

The **+** WITNESS

MAY 12, 1966

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THE WITNESS is published weekly from September 15th to June 15th inclusive, with the exception of one week in January and bi-weekly from June 15th to September 15th by the Episcopal Church Publishing Co. on behalf of the Witness Advisory Board.



The subscription price is \$4.00 a year; in bundles for sale in parishes the magazine sells for 10c a copy, we will bill quarterly at 7c a copy. Entered as Second Class Matter, August 5, 1948, at the Post Office at Tunkhannock Pa., under the act of March 3, 1879.

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Story of the Week

Situation Ethics in Sex Life Criticized by Psychiatrist

★ The situation ethics of modern sexual morality was assailed in Chicago by a noted psychiatrist. He criticized theologians, parents, churches and schools for emphasizing a new morality.

Dr. Graham B. Blaine Jr., chief of psychiatric services of the Harvard University health services, made the charge at the annual meeting of the Academy of Religion and Mental Health.

He warned that the new morality is unable to provide the firm guidance that young people need and inwardly seek. And he disagreed sharply with those who hold that "love" is the only basis of the Christian's sex morality.

Dr. Blaine cited an unidentified college chaplain's statement that, regarding pre-marital chastity and life-long marriage, "there is only one absolute for a Christian — the love of God." This kind of thinking, Dr. Blaine said, constitutes "moral softness."

Concerning situation ethics in relation to sexual morality, he said: "You don't have time to study the situation in the context of the love of God when you're in the back of an automobile."

Dr. Blaine told 500 academy members that "the present younger generation is probably

no better or no worse than any others have been. It is just different, and the number of young people is larger.

"Today's young people are the brightest and the most healthy younger generation we have ever had, and we are the richest and best endowed parent generation. We should be able to do more for our children than generations in the past have been able to do.

"While there may be no more sexual activity, drug-taking and rioting proportionately on our campuses today, there are still unwanted pregnancies, drug-takers and rioters, whereas there should be fewer.

"Rebellion seems to be a necessary part of growing up. It is a manifestation of the basic adolescence conflict between feelings of dependency and the striving to be independent. But there are constructive forms of rebellion and destructive forms of rebellion."

Dr. Blaine said constructive forms might be seen as distinctive hair styles, beards, outlandish dances, procrastination and pranks. Destructive forms might be seen as underachievement, cheating, stealing, drug-taking and unplanned pregnancies, he added.

"The principal responsibility of the elders is to channel rebellion into constructive rather

than destructive forms," he said. "This can be accomplished in childhood by contributing to the formation in our children of a healthy conscience.

"At this time this is accomplished by firm limit-setting and a reward and punishment policy on the part of parents.

"During adolescence, parents become less effective and church and school must take more responsibilities for conscience development in the young adult. Rather than rewards and punishments, church and school must provide models and clearly-defined guidelines."

Dr. Blaine then warned, "In some instances, parents, schools and churches, with their emphasis on the new morality and situational ethics are failing to live up to their responsibility in this regard. They fail to provide the firmness and consistency that young people need to fight against outwardly, and inwardly comply with.

"Young people, because of their need to feel self-reliant, cannot openly ask for controls, limits, and clear examples of standards and values from authority. But basically they want and need them."

The Academy of Religion and Mental Health, an affiliate of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, is devoted to cooperation involving religion, medicine and the behavioral sciences.

Success of U.S. Christianity Creates Problem Says Asian

★ In the eyes of a leading Asian Christian, one of the chief problems of Christianity in America is its "success" and the resultant confusion and integration of Christian beliefs with the general American culture.

"Here, whatever you believe is supposed to be a variety of Christianity," said D. T. Niles, general secretary of the East Asia Christian Conference. "Christianity has cultural connotations in America," he explained. The result, he said, is that authentic Christian beliefs get muddled and confused in the process.

According to Niles, this "acculturated Christianity" explains in large part the attention given in recent months to the "God is dead" theologians.

"If William Hamilton were in India we'd call him a Buddhist and go on about our business," he said, referring to one of the leading exponents of the radical theology. "In India we've lived with God is dead for 2,500 years and we know it for what it is—Buddhism."

Niles was interviewed by Religious News Service while in this country on a two-week lecture and preaching tour that included major addresses at Colgate Rochester Divinity School; Berkeley Divinity School; and Oberlin Graduate School of Theology. As a leading Asian Christian who visits America frequently, he was asked to give his views on Christianity here.

To help American Christians sharpen their perceptions of the differences between Christianity and the American culture, Niles advocated missionaries from lands where Christianity is a minority religion.

"Just as we have asked you to send us missionaries in the past, you must ask us to send you missionaries now. You need to bring to this country people who are Christians but who can see things in a new light."

A few such missionaries have already been exchanged, he said, with generally beneficial results. One of the major problems, however, is the shortage of trained personnel in the countries from which these missionaries would logically come. Most of them, Niles indicated, haven't enough leaders to take care of the needs of their own churches at home, let alone being able to export leadership.

Nevertheless, said Niles, some ways must be found. "This is a place where we musn't fail you," he said earnestly.

He also advocated stronger discipline in Christian churches. "Of course you don't go about throwing anyone out of the church," he said, but advocated discipline "in the sense you denote who is Christian and who is not. It is not throwing anybody out by putting the right labels on people."

Niles foresaw a decline in the success enjoyed by the church in America and predicted it would in the long run be beneficial to Christianity. "The time will come when the church begins to be under pressure," he said, and called this "an inevitable thing out of which good can come. When people stop going to church for social reasons it will be a good thing."

Asked to evaluate broad-based interreligious appeals designed to promote church attendance, Niles indicated that he had no objections to such promotions, but that he felt

preaching in American churches tended to stray into psychology or other fields instead of expounding Christianity.

"There's no use in telling the people to go to church if there's nothing in the shop to sell," he said, adding that too often "they don't get a clear exposition of what the Christian faith is all about."

Training offered by the theological seminaries is partly to blame, he said. He also criticized "careerism — the minister is hired by the congregation and the congregation comes to see him perform." Such a system can "corrode the integrity" of the clergyman if he does not learn to resist unwarranted pressures on him.

In America as in every part of the world, Niles said, a central problem before the church is to "find structures for the congregation which are appropriate for the new structures of society." He commended experiments with house churches, neighborhood groups and similar new approaches underway in many areas.

Another problem Americans share with Christians everywhere is church members — particularly young people—who don't know the Bible.

"Our biggest need is to grow again a Bible-knowing community," Niles said. "They don't even know the facts of the Bible stories. The preacher can't assume his congregation knows a Bible story. He has to give them the facts of the story before he begins to interpret it and preach about it."

RACE AND RELIGION APPEAL

★ Presiding Bishop John E. Hines has asked all parishes to make offering May 15 or some later Sunday, for the Church and Race Fund. See page 18.

THE WITNESS

Theologian Want Communicators To Build Thinkers Not Robots

★ A world today which is "saturated with communications, may perish for loss of communication," a theologian declared at the first North American assembly of the World Association for Christian Broadcasting.

