



"Meditate
upon these things;
give thyself
wholly to them;
that thy profiting
may appear unto all"

I Timothy 4:15

Journal
of
Theology

Church of the Lutheran Confession

VOLUME 8

MARCH 1968

NUMBER 1

==ESSAYS AND ARTICLES==

THE RISING TIDE OF TRANSLATIONS

It is a rather amazing thing to note what has been called "a proliferation of translations" of the Bible, particularly the New Testament. Nor is this the result of those translations offered by authors of commentaries in connection with the respective texts they are discussing. The translations to which we are referring are usually offered either as revisions of earlier versions or as entirely new translations. So we have "The New Testament in Basic English," or an "American Translation," or "In the Language of Today," or as "Today's English Version," etc. Nothing has brought this out more clearly than the recent publication by Zondervan of "The New Testament from 26 Translations." While two of the Twenty-six translate only parts of the New Testament, this still means that we are confronted with a choice of at least two dozen versions. This is truly a remarkable situation, concerning which one may well ask, is this good or bad?

We are not concerned about the motives of publishers, which may be purely commercial, or of the participating scholars. We are concerned simply with the fact that this mass of work has been done, that this amazing amount of published material is available. Not all of it will be of the same quality. Not all the scholars will have the same attitude toward the Sacred Word, nor will they all agree in their understanding and interpretation of it nor in the resultant doctrine. But it is the Sacred Word, and therefore we are interested. Nor are these modern translations to be rejected simply because they are modern. The early translators worked with primitive tools. Over successive generations the dictionaries have become more informative, the grammars more specific, and a far more comprehensive knowledge of Greek as it was spoken and written in apostolic times has been attained. These are the advantages of those who prepared the younger versions.

Against these must be measured the assets of the older, particularly the Authorized (King James) Version. The mere fact of its amazing vitality is a powerful testimonial to its worth. Not only has it nourished the faith of countless believers for well over three centuries. Particularly significant is the way in which this version has won acceptance among Lutherans who originally had worshipped in another tongue, yet had come to love and cherish this old version very deeply, in a way that younger people may find hard to understand. Yet this is to be weighed most carefully. Let there be no callous indifference to these sentiments of an older generation. But let there also be no tyranny which ignores the needs of the younger. They are our children, our future. We dare not close our eyes to the fact that for them the difficulties connected with the use of language as archaic as that of the Authorized Version will be greater than those we, their elders, encountered in adapting ourselves to its diction in our day. There will be problems, and they will call for an exceptional measure of patience and mutual understanding. Patience because of the many new versions which claim our attention. Understanding for some important principles that are involved.

It would certainly be a mistake either to embrace these new versions in their multiplicity or to champion the cause of any single one of them without the most careful study and comparison of which we are capable. The first method would certainly create serious confusion, even though the choice of versions might be limited to just a few of the best. The value of what we preach and teach from Scripture lies not only in the immediate comfort or enlightenment our hearers gain from it, but particularly also in what is retained, stored up in one's memory for constant strengthening and for future use, perhaps even in the hour of death. It is therefore simply a matter of common sense that in what we teach our children, particularly by way of memory work, there be a consistent use of one single version, judiciously chosen and carefully adhered to. The purpose of this article is not to determine what version that should be, but rather to warn against an arbitrary and capricious switching to and fro. For such an ill-considered

procedure would inevitably create hopeless confusion in the mind of a child and interfere seriously with the primary importance of laying a sound foundation. Once this has been done thoroughly, the process of clarifying a difficult passage by comparing it with some other version can begin. This can be done to good advantage during the advanced school years, in Bible classes and in the sermon, always with the proviso that the alternate version has been chosen with intelligent care, and the purpose is not to add variants or even contradictory material which would confuse the pupil as to what he has already learned. All this will call for much study by teachers and preachers, much comparing of different versions and, above all, much study of the original text. And that is the purpose of this article: to point out the opportunity as well as the incentive furnished by this mass of material. What follows in these pages is meant as suggestion only, in the hope that some of the personal observations made there may stimulate others.

