when other theological schools already provide excellent tools of this type. Perhaps the best answer is that this bibliography has been especially directed to the Seventh-day Adventist ministry and is therefore likely to be especially useful to it. As with any such collection there will be questions as to why this or that book is included while others are left unmentioned. Quite naturally the choice reflects the background and training of the professors who made the selections. On the whole, in this reviewer's opinion, they have judiciously selected those works which are most reliable, usable, and which have had the greatest impact on theology. The compilers deserve commendation for their good work and thanks for providing such a helpful volume.

A copy may be obtained by writing to the Seminary Student Forum, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49104.

MALCOLM MAXWELL



NEWS BRIEFS

[Unless otherwise credited, the following news items are taken from Religious News Service.]

Holy Land Is Chosen as Site for Sacred Scripture Seminar

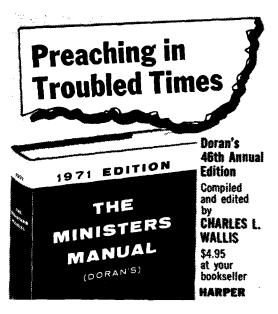
The International Catholic Federation for the Biblical Apostolate (ICFBA) has announced plans in Rome for an international seminar on Sacred Scripture to be held in the Holy Land during the last week of June and the first week of July, 1971. Father Bernard Orchard, O.S.B., the federation's general secretary, told newsmen here that the organization felt that the Holy Land was "the perfect place to conduct such a seminar." After all, he said, "It is there that it all began. We will be at the very site where many of the greatest events of historical religious importance took place. We will be returning to the place where it all began." The International Catholic Federation for the Biblical Apostolate was established in Rome last April to carry out a major directive of Vatican II: "Easy access to Sacred Scripture should be provided for all the Christian faithful." Father Orchard said that Jerusalem and the Holy Land were chosen as the locale for the federation's first major project "in an effort to spark enthusiasm among bishops for their very important work of carrying out a mandate of Vatican II, the promotion of the Bible among Catholics."

White House Service: Ten Commandments Still Major Foundation of Sound Society

In the 4,000 years since the Ten Commandments were handed down at Mount Sinai, no sounder foundation for a stable society, especially in these troubled times, has evolved, a former Congressman said at the White House religious service in Washington, D.C. Dr. Walter Judd, who represented a district in Minnesota from 1942-1962 and was a medical missionary in China in the 1920's and early 1930's, told President and Mrs. Nixon and 250 guests in the East Room that his long experience in public life has convinced him that these ten ancient precepts are relevant to the turmoil, ferment, anxiety, conflict, and uncertaintly experienced by nearly all levels of society, and that more effort must be made to apply these age-old guidelines to harmonious social relations. In summing up he said, "Blessed was, is, and always will be our nation when the Lord is truly our God."

Southern Baptists Polled on What a Dissenter Should Do

A Southern Baptist survey has shown that 56.5 per cent of pastors surveyed believe members should leave the church if they cannot completely agree with the denomination's articles of faith.
The poll asked: "If a member of a Southern Baptist church finds he cannot completely agree with the Articles of Faith as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1925, and again in 1963, should he remain in a Baptist church or leave it?" Four alternative answers were given. Most pastors (34.7 per cent) chose the response, "Leave, and join a church whose doctrine he more nearly accepts." Only 19.5 per cent of Sunday school teachers chose this answer. "Remain, on basis of things with which he agrees" was the response chosen by most teachers (39.3 per cent). This answer received the second highest vote from pastors (27.3 per cent). Receiving the second highest vote of teachers (20:6 per cent) was "Remain, actively trying to influence the Convention to



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change." Only 10:5 per cent of pastors took this stand. The other category, "Leave, and try to find a church whose doctrine he can completely accept," received 21.8 per cent of the pastor's votes and 16.2 per cent of the teachers'. "No answers" were marked by 5.7 per cent of pastors and 4.4 per cent of teachers.

Martin B. Bradley, Viewpoll director, reported that many questionnaires were accompanied by comments that added depth to their responses. He said a "sizable number," most of whom answered, "Remain," stated that complete agreement is not very likely nor is it necessary. Many of them said that there should be no creed but the Bible, no head but Christ, and that the "right to differ is basic to being a Baptist." Those who took a firm "leave" position held that a person either is or isn't a Baptist, and should leave if he can't agree with a tenet as basic as the Articles of Faith.