Roger L. Shinn, dean of instruction and professor of applied Christianity at Union Theological Seminary, told some 200 church and commercial broadcasting specialists that the key lesson the communicator may have to learn is "restraint."

"Sometimes the communicator must learn to shut up and let his victims think," he said, "sometimes his greatest gift is silence and solitude. When communications relent in their pounding at our senses, we may learn to communicate."

He stressed that the effects of the "communications revolution" still cannot be fully determined.

"Conceivably," he commented, "we can create for the first time in history a society of informed, thoughtful citizens. Conceivably we can achieve a mass of robots manipulated by the political and financial powers that control the mass media."

"Or conceivably we can pound our people into dull insensibility, as they train themselves to resist the aggression of professional communicators and learn to filter out the valuable as well as the threatening and annoying messages that assault them."

Shinn stated that the world today is "smothered in words," but is "hungry for a meaningful word."

"It is a world that can flash

messages and pictures across oceans via outer space, yet a world where persons have trouble addressing each other face to face."

Calling on communicators to "learn all the tricks of the trade and invent some new ones," Shinn commented that "increasingly we discover that communication is a key, a dominating symbol, to help us understand ourselves, our society, our very universe."

While flashing signals in deep space are being discovered and used to "decode . . . origins and processes of galaxies and solar systems," he said, "the tiny gene within the chromosome proves to be a device for coding intricately complicated information that governs the growth of organisms and persons."

"Everywhere the processes of life and matter depend upon communication. In a profound sense they are communication. In the beginning and forever is the Word. 'By the word of the Lord the heavens were made (Psalm 33:6).' The Word made flesh, the Word refreshing and enlivening our world—this is the content of our life and faith."

Formed in 1963 in Nairobi, Kenya, after informal conferences dating back to a consultation on religious broadcasting in 1956, the organization includes 18 Protestant denominations, the National and World Councils of Churches and such groups as British, West German and Nigerian broadcasting systems. Some 150 individuals also hold membership.

Other speakers at the assembly included J. R. Pierce,

executive director of the Bell Telephone Research - Communications sciences division, and known as the "father" of Telstar.

Pierce maintained that those of the 19th and early 20th centuries who saw in technological advance the threat of man being over-whelmed by machines and forced into a "crowded, hivelike existence" were "gloomy prophets."

Instead, the scientist said, spreading suburbia and a highly mobile population have become characteristic of the "non-stagnant" nature of our society.

"This is no accident," he said. "Increasingly improved communications, together with improved transportation, are creating technologically integrated but physically decentralized society."

He predicted dramatic new communications advances which will allow man to move more freely while remaining in contact with his home and office.

The scientist also saw wider use of data communications systems which will link the human voice with computers for such uses as teaching, business conferences and even grocery shopping.

Another scientist, Charles de Carlo, director of automation research of International Business Machines, told the assembly that scientists should not make the final decisions about the morality of their work.

ANGLICAN BISHOPS HEAR REPORTS ON UNITY

★ Christian unity was the principal topic of a five-day Lambeth consultative conference presided over by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and attended by 19 archbishops and metropolitans of the Anglican communion.

Dr. Ramsey, who had made

extensive tours of the holy places in Israel and Jordan, discussed plans for unification of Protestant Churches in England, Canada, the United States and some Asian and African countries.

He said plans for unions of Anglicans, Presbyterians and Methodists in Ceylon were "very far advanced," while plans in the United States involving Anglicans and Protestant and Evangelical Churches were still in "elementary stages."

At a news conference, Dr. Ramsey said the Eastern Orthodox have agreed to the establishment of a "pan-Orthodox, pan-Anglican theological commission" to discuss doctrinal questions.

In England, meanwhile, he said, the plan for unity between Anglicans and Methodists involved two stages — first, full communion, and then the formation of a united church.

At another press conference following the close of the conference, Dr. Ramsey said he trusted that the day of inter-church unity will come, "but there are still obstacles." He did not elaborate on the obstacles.

He said his recent audience with Pope Paul had been "most useful," but he added that relations between the Roman and the Anglican Churches for the time being could be nothing more than cooperation and friendship.

Asked by an Arab newsman why he had lighted six candles on Mount Zion in Israel for the six million Jewish victims of Nazism, but hadn't done so for "victims of Jewish aggression" — meaning the Arab refugees in Palestine—Dr. Ramsey said he had lighted the candles on

Mount Zion "on request for a solemn religious occasion."

Declaring that he would light candles anywhere for innocent victims if so requested, he expressed the "strongest concern and sympathy" for all refugees, Arab and others, and said he prayed for the earliest solution of their problems.

Dr. Ramsey said that while he had no time to visit refugee camps, he had asked his wife to do so. He said she told him of the need for improving the situation of refugees.

The Anglican Primate said he was happy over the good relations existing in the Holy Land between the Christian and Moslem communities, particularly in the field of education.

Dr. Ramsey met Jordan Premier Wasfi el-Tal and other Jordanian leaders at a reception tendered him by Anglican Bishop Najib Atallah Cuba'in of Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

MAKING CALLS ON VIETNAM

★ It is called "Wednesdays in Washington" and the idea is to get church people to call on congressmen and give them opinions about Vietnam. Sponsored by seven denominations and several national church bodies, participants are encouraged whenever possible to bring with them statements that reflect the position of church councils, associations of ministers or other groups. An appointment with a congressman or senator is also advised to make sure he is there when you call.

Briefings on Vietnam are held every Tuesday evening at NCC headquarters and a prayer service is held at 8:30 Wednesday morning at Methodist headquarters which is across the street from the Capitol.

SO. PRESBYTERIANS JOIN CONSULTATION

★ Southern Presbyterians at the assembly just held at Montreal, N. C. voted full participation in the consultation on unity, bringing the number of churches in the talks to eight. Representatives of all of them are meeting in Dallas, Texas, and at the opening session on May 3 it was again clear that how much authority bishops would have remains one of the sticky issues. Some, notably Episcopalians, want bishops to appoint or recommend ministers for local congregations, and consequently to protect them from removal by the congregations. But no satisfactory solution to the problem of appointments has been found, prompting Eugene Blake, vice-chairman, to say, "This will be a tough one to settle."

The "God-is-dead" theology—explained in full, for the first time, by the leader of the new radical theologians **THE GOSPEL OF CHRISTIAN ATHEISM** By THOMAS J. J. ALTIZER

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EDITORIAL

We Need Wisdom To Match Power

CURRENT American foreign policy will fill some of the most sordid pages in history. But if that history comes to be written — and there are people around to read it — it will not be due to the obtuseness of a Johnson, or the obstinacy of a Rusk, or the truculence of a McNamara. It may come rather from statesmanship arising in quarters where it may be least expected. An example is the address, at a New York meeting of the American Newspaper Publisher Association, of Senator Fulbright of Arkansas, chairman of the senate's foreign affairs committee, dealing with the effects of the American invasion of Southeast Asia. It deserves attention. The concluding paragraphs follow:

There is a kind of Gresham's law of public policy: fear drives out hope, security precedes welfare and it is only to the extent that a country is successful in the prevention of bad things that it is set free to concentrate on those pursuits which bring happiness into the lives of its people.