The task is by no means hopeless, though Zondervan's collection is hardly encouraging. The basic plan is fair enough: to take one version for the sake of continuity (the A. V.), and then to follow each verse or fraction of a verse with the significant variant translations. But why should it take nine variants to bring out the meaning of the simple statement in Acts 2:27a (Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart). Yet here they are: "they were conscience-smitten -- it went straight to their hearts -- they were stung to the heart -- they were stabbed to the heart -- they were moved to the depths of their hearts -- their consciences were stung -- they were cut to the heart -- they were pierced to the heart -- they felt crushed". But even this list of 26 versions can be substantially reduced if we remember what we are looking for -- something that will fill our specific needs for our congregations. There Moffat eliminates himself by his way of rendering the words of Christ at the Last Supper: "This means my body, this means my blood." Williams (The N. T.: A Translation in the Language of the People) does not improve matters by sometimes saying "is, "

sometimes "means." And when Goodspeed in his American Translation persistently uses "make upright" for "justify," his espousal of the Unitarian concept of salvation by character is too clear to be missed.

But even this process of gradual elimination would take too long. There are simply too many points to be watched. A simpler method must be found. If one is offered here, it is with full awareness on our part that this may seem like an oversimplification of the problem. But let it be considered at least as a beginning, a flexible plan which will lend itself to being modified at the discretion of the individual reader. Let us begin with a few well known versions, perhaps as they are printed in parallel columns in the Christianity Today edition of the New Testament in Four Versions: the Authorized Version, the Revised Standard Version (RSV), Phillips, and the New English Bible (NEB). Beck should be added, and then either the New American Standard (1963) or the American Bible Society's "Today's English Version." The Four Versions Edition would give one the convenience of reading across from one column to the other, and the additional volumes should not prove too inconvenient for fluent work.

A good way to begin would be to scan the several prefaces to determine the announced goals of these various translators. These self-set goals seem to be quite uniform in one respect. They all indicate the intention of bringing out the true sense of the original Greek. Yet the few samples so far given (Moffat, Williams, Goodspeed) show how careful one must still be in accepting their final product. The differences become greater as these prefaces discuss the intended method of translation. First of all as to the language. RSV speaks of its revision as designed "to be in the direction of the simple, classic English style of the King James version." Phillips argues for freedom in translation and admits that he sometimes finds himself driven close to paraphrase rather than translation, all for the sake of bringing out the true meaning. It is said that his early parish experience was in London's East Side, among the poor who often were poor because of their limited education. This would explain his tendency to produce

a longer translation than a precisely literal rendering would involve. The NEB states that the Joint Committee... "decided at the outset that what was now needed was not another revision of the Authorized Version, but a genuinely new translation in which an attempt should be made consistently to use the idiom of contemporary English to convey the meaning of the Greek." Thus the RSV, because of its declared loyalty to "the simple, classic English style of the King James Version," plus Phillips and the NEB have their distinctively British flavor and dignity. The others (Beck, the Bible Society's TEV, and the New American Standard) aim at the American idiom, with Beck the most informal and colloquial. Whether this trend detracts too much from the reverence due to the Word of God, the Gospel of our salvation, is a matter on which opinions may well differ, provided only that those who do differ will respect the principle of brotherly love which should govern us at all times, particularly under these conditions and on these matters of taste.

With these premises established, with our objective clearly defined, and with a limited number of versions before us (not necessarily those listed so far, but with a flexible program allowing for changes at any point) the process of comparing them as to their respective merits should not seem too overwhelming. And it can become a fascinating study as we begin the process of making these comparisons, and making them systematically. One method has already been touched on briefly by our passing reference to Goodspeed, Williams and Moffat. To choose certain sensitive key passages of Scripture and then read them across the board through the several translations will be a revelation. Not only will we become familiar with the style of the translators, with their attitude toward Scripture, with their degree of reverence or lack of it. Above all we shall be able to note how well their versions lend themselves to the basic purpose of all Scripture, to make us "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (II Tim. 3:15) The variations of style and language are something one can bear with. Archaic terms can be explained. But deviations from the truth of the

Word, even though they may seem minor, have a way of finding lodgement, taking root and bearing fruit, which like all fruit is itself a seed that serves to spread the error. Let this be illustrated by just one example. When the King James translators rendered Gal. 3:24 with "the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ," it seemed to be a minor matter, particularly since they indicated by their use of italics that the three words, "to bring us," were not in the original Greek but are supplied by the translators simply for the sake of rounding out the sentence. Yet history shows how this seemingly innocuous insertion became the basis for attributing to the Law a positive function in conversion, in contrast to the purely negative terms that Scripture supplies so emphatically. In short, it led to the opinion that also the Law serves to some extent as a Means of Grace, a concept not merely reflecting the views of Calvinism but also infecting substantial areas of Lutheranism. The other versions we have been considering have corrected the error by saying "until," a translation well supported by the context of verses 19, 23, and 25. Only Beck leaves one somewhat in doubt: "Then the Law has been our guardian so that we would come to Christ and become righteous by faith."