Two comments seem to epitomize the divided opinion among Baptist leaders, the survey director observed. One was that "Baptist churches are becoming weaker in the faith because far too many members are only Baptists by name and do not believe in Baptist doctrine based on the Scriptures." The other referred to the Articles of Faith as a "majority opinion" rather than a creed, and asked, "What's happened to the Baptist concept of religious freedom in these articles? Who is going to be the bishop or pope?"

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Conservative Presbyterians Told to Begin Plans for "Separation"

Conservative Presbyterians from fifteen Southern States were told that they should begin preparing plans and structures should "separation" from the Presbyterian Church, U.S. (Southern) become necessary. W. Jack Williamson, a Greenville, Alabama, attorney, told more than five hundred persons gathered in Weaverville, North Carolina, that the "radical, determined ecumenists have a timetable for the liquidation of the historic witness" of the denomination. He did not advocate separation now, but advised local and regional plans so a pull-out could be accomplished with "order, dispatch and decorum" if it becomes necessary.

Report 13 Million Americans Have Quit Smoking Since '66

More than 13 million Americans are reported to have kicked the smoking habit since 1966, bringing to 29 million the number who are now members of the nation's "unhooked generation." Nearly two thirds of the adult population are now nonsmokers, according to a survey cited at the first National Conference on Smoking and Health in San Diego. Less than a decade ago nearly half the adult population smoked. Since 1966 more than one million people throughout the world have participated in the successful Five-Day Plan to Stop Smoking program created by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

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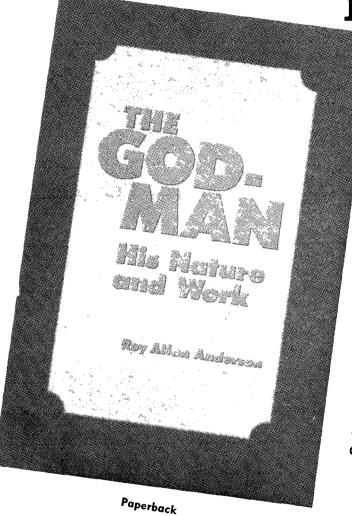
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EXCEPTION "I TO THE RULE "o

"I AM a preacher," he declared, "can you give me a discount on this item?"

"But, officer," pled the offender, "I am a minister and even though I broke the speed limit I think you should consider my position in this matter."

Why do we preachers seem to have the idea that we are an exception to the rule—all rules? From seeking special parking places to excusing ourselves for whispering in the house of God, we rationalize, we justify ourselves by claiming we are preachers. We demand unity and cooperation from our members, but how much cooperation do we yield in return?

A lady and her daughter found seats in the balcony of one of our larger churches during intermission. The mother left for a few minutes and asked her daughter to save a seat for her. When she returned, to her surprise she found her daughter seated in a different row. Why? An important preacher had come along and although he had been politely told that this seat was being saved, the poor girl was obliged to move by his remark, "What do you mean you are saving this seat? I have been sitting here for five years!"

Are preachers really exceptions to the rules? If the spirit of Paul, who labored with his own hands to support himself for fear of criticism, would permeate the preacher ranks, perhaps we could regain some of the respect that has been lost for us. Perhaps, also, we could regain some of the respect that has been lost for the ministry. What do you think?

J. R. S.

HAPPY
IT TOOK the world until 1850 to get
its first billion inhabitants. Seventy-five
years later we stood at two billion. It
took only 35 years to gain another billion and a
half. The population increase is indeed an explosion.

There has, however, been no corresponding explosion of the preacher population. The glamour professions have siphoned off many men of great ministerial potential, leaving the unreached millions—more "unreached" than ever.

It is therefore a desperate necessity that we turn to the laity for help. The New Testament concept of lay ministry must be revitalized. Hierarchical influences have well nigh paralyzed this emphasis, with the result that large numbers of laymen sincerely believe that soul saving is the preacher's business. This is highly pleasing to the enemies of the church who revel in its impotence. We must change this picture. But how?

We have tried promotion, cajoling, and opaque threats to no avail. Quotations Biblical and otherwise likewise fall on deaf ears. It seems that the solution has eluded us because of its inherent simplicity. Preacher, what do you do when the financial strength of your church begins to ebb? You get into the homes of the people and appeal to each member personally. What do you do when winning a soul to Christ? After preaching publicly, you visit his home and appeal to him personally. The decision is gotten by the fireside. What would a fireside appeal to each member personally do to activate the laity in soul-winning endeavor? An every-member canvass across North America may be the answer. The object: to provide additional troops for front-line service, namely, soul winning. Thus may the church indeed at last move like a mighty army. O happy day!

E. E. C.

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