The turning away from these pursuits after so brief an interlude is the first and at present more conspicuous fallout effect of the war on American life.

The second, and potentially more damaging, is the stirring up of a war fever in the minds of our people and leaders; it is only just now getting under way, but, as the war goes on, as the casualty lists grow longer and affect more and more American homes, the fever will rise and the patience of the American people will give way to mounting demands for an expanded war, for a lightning blow that will get it over with at a stroke.

The first demand might be a blockade of Haiphong; then, if that doesn't work, a bombing raid on Hanoi; and if that doesn't work, a

strike against China; and then we will have a global war.

There has already been a marked change in the kinds of things we think about and talk about in America. A few years ago — even some months ago — we were talking of detente and "building bridges," of five-year plans in India and Pakistan, of agricultural cooperatives in the Dominican Republic and land and tax reform all over Latin America.

Today these subjects have an antique ring. Instead of emphasizing plans for social change, the policy planners and political scientists are conjuring up "scenarios" of escalation and nuclear confrontation and "models" of insurgency and counterinsurgency; in Latin America they seem more interested in testing the "images" of armies than in the progress of social reform.

There can be no doubt that the major cause of this change in our national vocabulary is the war. Just about every day millions of Americans see stories and pictures of battle on the front pages of their newspapers and on their television screens. All this war news must have its effects: the diversion of attention from domestic pursuits, the gradual dehumanizing of the enemy, rising levels of tension, anger, war-weariness and bellicosity.

America is showing some signs of that fatal presumption, that overextension of power and mission, which brought ruin to ancient Athens, to Napoleonic France and to Nazi Germany. The process has hardly begun, but the war which we are now fighting can only accelerate it.

If the war goes on and expands, if that fatal process continues to accelerate until America becomes what it is not now and never has been, a seeker after unlimited power and empire, then Vietnam will have had a mighty and tragic fallout indeed.

I do not believe that will happen. I am very apprehensive but I still remain hopeful, and even confident, that America, with its humane and democratic traditions, will find the wisdom to match its power.

NEW STIRRINGS IN THE CHURCH

By William S. Hill

Rector of St. Paul's, Lansing, Michigan

A DISCUSSION OF THE NEW THEOLOGY AND THE NEW MORALITY AND THE REFORMATION NOW TAKING PLACE

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH of today is in a state of vigorous ferment. The church's traditional theology, morality, liturgy, and organization are being criticized and challenged — not by outsiders or foes of organized religion, but by the church's own members and leaders. Many look upon this ferment as a prelude to a new and much-needed reformation, and they believe this reformation will grant to the church a vitality and a relevance it has for a long time lacked.

This article is intended to be a summary, or a survey, of the ferment characteristic of the contemporary church; it is an attempt to present an over all view of what is occurring in Christianity today; and this summary can itself be summarized by a phrase from the Epistle to the Philippians: "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

An Urban Society

THE MAJOR FACTOR which is forcing the church to forget those things which are behind and to reach forth unto those things which are before is, of course, the changing character of our society. We are swiftly changing from a rural to an urban culture, and the great impetus behind this change is technology, or applied science.

Phillips Brooks, a city-dweller born and bred, used to delight in pointing out that the Bible begins in a garden and ends in a city; and to him this indicated the process by which man, under God, was making the transition from a way of life which is predominantly rural to one that is preponderantly urban. Phillips Brooks died in 1893, and in his day the United States could be likened more to a garden than to a city, for then the nation was 70 percent rural and most people lived on farms. Today only 9 percent of the total population live on farms;

the nation itself is 70 percent urban. And what these cold statistics indicate is a sweeping change in our whole way of life.

There are three elements in our urban way of life which have had a profound effect upon religion; they are what may be called the city-dweller's mobility, plurality, and anonymity.

Choices Offered

THE MOBILITY of the city-dweller — the average American family moves once every five years, and the average wage-earner does his work at a considerable distance from his home — has had a profound effect upon religion. Rare is the person today who is buried from the same church in which he was baptized; the chances are that in his moving about he has been a member of several churches in his lifetime. Moreover, rare is the person today who feels under compulsion to attend a church in his neighborhood; thanks to the automobile he can go to a church, wherever it may be located, whose theological outlook, moral standards, and form of worship are most congenial to his way of thinking. As a consequence, the persons with a life-long loyalty to a particular neighborhood church has virtually ceased to exist.

The plurality, or pluralism, of city-life has also had a profound effect upon religion. It is perhaps safe to say that most Americans who are at present in their fifties grew up in neighborhoods which were generally homogeneous, with neighbors for the most part of the same race, the same economic level, the same religion — even the same politics. But all this has changed. A modern city-dweller in the course of a single day can have a greater variety of social contacts than was possible for his village-dwelling grandfather in a life-time. As a consequence of living in a pluralistic society, any individual has a live option to choose a religion different from the one in which he was brought up or, for that matter, to turn away from religion altogether. Going to school with,

meeting with, working with, and enjoying recreation with people of all faiths, and of no faith, he develops an appreciation of other faiths even as he is led to question his own.

The anonymity of the city-dweller — the fact that he does not know his neighbors, nor they him, and the fact that many of his contacts, such as with a store-clerk or elevator operator are impersonal — has had its own effect upon religion. In a small village where everybody makes your business their business, you may not worry much about what God knows about you, but you are certainly concerned with what your neighbors know about you! In contrast to this, in an urban culture, very few people know what you do or think, and of those who know, practically none care. So morally and spiritually you are on your own.

The present day ferment in religion, then, has its roots in the deep and far-reaching changes in our social structure. In terms of the Bible, we are moving from the garden of Genesis to the city of Revelation.

The New Theology

THE FERMENT in religion which has attracted the most attention goes by the name of the new theology; and the new theology is basically a summons to be "forgetting those things which are behind" — that is, to put away the ideas of God which belong to the pre-scientific, the pre-industrial, and the pre-urban age, and to be "reaching forth to those things which are before" — that is, to envision God as he reveals himself to modern man.

The spokesmen of the new theology are calling us to put away religious imagery which is misleading, and even meaningless to modern man. When they say that God is dead, they mean that certain ways of thinking about God and certain ways of describing God are as dead as the proverbial doornail.

As an example of this, consider the well-known phrase from the 23rd psalm: "The Lord is my shepherd." To someone brought up on a farm, or to someone with a first hand knowledge of rural life, this phrase is deeply meaningful, for it suggests a kindly, intelligent, devoted shepherd who makes sure the sheep are provided for and who defends them from danger. He leads them beside the still waters, he makes them to lie down in green pastures, and he uses his staff to drive away the wolf.

From all this a person with an agricultural background draws a picture of God as caring for his people with tenderness and as shielding them against all possible harm.

But to a child brought up in a city slum—a child who has never seen green pastures or still waters, let alone a flock of sheep—the concept of "the Lord is my shepherd" has very little meaning. If God is to live for that youngster, a new image by which to conceive of God must be found.

Existentialism

AND THEN the spokesmen for the new theology are calling us to be existential in our theological thinking; they are bidding us to think of God existentially.