With this as a sample of what we mean, we intend -- God willing -- in a future issue to bring a number of such comparative studies of key passages, hoping thus to show how the impact of these new translations may be met. Not everything they bring will be good. Nothing we find will be perfect. But many valuable observations will be made in the process. Our own understanding of the Word will grow, our depth of perception and judgment be refined. And so we shall be reaping the benefits of this rising tide.

E. Reim

JOHN 3:34.

Ὁν γὰρ ἀπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς
τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ θεοῦ λαλεῖ.
οὐ γὰρ ἐκ μέτρου δίδωσιν τὸ πνεῦμα.

In traditional Lutheran teaching the second half of this passage is frequently cited as referring to the unction of the Holy Spirit as promised to, and conferred upon, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus the Thorough Declaration of the Formula of Concord, although without citing the passage, clearly alludes to it as having been spoken of Christ (Art. VIII, 72, Trig. p. 1040). The "Short Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism," St. Louis 1943, lists John 3: 34 as a proof passage under the answer to the question: "Why is He called Christ?", in conjunction with Ps. 45:7 and Acts 10: 38 (The passage is not included, however, in the earlier edition of 1912). The annotated edition of the Exposition of Luther's Catechism by E. A. W. Koehler, 1926, briefly explains the words of the passage as confirmation of the message addressed to the Messiah in Ps. 45:7.

The "Gausewitz" catechism of the Wisconsin Synod, 1956 edition, does not include the text among its references. Whether the omission was to serve the interest of brevity or suggest doubt as to the relevancy of the passage is not known to this writer. But it is a matter of record that some exegetes have questioned the claim that the verse refers to Christ. R. C. H. Lenski, for example, manifests little patience with the traditional view. He insists that in vv. 33 and 34 John the Baptist refers to himself. Although from this position Lenski rejects the claim of some commentators that v. 34 presents a purely abstract generalization ("anybody whom God has sent"), he nevertheless comes to the firm conclusion that "'he whom God did commission' is the Baptist and not Jesus." Dr. Theodor Zahn in his commentary reaches the same decision, although by a somewhat more technical route.

These and others set aside the testimony of Luther (Luther's Works, 1957, Vol. 22, p. 488f), Luthardt (Commentary on John, 1886, p. 36), E. W. Hengstenberg (Commentary, 1867, Vol. I, p. 236f) and other men of similar stature, as well as the view of so modern a commentary as that of Dr. F. Davidson (1953, p. 872). The need for a study of this text is thus established; and to this end a few observations are here offered as an encouragement toward further investigation.

It soon becomes evident to the student of Scripture that the text presents certain difficulties of which the casual user of proof passages is not aware. The word ἀὐτῷ is not found after δίδωσιν, either in the accepted text or in any alternate manuscript reading, as the KJV indicates by italicizing "unto him." Thus RSV and NEB omit these words entirely in translation. Moreover, the ὁ θεός is missing from the second half of the verse in the Nestle text, as they are missing also in the Vatican and Sinaiticus MSS. and in the best Latin texts, although present in numerous other Uncials and in most Minuscles. But τὸ πνεῦμα is also missing in the Vaticanus and in the Syriac palimpsest, while so strongly attested otherwise that our Greek versions include the term.

A literal translation of v. 34, according to the accepted text, is as follows: "For (he) whom God sent speaks the sayings of God; for not out of (a) measure gives he the spirit."

This leaves us with a number of unanswered questions. Is τὸ πνεῦμα subject or object of δίδωσιν? If it is the object, shall we supply as subject the ὁ θεός of the first half of the verse, or is the subject of δίδωσιν perhaps the same person who was the object of ἀπέστειλεν, namely the ὄν? And finally, must we supply in our thought an indirect object for δίδωσιν, such as ἀὐτῷ?

We illustrate the questions with possible alternative translations:

1. "(He) whom God sent speaks the sayings of God; for the spirit gives not out of (a) measure."
2. "(He) whom God sent speaks the sayings of God;

- for he (God) does not give the spirit out of (a) measure."
3. "(He) whom God sent speaks the sayings of God; for he (the sent one) does not give the spirit out of (a) measure."
 4. "(He) whom God sent speaks the sayings of God; for he (God) gives not the spirit out of (a) measure (to him) (the sent one)."