The words, "existential" and "existentialism" are twenty-five dollar words, but they are worth the money because they are a shorthand way of describing an important and influential school of thought. As the word itself suggests, existentialism is concerned with a thing's existence rather than with its essence; its focus is on living actuality rather than upon far-off abstraction.

The human female, as an illustration, can be thought of in terms of her essence as a woman or of her existence as a woman. The essence of a woman might be said to consist of a certain set of physical characteristics, a certain pattern of emotional response, and a certain intellectual structure, including what we call a "woman's intuition." A human female in a protracted coma in a hospital, recognizing no one and functioning only because of medical aids is, in essence, still a woman.

In contrast, the existence of a woman consists of what she does — as she is actively involved in life, as she functions as a wife and mother who makes deliberate moral choices. The human female in the coma in a hospital is in essence a woman, but she does not exist as a woman; from the strictly existential point of view, therefore, she is not a woman.

Now the new theology is, generally, existential in outlook. This means that the new theology has turned its attention from the being of God to the action of God, or, to use a current phrase, from the essence of God to the existence of God. Modern theology is concerned not with what God is like, in the abstract, but with what God is doing in concrete situations, and

how he functions as the ground of our being. In terms of the Bible, the new theology is not preoccupied with the God who is "high and lifted up," but rather with the God "in whom we live and move and have our being."

The New Morality

THE FERMENT in religion has, as one would expect, expressed itself in a certain moral outlook; and this new morality, as it is called, is fundamentally a summons to make love the dominating force in all ethical decisions. Indeed, the favorite text of the spokesmen for the new morality is the passage in Romans in which St. Paul affirms that "love is the fulfilling of the law."

Of course it has always been an axiom of Christian morality that every law must subserve the law of love; even the Ten Commandments were to be broken on occasions when love could be served no other way. For example, if your children were starving and the only way you could get food for them was to steal it, your duty under such circumstances would be deliberately to break the commandment which says, "Thou shalt not steal." What the spokesmen for the new morality claim, however, is that the church has not lived up to its own principles but has instead put rules above relationships, principles ahead of persons, and laws ahead of love. Relationships, they say, are more important than rules and persons than principles; in a phrase, love must always come first.

Situation Ethics

IF LOVE is to come first, so claim the exponents of the new morality, then morality itself must be what they call situational.

Situationalism is another twenty-five dollar word that is worth the money because it, too, is a form of shorthand describing a whole school of thought. Situationalism simply refers to the fact that circumstances alter cases and that your moral behavior must be suited to the specific situation. You may believe, in principle, that children should be considerate and generous; but what do you do when your two small children are crying because they both want to play with the same toy? You may believe, in principle, that children should be punished when they do wrong, but what do you do when you have a child who will stop

at nothing to defy you if you give him a spanking?

You may believe, in principle, in life-long monogamy and in children being lovingly raised by their parents; but what do you do when you learn your daughter is going to have a child out of wedlock? What you do in each case is to do what Jesus did in the case of the woman taken in adultery; you put persons ahead of principles, relationships ahead of rules, love ahead of law. You adapt a situational morality.

Now the only ethic appropriate to a swiftly-changing world, so affirm the spokesmen of the new morality, is an ethic which deliberately and determinedly seeks to respond to the claims of love in each unfolding situation. In terms of the Bible, the so-called new morality simply echoes the ancient command: "owe no man anything but to love one another."

Christ Centered

THE APOSTLE PAUL concluded his remark about "forgetting those things that are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before" by saying, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

When viewed in its best light, the new theology and the new morality are attempting to do this very thing: they are seeking to press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The new theology and the new morality are definitely Christological—that is, Christ centered. Spokesmen for the new theology and the new morality are united in affirming that in Christ—in "the man for others"—we see more clearly than in anything else the meaning of life, the purpose of life, and the potential that is in life.

To be sure, these spokesmen affirm that Christ must be "demythologized" and "contextualized"—words which mean that Christ's life and teaching must be cleansed of myth and placed in a complete context, so that modern man may see Christ clearly and see him whole—but they nevertheless regard Christ as fulfillment of the desire of all the nations.

Naturally, in a time of reformation—such as this definitely is—there are going to be not only differences of opinion, but tensions and strains. We can, however, take heart, for we have nothing to fear and everything to hope for in any stirring and ferment which make for

a deeper and more complete understanding of Christ.

We can be thankful that our age is challenging us to look more perceptively and more realistically at both God and man, at both divinity and humanity; and we can be sure that

these stirrings are making it possible for us to keep growing and developing . . .

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." — Ephesians 4:13

THOUGHTS ON THE INCARNATION

By Oscar F. Green

Rector Emeritus, All Saints', Palo Alto, California

JESUS CAME NOT TO DIE BUT TO REVEAL THE MORAL WILL AND LOVE OF HIS FATHER

ALL CHRISTIANS hold two basic convictions — first, that God is our father; second, that Jesus is our lord and saviour. Therefore the problem arises of relating Jesus to God. The orthodox answer to this question is, that Jesus is the enfleshment, the embodiment, the incarnation of God.

Sophisticated persons do not like this answer. They think it absurd, pure superstition. No person, they say, can be both God and man. It must be admitted that all sorts of superstitions have clustered around this idea. But we must not dismiss it too casually. Sophisticated people, even as we ourselves, have been wrong about a great many things. Certainly science every day is forcing us to give up ideas we had always thought reasonable. If there is a God, there is surely nothing inherently unreasonable in his revealing himself in Jesus Christ. What is more there may be a way of approaching the problem that need not offend our intellects.

What most lay persons, of course, do is not to worry about the question at all. If they are Christians, they go on and worship God and honor Christ, and let the preachers take care of the theology. This system works fairly well until we are asked to defend our faith, or are in danger of losing it because of silly criticisms. Then we need to be able to talk intelligently about what we believe. Furthermore the basic law of our faith commands us to worship God with all our mind, as well as with all our heart,

soul, and strength. So a little thought about the incarnation may not be out of place.

Two Extremes

THEORIES about the incarnation tend to shift between two extremes. On the one side are those who take the idea that Jesus was in a special sense the son of God lightly. Many of these would say that all of us are sons of God, so, of course, Jesus was too. He was a wise and good man, but little different from the rest of us. A brash woman once said that she thought that her husband was as good as Jesus. He is commonly listed among the prophets. Renan thought him a kindly poet. Today it is quite the thing to speak of him as a religious genius. But others would not go so far, pointing out that he was not an original thinker, since he got all of his ideas from the Old Testament. Most of these persons when they call Jesus the Son of God are merely being polite, as Protestants are when they address the pope as holy father.

The difficulty with this attitude toward Jesus is that it flies into the face of the facts. Any way you look at him, Jesus was no ordinary man. Without any backing at all, he started as a carpenter in a small town in an unimportant province of the Roman empire. He remade the calendar, and produced a religious movement, which still gives no signs of being outmoded. He convinced pious Jews and Romans, many of them highly educated, that in some sense he was divine, and had risen from the dead.

This is no small feat. In fact, it is unique. Unless one utterly rejects the idea of God, it would seem more than probable that he is God's messenger.