Before we can properly arrive at a responsible exegetical decision regarding the above translations, each of which is grammatically possible, we must resolve the key question confronting us here. Who is the $\delta\nu$, the one whom God sent? This determination must be made from a study of context and with theological insight. If we go back to the second half of verse 31, we hear John the Baptist speaking of "the one coming out of heaven," who "is above all." That this is a reference to Jesus, the Christ, cannot be properly doubted. He is the subject of this grand, final testimony of the Forerunner, the messenger who came to prepare the way of the Lord. And to his own disciples John now says of Him: "What He saw and heard, that He testifies, and His testimony no one takes (accepts). The one having accepted his testimony certifies (as with a seal) that God is truthful." (vv. 32, 33).

It is generally assumed that the subject of v. 33 is John himself. The definite article with the aorist participle certainly makes any other conclusion most improbable. John is the one who, having accepted the witness brought by Christ, certifies God as true, reliable. When John now continues: "For he whom God sent speaks the sayings of God," some exegetes find themselves struggling with the context. Is John still the subject here, as he was in v. 33? Or is John back to his true topic, namely to Christ?

There is no grammatical ground whatever for insisting that John is still the subject in v. 34. Lenski stumbles over the $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$ and insists that this makes it impossible to relate what follows it to anyone but John, since "only

properly related statements can be joined by 'for'." Even though we accept this latter dictum, Lenski's assertion is untenable. Why does John, having received Christ's witness, certify that God is true? Because the One whom God sent speaks the sayings of God! Thus the γὰρ is fully justified.

To argue, moreover, that the Baptist, too, was commissioned, or sent, is specious. The aorist indeed suggests a timeless, punctiliar action, and the context places this action in the past; but why should that apply to John more than to Jesus? Equally unacceptable is Lenski's claim that, if Jesus were meant in v. 34, the present tense of δίδωσιν would have to be changed to the aorist, since the present is linear and would mean: "Continues to give ..." - something that would apply to John but not to Christ. Such dogmatism lacks the necessary support. We recommend a study of the aoristic, gnomic present tense. (See Robertson's Grammar, pp. 864-865; 866).

In the larger context of John's entire tribute to the Lord Jesus Christ the message of v. 34, so richly meaningful when understood of Jesus, seems strangely vague and pointless when its words are made to speak of John. But the Baptist had finished all that he wished to say about himself when he spoke the words of v. 33. This was the first, and the only, personal reference since v. 28. The rest belongs to Jesus who must increase while John decreases. Seen in this light, moreover, a proposal that v. 34 be regarded as a mere generalization applicable to anyone whom God ever sent or commissioned would make the verse seem even more inapt.

But it is particularly the second half of verse 34, the sentence with all the apparent difficulties of grammar and syntax, which may well urge upon the thoughtful, unprejudiced theologian the conclusion that Christ is its central figure. For apart from the spirit of John's message, which would allow no one save Christ to preempt the spotlight in this discourse, the thought immediately suggested by v. 34b is too familiar to overlook or ignore. Since there is no occasion for the kind of emphasis which such a construction would provide, the position of τὸ πνεῦμα in the

sentence does not allow the Spirit to be the subject. On the other hand, the $\delta \theta \epsilon \acute{o} \varsigma$, though not repeated here, becomes the subject of $\delta \epsilon \delta \omega \sigma \iota \nu$ by virtue of its nearest and most natural relation. It is as though John finds it unnecessary to quote Psalm 45:7 to make his point, and simply alludes to its message. After all, he would say, you all know what Scripture says: "God hath anointed Thee above Thy fellows!" Indeed, God did anoint Him, without regard to limiting measure. That this is true only of the Messiah, John need not add. That this distinguishes the Christ from all others whom God ever sent, we know.

E. Schaller

The JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY is published at Eau Claire, Wisconsin, by authorization of the Church of the Lutheran Confession.

Subscriptions: \$3.00 per year, \$5.50 for 2 years, payable in advance.

Issues are dated: March, May, July, October, December.

Editor: Prof. E. Schaller, 513 W. Grover Rd., Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 54701.

Editorial Staff: C. M. Gullerud, R. Gurgel, E. Reim.

Contributing Editors: M. Galstad, G. Radtke.

All correspondence, including subscriptions, renewals and changes of address, should be directed to the Editor.

PAIDEIA

SPIRITUAL READINESS

The assertion that "Johnny can't read" was not new to the past decade. It was a complaint familiar to previous generations as well as to the last one. Nor will the future be free from such allegations. There have been, there are, and there will be children who find it difficult to comprehend the written word. The reasons for this failure are many and varied. That some of these reasons lie in methods of teaching the art of reading is undeniable. The lack of potential within the child explains the failure in other instances. At times the cause lies not in teacher or child but can be traced to failures on the part of parents, failures in the sense that they have not provided the background and experiences so vital to a successful reading program. Parents play an important role in the reading readiness of the child.

Reading readiness (as well as readiness in many other areas of the child's life) is much spoken of in our day. Much of the readiness comes from the environment of the child from birth through age five or six. The importance of these years in the development of the child was known to other centuries and other cultures. It has, however, been rediscovered with a great deal of enthusiasm and emphasis in our day. Almost any recent book on psychology, education or methods will have a great deal to say on readiness and readiness programs for the infant and young child.

We would readily agree that preparations to meet the demands that life brings should not be delayed until the child begins its formal education at age five or six. Long before parents give Johnny into the hands of a teacher, a readiness program for life in its many aspects must be begun. Education should begin with the day of birth. A tremendous responsibility lies with father and mother in

those first five or six years of Johnny's life. In those years much can be done that will lead to the success, or much be neglected that will lead to failure or partial failure, of the child in many areas of his later life.

All of this emphasis on developing readiness, on parental concern and responsibility during the early years, should lead us to give some serious thought to readiness for children in another field, namely, readiness to live, to act and to speak as God's children.

We establish Christian day schools where our children are to be educated under the guidance of Christian teachers and among Christian students. Frequently the criticism is voiced that there is evidence of other than a Christian spirit among the children. A questioning eye is raised as to the value of the school. A doubt about the ability of the teacher or teachers may be expressed. True it is that there may be many reasons for a non-Christian act or actions within the school. Wherever flesh and blood exist there will be found the Old Adam. In pupil and teacher alike the sinful flesh rears its ugly head. Daily use of the Gospel is required for strengthening, for guidance, for renewal. But when we start looking for causes of a lack of Christian spirit in our Christian day school children, could it perhaps be that parents have not always made wise use of the infant years of their child in developing a spiritual readiness?

If bringing the child into daily contact with good speech patterns, with a widening circle of things and people, with carefully selected music and the like is so essential for preparing him for a successful contact with the primers, with music, with arithmetic texts, etc., how much more ought not parents be concerned about, and be engaged in, bringing Johnny into an ever increasing contact with the world of his Heavenly Father so that he develops a "readiness" in this vital area of life. Too young for such things? Never too young to lay the ground work in other areas; and the same holds true of the spiritual field. The Savior rebuked the disciples for hindering mothers in bringing their young children to Him. "Suffer the little children forbid them not."

The government has inaugurated "Operation Headstart" to provide opportunity for reading readiness among underprivileged children. Don't wait until it is too late to solve the problem - that is the idea behind the program. Give the youngsters a break, an equal chance with those whose early years have been well used.

Wise parents will conduct for their children their own operation headstart in many areas. Knowing how much is accomplished in those early years, they will provide their children with every advantage - especially in the field of spiritual things! The "Abba Father" will ever grow with the child's vocabulary. An ever deeper understanding of Him who is Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier will be given through careful and persistent guidance on the part of father and mother. When the child is delivered into the teacher's hands at age five or six, he will come with a spiritual readiness that is amazing and on which the teacher can continue to build.

Certainly spiritual readiness consists in a God-given faith worked in Baptism; but it is a faith that has learned to express itself in word and deed through careful and continuous training. Parents have supplied a vocabulary of spiritual terms filled with meaning from Bible stories, hymns and prayers. They have by their own example supplied a picture of Christian living. Where parents have provided such a spiritual readiness, the Christian school will find a prepared foundation on which to build.

The Savior expects such preparations on the part of parents. Where it is provided, He makes a promise: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

Pastors and teachers will be as busy instructing parents regarding this all-important matter as the public educators are in encouraging reading readiness and as the government is in promoting "Headstart."

R. Gurgel

==PREACHING THE WORD==

THE EASTER SEASON.

Palm Sunday (Confirmation)* : The Text: John 12:1-8.

On the night before Palm Sunday some 1940 years ago three people put a price tag on Jesus. Not that He was for sale, or that anyone could buy Him. But the price tags would show what they thought He was worth. What IS He worth?