The opposite extreme view of the incarnation is that Jesus was God masquerading as a man. Theologians call this the heresy of Docetism. The trouble with it is that the facts of Jesus' life seem to indicate that it is just as absurd as the view that Jesus was just an ordinary man. Jesus never claimed to be God; and didn't act like a God. Why would God for thirty years carry on this kind of deception. The value and the popularity of this theory rest on the fact that it is an easy way to think of the divinity of Christ. A five-year old child can understand it. Then it has this added advantage: if we believe that Jesus was wholly divine, we do not have to worry about following him. Sinful human beings like us cannot be expected to behave like God. We'll just believe in him and let him take care of us.

Dual Nature

THE CHURCH finally and officially settled upon the view that Jesus had a dual nature. He was at one and the same time perfect God and perfect man. It also insisted that he was not a hybrid, or a cross-breed. Rather in his person were united these two distinct elements, which were not to be confused. The councils did not attempt to explain how this combination worked. They just said that it was so, and let it go at that.

Naturally thinking beings have not been content to leave it at that, and since the Council of Chalcedon, when the formula was adopted, theologians and everybody else who has thought about the matter, have tried to explain to themselves, if not to the world, just how it was that Jesus could function as both God and man. It is a very tricky problem to handle and the vast majority of Christians without knowing it have been either Docetists or Unitarians. Protestants tend to be Unitarians; Catholic churchmen Docetists. (I am thinking here of persons not well-grounded in theology.)

Most of the Christians we know in the old-line churches are shocked at the thought of Unitarianism, but are unaware of the contradictions inherent in the Docetic view, its basic contradiction being that it invalidates the manhood of Jesus. It makes nonsense of his youth

and childhood; of the hours he spent in prayer, of his seeming lack of knowledge, of his waste of time in the carpenter's shop, of his refusal of the title, "good master." Some are led to the absurdity of speaking of the Virgin Mary as the mother of God. The sin of blasphemy involves intention. Certainly devout Christians who use this terminology had no such intention; but the idea as such partakes of blasphemy. As does the belief that God died on the cross. It is only false gods who die. The creator of the universe can't die: he is eternal.

The Trinity

THE DOCTRINE of the Trinity is used to soften these anomalies. It is said that the whole of God is not in Jesus, but only the second person of the Trinity. This leads to an even greater contradiction, that the Trinity can be split up. The orthodox view is, I believe, that the persons of the Trinity represent internal distinctions in the Godhead, somewhat like will, affection, and cognition in the human personality. And even though it made sense to talk of dividing the Trinity, it would still seem that one person of the Trinity would be as immortal as the other two persons.

Thinking of God as one person (in our modern use of the word) and metaphysical entity and the man Jesus as another person and metaphysical entity, it does seem that we can only end in contradiction when we attempt to join them together in one human body. Furthermore Jesus does not appear to be two persons, but only one, and a highly integrated person at that. There is nothing schizophrenic about him, much less than there was about St. Paul for instance. In Jesus there is no suggestion of a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. The enemies that Jesus fought were external rather than internal. Jesus seemingly did not always know what he ought to do, but once having made up his mind, he had no particular trouble in doing it, even to dying on the cross.

Is there any way, do you suppose, that we can think of the incarnation that will lessen the tension of these contradictions? Perhaps.

It will help if we start with the humanity of Jesus, take it seriously and never surrender it. This would mean that Jesus was born a normal human child, in Bethlehem's stable. (This would seem to involve the giving up of any literal doctrine of the Virgin Birth; for it

makes of Jesus a cross-breed, half man and half God. The true doctrine of the incarnation insists that Jesus was whole man and whole God.) From a helpless infant Jesus grew in stature and wisdom and in favor with God and man. He was subject to error and tempted in all things like as we are. He had to study and pray and make decisions like anyone else. He gained knowledge as other men, by asking questions, by trial and error, by the use of his reason. He lived by faith, and it would appear, died disillusioned.

How Different?

WHEREIN then does Jesus differ from other men? In that in a very special sense, he was God's man. It could be that from the beginning God proposed to reveal himself to his earthly children in an especially selected human being. In the fulness of time Jesus was born and he was the child of destiny and became the man of destiny. Thus it is that the words of Pilate to the mob in his courtyard clamoring for the blood of Jesus take on a deeper meaning than Pilate dreamed of. Probably in ridicule, he pointed at Jesus and said, "Ecce homo" (Behold the man), scoffing at the idea that his prisoner, a ridiculous Jewish peasant, called himself a king. But indeed Jesus was the man above all other men, "the man of God's own choosing."

However, God's dealing with his only-begotten son, was no different from his dealing with the rest of us. It was largely indirect, by putting ideas in our minds. So God put it into the mind of Jesus as a child that he was God's son and servant, and might become his special messenger. In no sense did he dominate the will and the decisions of this chosen one. Jesus could have rejected his destiny. If he had, God would have had to raise up another. But Jesus did not reject his destiny; rather he welcomed it; and humbly, although half-consciously during his younger years, prepared himself to meet it. Finally came John the Baptist in the wilderness preaching the nearness of the kingdom of God. Jesus embraced this gospel, and accepted the baptism of John, wholly surrendering himself to God's plan.

It is impossible for anyone to speak dogmatically about what actually happened at the baptism. But clearly it was a crisis experience in Christ's life. It led to the temptation in the wilderness in which Jesus worked out the impli-

cations of his mission. It marks the beginning of his ministry, and was climaxed by the voice from heaven, which said, "This is my beloved son in whom I am well-pleased," which assurance filled Jesus with power.

Jesus was by nature, if you will metaphysically, the son of God. We are all made in the image of God and are his sons and daughters. It could be that at his baptism, Jesus became spiritually the son of God. He was as it were born again, into full fellowship with God. He set to one side the legitimate but secondary purposes of his life and identified with God and his purposes. Thereupon, because of the purity of his life, because of his character, his understanding of God's will, and his love for God and people, God was able to identify himself with Jesus. The fourth gospel is correct when it makes Jesus say, "The Father and I are one." He had in very truth become the incarnation of the will, the purpose, and the love of the Lord God Omnipotent. The spirit of God had taken flesh and dwelt among us. The words of Jesus had become the words of eternal life. He was the inaugurator of the new social order, the kingdom of God, the church of the living God, or as St. Paul calls it, the body of Christ.

God With Him

BUT in becoming fully the Incarnation of God, Jesus did not cease to be a man. As a man he carried on his ministry: he taught and preached and healed: at last was rejected and crucified. The major temptation of his ministry was to break the hypostatic union that existed between God and himself. The temptation reached its culmination in the garden of Gethsemane and on the cross. But God was with him and his faith did not break. "Not my will, but thine be done." And in dying, even though everything seemed to be finished, he could say, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." To make sure that the world would not mistake the fact that in the carpenter of Nazareth he had revealed himself, God raised him from the dead.

Though we reject the idea that God died on the cross, we may be sure that God suffered while his son died, suffered because his chosen son suffered; suffered because if that son was to fulfil his mission he must die, and he could not intervene; suffered because his other children were so blind and stupid and cruel as to kill the Prince of Glory.