You should know, you who stand before Him as catechumens who are today putting a price tag on Him in your Confirmation. Not only are you publicly professing your faith in Him, but you are intending to say what you are prepared to offer Him, namely your very life. You will renounce the devil, his works and his ways. That means, everything in which Jesus has no part. You will say that you would die rather than depart from Him and His truth. You are putting everything you have and are at His feet today with words from your own mouths. Is He worth that? Do you know what you are doing? Is it going to look right to everyone, or to you later on?

In the light of our Gospel we see how these questions ought to be answered. You are familiar with the story. I call your attention to the fact that it shows us

The price tag which belongs on Jesus.

*Palm Sunday is traditionally a day of Confirmation in many churches. Even where it is no longer so observed, it may stir the hearts of those who mark it as the hour of their youthful rededication to the Lord.

I. Mary put it there.

A tussle over price tags started when Mary broke open a container of very precious ointment and anointed our Lord with it. The guests at the supper table, busily eating, paused and looked about. Did a millionaire just walk in? Smell that expensive odor! Nobody in this circle had ever dreamed of putting so much perfume at \$4 an ounce on any one person at any one time. There were twelve ounces. All of it evaporated into the air. Almost \$50 gone! Now was that really necessary? Was it worthwhile? The question is even more serious than you and I will quite understand; for \$50 in those days would have supported a family for half a year. Would not one ounce have done just as well? Mary said, no.

What was it that moved her to appraise the Savior so highly? Our text, you notice, twice refers to Lazarus whom Jesus had raised from the dead. He was at that banquet. In a way, this was a meal of thanksgiving in honor of the Lord whose power and love were demonstrated in living testimony by that man who had been in his grave four days, yet now was back with his family. What was Jesus worth to Mary when He could bring life out of death? But Mary was thinking not only of her brother but of herself. Jesus had included her when he said: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." In order to be our resurrection, Jesus would give Himself into death as a ransom. Mary knew this, and wanted to show Him while He was yet with her what He meant to her, rather than wait until He was dead on the Cross before showing her appreciation.

But let us not think that the whole price was measured in the value of that jar of ointment. For Mary not only gave Jesus her savings; she gave Him her complete faith and trust. She could not have anointed his body for burial unless she believed the words that He had spoken. He was her All, her Hope and her Joy in life; and no one could doubt that she would willingly have died for Him too, if necessary.

This is the price tag you are placing on Jesus today. You have no perfume in your hands; and it would be too late for that anyway, for your Lord is glorified, and though present here with us, is no longer visible and need not be anointed for His burial. But your vows are like a precious ointment to Him. You are holding nothing from Him that you have to give. Your body and soul are certainly dear; yet you are offering them to Him when you accept His service, promising obedience to every word He speaks and anything that He may want of you, even your very life. You say that you will know no higher Master.

It is true that words are easy to speak. They evaporate, once spoken, and are gone, just like the costly ointment of Mary. But you are not giving only words. Your offering is a sweet savor to the Lord when it comes out of a heart of faith in Him. For that is a heart which belongs to Him. You believe that He is your resurrection and your life. You believe that He died to save you. Therefore you are saying before all the world: the price tag Mary put on Jesus is right!

Not everybody will agree with you. Not everybody agreed with Mary either. She had hardly priced Jesus with her whole living when

II. Judas removed the tag again.

Judas criticized Mary severely. Let us look at his argument: "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" We get Judas' message all right. He was saying: After all, we have other obligations in life, and they are worth something too. We must not just throw ourselves away on Jesus. As an example he pointed to the poor people who could have used that money well. Plainly this said that Mary's use of the ointment was a waste. Jesus could not be worth such a price!

Our Gospel tells us what really made Judas feel as he did. It was not love for the poor, but love of money and love of himself. The truth was that he was a thief, that he had stolen even from his fellow-disciples and thus from

Jesus, of course. His appreciation of Jesus was small because he valued his lusts and desires. What Mary spent on Jesus he would have wanted in a money box where he could get at it. Why waste the best on Jesus? On one so poor and so lowly the ointment was out of place. One can do better than that with what one has.

After the same manner there are people today who would consider it a real pity that young people like you should tie themselves up with those Confirmation vows. You are giving away too much, they would say. After all, you are only young once, and youth should have its fling, enjoy life. Give the Lord a little - yes. Go to church now and then, and to the Holy Supper when it suits; keep up your church membership. But don't take it too seriously; enough time for that later. There are other things in life, other obligations. Don't be slaves to Christ.

The real attitude behind such advice is just as evil as it was in Judas. An ounce of yourself for Jesus and the rest for the needs of men simply means: Get Jesus as cheaply as you can and give the balance of yourself to sin, to the ways and desires of the world.

Shall such voices prevail in your life? Are you going to remove the price tag which your Confirmation vows place on Jesus? Certainly you will be tempted to do so. Who is not? More than once what you have given will be made to seem too high a price to pay. When those moments come, may you remember what your Savior said in our Gospel when

III. He put the price tag back on.

"Let her alone!" That was a strong and angry word which rang through the room. It was directed at Judas and at all who would interfere with Mary's splendid offering. The Lord's verdict was that what Mary had done was godly and good. Men may say, No; Jesus says, Yes! Men may call it a waste; the Lord calls it a wise investment, an act that will be spoken of as long as the Gospel is known on earth. People of wisdom will know that Mary did not over-price her Savior.

For thoughtful people will note that Jesus spoke of a cemetery. That is always a harsh word; but to be reminded of it helps. Mary placed her value on Jesus in the light of a cemetery. Soon Jesus would be in His grave. Mary's brother Lazarus had already once been in his. And Mary was on her way to her place in the earth. That, after all, is the supreme truth of this life for men - the cemetery. Who shall escape that? And what investment of our life and goods will do anything against that? How will you buy insurance against death?

The Lord Jesus Christ alone is the hope of our life. For He abolished death and brought life and immortality to light. If He died for us, it was that we might live unto Him. If He arose from the dead, it was that He might raise us from death. There is nothing in which we might invest profitably which is not first invested in Him. For what will happen to that person who has not given himself to Christ? What will a man give in exchange for his soul?

Our Lord has often expressed Himself regarding His value to us. We will all remember that he repeatedly spoke to us about our children, our youth. He has made it very plain indeed. To anyone who would offend His little ones by word or example, telling them that Jesus is not worth the price, His words have a solemn meaning: Let them alone! May we be most careful not to lay any stumbling-block in the way of these catechumens as they give themselves to the Lord in sincere dedication and re-affirmation of their Baptismal covenant. We need rather review our own vows once again and determine whether our Savior has been wearing His proper price tag in our lives.

Maundy Thursday (The Holy Communion). Text: Luke 22: 7-20.

A famous author of our times kept an old, cracked cup standing on a shelf in his apartment. Since the room was otherwise fitted out with the finest, most luxurious

furnishings, the cup looked very much out of place; but the author gave a very good reason for displaying it. During the second world war he spent days on a crowded little ship, fleeing his homeland ahead of the invading enemy. Food and water were scarce, and hostile submarines could strike at any moment. Everyone was rationed; and once each day a share of the drinking water was poured into that old cup. It kept the fugitive alive. From its place of honor in the apartment it said to him: Remember those days! In his time of plenty it was a reminder lest he forget that things can be different.

We have a cup on our altar this night. It is not cracked, but beautiful and of precious metal. Yet it may seem out of place in a sanctuary to which we come, not for bodily eating and drinking, but for spiritual strength. Yet it is not out of place. It speaks to us of remembrance. It reminds us of what it might be like for us in life, were it not for the Cross which rises above the altar. It reminds us of our danger and poverty, of the perils brought upon us by our enemy, of the thirst and famine that afflicts sinners who are at war with God, who say weeping:

"And fled I hence in my despair,
In some lone spot to hide me,
My griefs would still be with me there
And peace still be denied me."

The Cup on the altar is a symbol of our prosperity. As the Psalmist says: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: . . . my cup runneth over."

This is an hour of remembrance. The Cup says to us:

REMEMBER THE LORD.

And this we shall do

- I. Because for our sake He forgot nothing that was necessary; and
- II. Because for our sake we ought to remember what He means to us.

I.

"This is my body which is given for you this cup is the new testament in my blood which is shed for you." With these words the Savior invited his needy disciples to a Table for which the preparation had been diligent and detailed. The meal He offers them is not a sudden inspiration. The menu has been planned with painstaking care.