Unfortunately both the Jewish and pagan worlds of the first century were obsessed with

the ideas of animal sacrifice and the need for placating God with blood. So the early followers of Jesus became to elaborate a doctrine of the atonement, called Jesus the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world;" and talked of being "washed in the blood of the lamb;" and made of the holy communion a magical rite. But God is not interested in the blood of bulls and goats, or even in the blood of his own son, except in so far as that blood is a symbol of Christian life and devotion to him. Coming into a world dominated by hate and pride and cruelty, it seems inevitable that God's son should die. But his death was but the crowning expression of his loyalty and faith in God. He came not to die, but to reveal the moral will and love of his Father.

Divine and Human

SOME will feel that this view of the incarnation does not have the dramatic impact of some other views. It can be dismissed as adoptionism, the belief that Jesus was just a man that God took into the Godhead. I would suggest that any doctrine of incarnation reduces to some form of adoptionism. The idea of incarnation is the union of the divine and the human. Since the initiative is on God's side, at some point the union must take place, at which point God may be said to adopt a human being. The question is when does the "adoption" take place. The orthodox view would be that it took place at Christ's conception. There is nothing wrong with this view. The spirit of God was always with Jesus. Giving up the biological implications of the word, we may properly say that Jesus was "conceived" by God. However the incarnation could not be fully realized until Jesus was mature and able to enter into it. This occurred probably as we have indicated at his baptism.

While this view of the incarnation may not be so colorful as some others, it in no sense lessens the urgent nature of the gospel which remains a life and death matter. Our salvation does not come by being stirred by the drama of a dying God, by the magic of sacraments, by pleading the blood of Christ, by embracing some plan of salvation, but by faith in God and by entering and serving the kingdom of which Christ is the head. Perhaps this view loses something in emotional content. We can only hope that that loss is made up for by intelligibility.

God has created us his sons and given us freedom to share in his life and glory. The decision is up to us. We can either live out in misery and frustration our few years here, trying to find a home on this earth, when our true home is with God, and at last be blotted out. Or we can accept the way of Christ which blesses us, those we love, and the world, and at last go to be with God who has prepared for those who love him such good things as pass man's understanding.

Brains Plus Goodwill Needed

By John W. Suter

Priest of Concord, N. H.

IF ENOUGH people are wretched enough long enough—that is, if they are hungry or exploited or enslaved—they will finally resort to violence. There comes a point where the pressure is too great to be subdued. This is a law of psychological and sociological forces, and has nothing whatever to do with right or wrong. The reaction to hunger, both physical and spiritual hunger, is slow but automatic. Man would cease to be man if he did not feel within himself the necessity of security and dignity. His true nature asserts itself and demands food and decency and respect. Therefore the only effective approach to the solution of the world's ills lies along the path of human betterment and fair play, not within a given state, but on a worldwide basis.

There must be social engineers constantly at work who survey humanity as such, taking in the whole earth. Hemispheres, continents, islands, all must come within a single gigantic plan to feed, clothe, and liberate men — setting them on their feet and assuring them of a fair chance to live decent and respected and unexploited lives. In the interest of this highest good, every nation, every race, every social stratum, must be willing, or, if not willing must be made, to forego a degree of sovereignty and an amount of wealth. No nation or groups of nations, no fractional part of earth's people, should be the sole judge of the rightness of its own acts. To be sole judge of one's own rightness, whether as an individual or as a nation or as a hemisphere, is to condone and engage in anarchy.

For the building-up of the machinery of earth-wide security and harmony, two things are needed: brains, and goodwill. The former must be nurtured and put to use by governmental and educational agencies; it is the Church's special function to kindle and feed the fires of the latter. Brains without goodwill would give us an ant-hill world — efficient but

aimless, with personality reduced to nothing, each person being a cog in the machine. Goodwill without brains would give us a slow decay in the direction of idiocy.

We need both, and need them desperately. Both come from God, who made the whole man, his brain as well as his emotional life. To neglect either is to sin against the Holy Spirit.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HEADED BY STRAIGHT

★ Michael Straight, Episcopalian, heads the U.S. section of Amnesty International which seeks the liberation of political and religious prisoners throughout the world.

The London-based organization was founded in 1961 by an attorney and now has 450 chapters in 21 countries. It pressures authorities for the release of "prisoners of conscience" and claims to have secured the release of 800.

Straight, former editor of the New Republic, is the son of the late Willard and Dorothy Straight and brother of Beatrice Straight, presently starring in a Broadway play.

PARISH HOUSE WINS AN AWARD

★ The parish house of Christ Episcopal Church, Sausalito, Cal., was one of four church buildings to win awards at the conference on religious architecture. Entries came from all parts of the country.

LIBEL JUDGMENT IS UPHELD

★ Prof. Arnold Rose of the University of Minnesota, sued Gerda Koch, director of Christian Research, for referring to him as a "Communist or Communist sympathizer" in a publication. A jury assessed \$5,000 against Miss Koch for general damages of libel plus \$5,000

for malice. Christian Research was fined like amounts.

An appeal for a new trial was denied by Judge Donald Barbeau of Hennepin County, Minn. Although the right of expression extends to public issues and public leaders, the judge said, it does not mean that "the first and fourteenth amendments to the constitution have stripped private citizens of all means of redress for injuries inflicted upon them by careless or reckless liars."

ARCHBISHOP OF WALES THINKS DIFFERENT

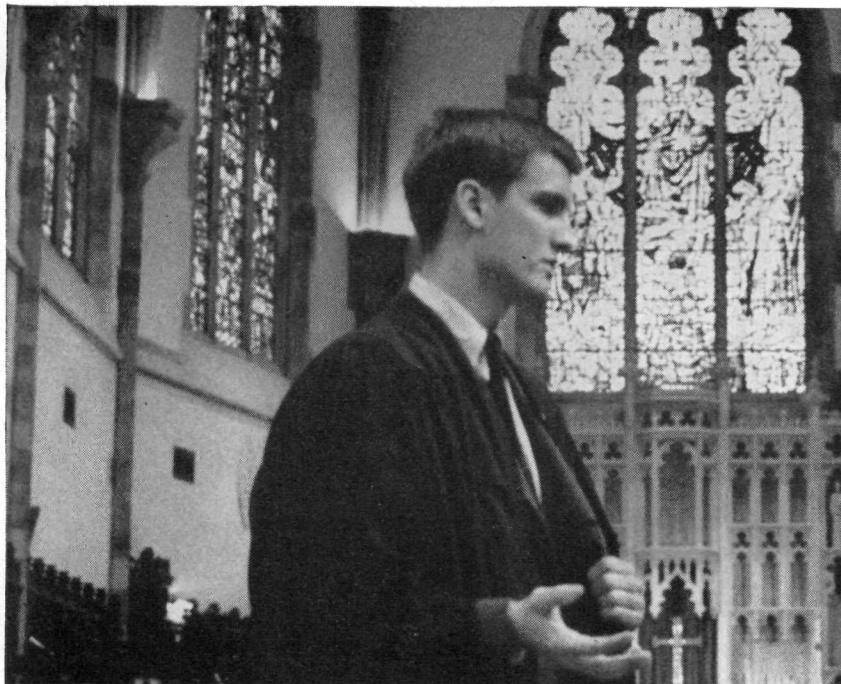
★ Archbishop Edwin Morris of Wales told the annual synod that the Vatican's attitude to Anglican orders is "an insuperable barrier" between the two churches. There are formidable dogmatic differences, he told the delegates, particularly as regard to papal infallibility and the Pope's claim to be the head of the whole church.

The synod, with a total membership of 500, approved a

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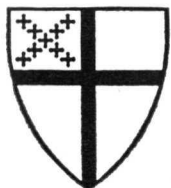
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motion from the bishops to revise the communion service and commend it to parishes for study. Several speakers said that the Welch Prayer Book must be changed to be more like other Anglican Churches.

CANADIAN SYNODS ADMIT WOMEN

★ Women were admitted to the New Westminster synod of the Anglican Church after a 60-year battle for equal rights. The vote was overwhelming, with only four clergymen and 12 laymen of the 300 delegates voting against the resolution.

In Montreal, Bishop Kenneth Maguire welcomed 20 women delegates to the synod, the first time in the 107-year history of the diocese that women have been fully-accredited delegates.

WHEN THERE IS NO RELEASE

★ The world knows that Alexei Gromyko and Pope Paul had a long private talk. Neither Vatican nor USSR sources had anything to say about what it was all about. So newsmen were forced to turn to "reliable sources", which means gossip. But everybody in Rome believes it was about how peace can be achieved, with the Soviet foreign minister saying at a press conference, "regardless of differences of ideology and religion."

HALFWAY HOUSE OPPOSED

★ Halfway House for men released from prison, planned by Volunteers of America in a funeral home they bought in Minneapolis, has been blocked by a petition signed by 1,500 who met in a church in the neighborhood. They were for

the center, they said, but not here.

"We must be careful about defiling our little ones," said one speaker, expressing the general view of the objectors.

DONALD BOLLES PLUGS PARTNERSHIP PLAN

★ Donald C. Bolles is to take to the road plugging the partnership plan. The idea is to abolish the quota system in favor of a 50-50 split between dioceses and the national church. The last General Convention recommended that the plan be studied with possible adoption at the 1967 G. C.

Bolles, a layman, is now promotion director of the Episcopalian.

The Rev. Richard Bolles, a son, has just been made canon pastor of Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, going from the rectorship of St. John's, Passaic, N. J.

PLATTENBURG TAKES NEW JOB

★ The Rev. Stanley Plattenburg is now administrator of field services of the department of education of the national church. He was formerly director of education for the diocese of Southern Ohio.

BISHOP DEWITT HONORED

★ Bishop DeWitt of Penn. has received an award for leadership in the area of civil rights. He has been a leader for integrated houses, schools and colleges.

NEW KIND OF TRAINING IN ENGLAND

★ Theological College at Lichfield, England, has started a new course of training for ordination. Students are formed into groups, with each one spending one out of three years away to learn about industry, hospitals, schools, social services, parishes.

MAY 12, 1966

In the U.S., in one way or another, this is common practice at all Episcopal and most other seminaries.

FUNNY THING HAPPENED WHEN CHAPLAINS MET

★ Military chaplains at their annual convention, strongly endorsed the war in Vietnam. American policy, they said, "continues to defend freedom, resist aggression, deplores the wonton violation of a nation's sovereignty and honors our national commitments made in good faith in the name of three presidents."

SPEAKING OUT IS COSTLY

★ Talking about "our racial sins" from a pulpit in Lincolnton, N. C. has resulted in a drop in contributions. "I'm sorry about that," said Lutheran pastor J. S. Setzer, "but if a man is going to worship a

god of narrow racial love, then we don't need his idolatrous money in the offering plates of the God of universal love."

HOW TO SEE THE POPE

★ Gov. George Romney of Michigan, a Mommon, was in Rome to ask the committee on the Olympic Games to have them in Detroit in 1972. Wandering around the Vatican Palace, he was spotted by a U.S. priest and an audience with Pope Paul was arranged.

PRINCESS THEREFORE WILL ATTEND

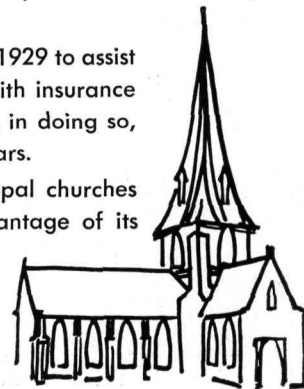
★ Working in their spare time, 300 men and 50 women built St. Luke's in Leicester, England. It took five years and its value is estimated at \$140,000. Bishop Ronald Williams will consecrate the church, with Princess Margaret, figuring it unique, attending.

What Does FIRE Insurance Cost You?

■ Most Episcopalians are familiar with The Church Insurance Company. Some, however, are not aware of its low cost complete fire and casualty insurance facilities.

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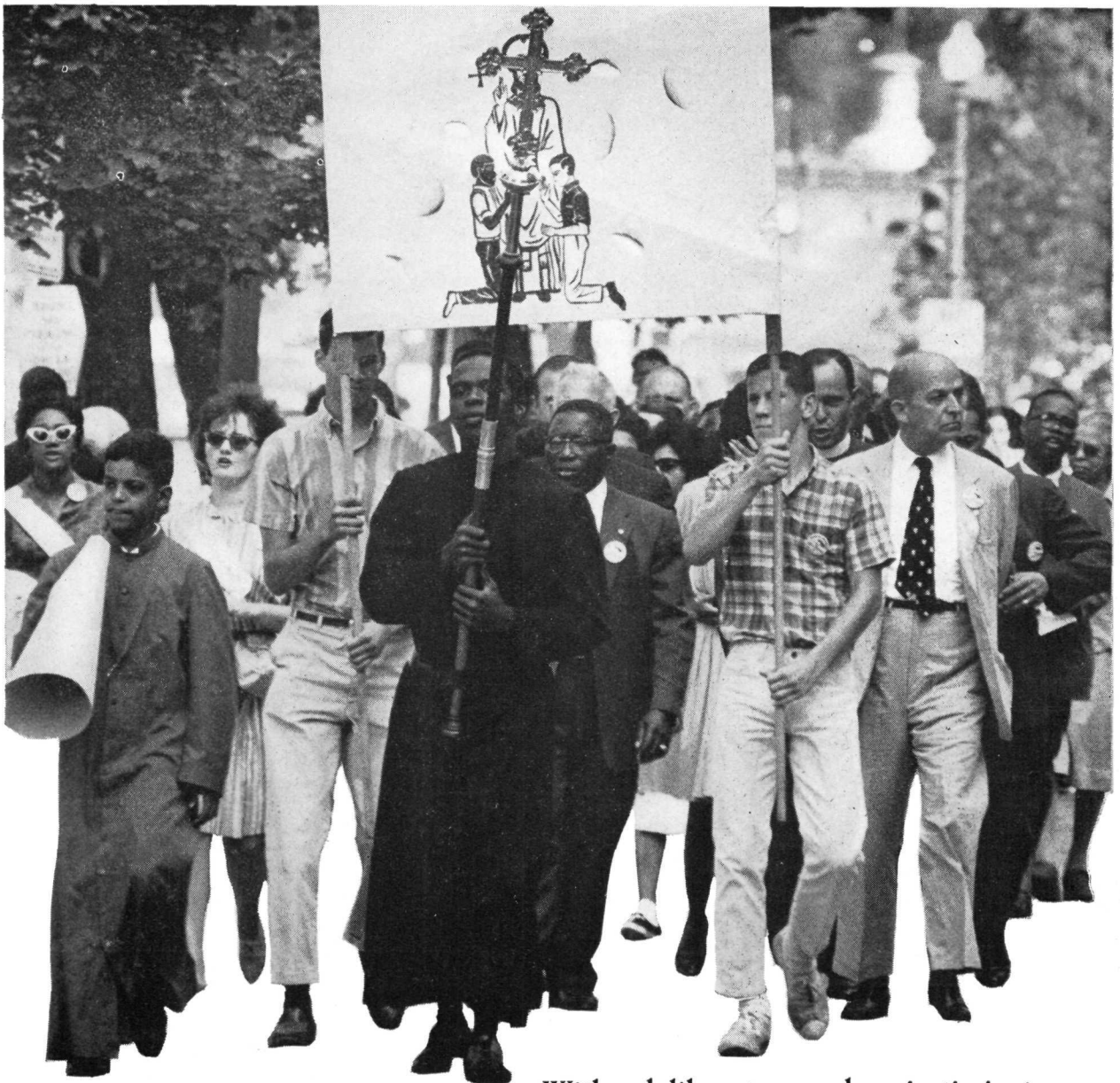
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FRANCIS THOMPSON

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- NEW BOOKS -

E. John Mohr
Book Editor

MAN'S QUEST FOR GOD, by Abraham Joshua Heschel. Scribner's. \$3.95

It was a stroke of ecumenical genius when Union Theological Seminary elected Rabbi Abraham Heschel to be Harry Emerson Fosdick visiting professor of homiletics for the current year. According to the terms of the professorship, Dr. Heschel lectured — to overflowing classrooms of students—during the first semester, and during the second he has been visiting the 16 related institutions where he was invited to lecture. This book is not his lectures, but an excellent example of his writing. Its subtitle is *Studies in Prayer and Symbolism*, and it deals in brief selections with such subjects as The Inner World; Spontaneity, the Goal; Continuity, the Way; Symbolism (in religion); and the Meaning of This Hour.

Rabbi Heschel is one of the great religious minds of our time, and every page of this book emits either flashes of insight or steady beams of religious truth. In a time when theology is falling all over itself with confusion, and "ecumenism" has called much of it in question, it is good to listen to a man whose faith is rooted in experience, in worship, in the mystical contact and communion with our Creator, and who stands up steadfastly for the Living God.

This is a book worth reading, not only in Lent or on Sundays, but at all times. It may well be that the Christian Church still has much to learn from the spiritual leaders of Judaism, as it did in the early centuries and again in the thirteenth century, and the sixteenth and the seventeenth.

— FREDERICK C. GRANT

Dr. Grant is Professor Emeritus of Biblical Theology, Union Theological Seminary, New York City.

GOD, SEX AND WAR. Adventures in Faith Series, by D. H. MacKinnon, H. E. Root, H. W. Montefiore, John Burnaby. Westminster. \$1.45

From the title one might infer that this book deals with the marriage of ordinary religious people but it actually consists of diverse lectures given at Cambridge University.

MacKinnon exposes the myth of the nuclear deterrent theory since the balance of terror is maintained

by weapons which men must be prepared to use if so-called necessity should arise.

Root discusses the *Ethical Problems of Sex* both in and out of marriage. Life-long marriage provides the right context for sexual expression, but is not a guarantee of the profunding of the relationship, for a man and woman can be faithful, sexually, in a mean and loveless fashion. But we do need the marriage ideal because of the hardness of our hearts, he believes, even though he is not committed to the view that all exercise of sex within marriage is right or that every exercise outside of marriage is irredeemably wrong. What he does is place sex within the context of the total person.

Montefiore deals with *Personal Relations Before Marriage* and discusses types of premarital sexual relations. He warns of the danger of venereal disease and unwanted pregnancy that come from promiscuity. Since relations outside of marriage involve factors that delimit the meaningfulness of sex, he would not like to see it wasted or perverted in such a fashion.

The concluding essay by Burnaby is concerned with *Conduct and Faith*. Jesus opposed moral authoritarianism and the ideal of conformity and emphasized love. His life was an expression of love, and, as the Bible says, we ought to love one another. Love involves forgiveness and forgiveness helps to heal the wounds in all relationships. This is Burnaby's primary thesis.

— LEE A. BELFORD

Dr. Belford is Chairman of the Department of Religious Education of New York University.

TRUTHS IN TENSION: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON RELIGION AND SCIENCE, by John Habgood. Holt, Rinehart and Winston. \$4.50

The author of the chapter on science and religion in *Soundings* has expanded his views into a lucid and lively discussion of their relations. Formerly a physiologist and then vice-principal of a theological college in Cambridge, Dr. Habgood brings to his task a thorough understanding of both poles of the subject.

Following an historical approach he traces the growth of science — and the theological responses — from its beginnings in Greece down through Copernicus, Newton, Darwin, and Freud to the questions raised by computers and contemporary physics and astronomy.

In the final chapters the author draws together his insights on the relations of science and religion as ways of knowledge and comple-

mentary aspects of human life and experience. One of the best chapters interprets scientific theories on the analogy of maps. His main thesis is neither that science and religion are in essential conflict nor that the struggles between them have been absurd errors, but that we must learn to live with a certain amount of fruitful tension between them.

Dr. Habgood's style is refreshingly simple and clear, yet often vivid and moving. This is certainly the best non-technical introduction to a perennial concern of Christians in the modern world.

— OWENS C. THOMAS

Dr. Thomas is Professor of Theology, Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, Mass.

SOUTHERNER, by Charles Longstreet Weltner. Lippincott. \$4.50

This book by a young man from Atlanta, Georgia, well-educated, emancipated, well-born, his father a college president, his grandfather a Confederate general, contains much factual information, and is worth reading. In 1962 the author was elected to congress at age 35 by opposing a familiar southern political device for defeating the majority vote, the county unit system. He deplores the habit in the south to cling to lost causes. He is impatient with Jim Crow mentality. To quote William Faulkner, "The past is not dead. It is not even past."

The writer is hopeful about the future of the south, though not minimizing the difficulties. He advocates an end to segregation and favors the proposition, "one man, one vote." His conclusion, "Let right be done."

Occasional exaggerations place strain on one's credulity. Washington is "the capital of the world." A number of nations that are "in pawn" to Washington would not accept that. The U.S.A. is "the most advanced nation the world has ever seen."

— JOHN H. JOHNSON

Dr. Johnson is Associate Rector, St. Martin's Parish, Manhattan, New York City.

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