Our text gives us an indication of this as it relates what led up to the hour when the Lord and His followers sat down at table in the "upper room." (v. 7-14). What impresses us is the manner in which the Savior had arranged for the celebration of the Passover. Since He "had not where to lay His head," as He once said, and the disciples had in Jerusalem no "home away from home," they could not make provision for the Passover observance in the usual manner. All other families and householders knew what was to be done. On this festive occasion they were to celebrate the deliverance of their forefathers from slavery in the land of Egypt. This night was the anniversary of the slaying of the first-born in every Egyptian home by the angel of death. It was also the night in which the Israelites had escaped the wrath of God by slaying a lamb, eating it, and streaking the door-posts of their dwellings with its blood. When the angel of death saw the blood, he passed over and did not enter.

In commemoration of that event each family was performing its ceremonial duties. Mother was baking unleavened bread; father was slaughtering a lamb; the table was being set. But the disciples awakened on that morning not knowing how or where they might be able to celebrate. Yet it turned out that the Lord did know. Indeed, He had designed it all in advance, even to the extent that He in the power of God had planned the life of a certain man so that he would, just at the right hour of the right day, be carrying a pitcher of water along a certain street in Jerusalem. And we hear in what marvellous way the disciples were by him led to the place of the feast.

Why did Jesus do it that way? Could He not in a very ordinary manner have arranged for the disciples to go and find an available place for dining, as other visitors in the city probably did? But no; by miraculous signs the Lord guided His disciples so that they might realize - and we - how diligently the Lord had remembered them, had thought of them and their needs. It calls to mind the fact that even from everlasting God arranged for a banquet for our salvation, yes, and for this particular meal which Jesus is about to celebrate. It reminds us that God from eternity prepared His Son to become the true Passover Lamb, sacrificed for us. Thus everything fit in so well, and the steps of men were laid out, to bring them and us to the upper room. The Lord remembered us in our sins and misery!

This is indicated also by the Lord's expression of His great desire. (v. 15-18). We know that this was not the first time that the Lord had taken occasion to observe the Passover with his disciples. Why, then, was this opportunity of such special nature? Why had He looked forward to it with such burning hunger? This He explains by saying: "I will not anymore eat thereof." It was to be the last true Passover observance on earth, not only for Jesus, but for all men. The Passover was, after all, only a symbol. It pointed forward as well as backward. It commemorated the ancient deliverance from Egypt; but it foretold the far greater deliverance of us all from the bondage of sin and the sword of eternal death. And it was about to give up its old meaning to the new one. For here was the Lamb of God whose blood would be shed for the ransom of the bodies and souls of all men from one greater and more cruel than any Pharaoh, from Satan, the prince of hell. The hour had come; and the Lord looked forward to it. So great was His concern for His disciples, so great His wish to win them for His own and see them safe and give them true peace in the forgiveness of their sin. The sooner it all was accomplished, the sooner would dawn the eternal day in which all saints, at the everlasting feast of heaven, would be singing their song to the passing of the dark angel: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God which giveth us the

victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 15:55. 57).

If He had not thus remembered us - if we had not been foremost in His mind and heart, what would have become of us? That cup on the altar says to us: This is a meal marvellously prepared and arranged because the merciful Christ held you in His remembrance and never forgot what you needed. It is here to make you think of where He now sits in heaven, preparing the table for the banquet that will never end. O remember Him, therefore; think of the days of your sins, of hell lying in wait for you, of being encompassed before and behind - and remember Jesus Christ! He has long ago arranged also for this our observance tonight and brought us here wonderfully. Draw nigh, and receive Him. And as you come, for your own sake,

II.

Remember what He means to you. (v. 19-20).

"In remembrance of me" - that is what He says. For behold, He brings to an end the eating which belongs to an ancient ceremony and replaces it with one so marvellous that our human minds shrink before its thought. "This is my body," He declares, as He gives His disciples bread to eat; "this is the new testament in my blood," He affirms as He passes the wine to their lips. And here is no make-believe! It is the very body offered on the Cross, the very blood He shed there, which He imparts with the bread and wine. As He once gave the priceless, spotless ransom, so He shares Himself which each of His disciples, eager that they should truly perceive and know how completely He is theirs. We are asked only to remember Him completely, in all that He means to us.

This it would be impossible to do at each communion. For the Lord Jesus is given to us to touch our lives in many, many ways, and we would not remember them all in one sacred moment. But surely we ought to remember him in more than this supreme act, that He died for us.

Consider His many-sided Grace. First of all, surely, as the Passover Lamb. Thus He became the author of our salvation. As the innocent lambs of the Old Testament age sacrificed their lives so that people might be protected by their blood and strengthened for the desert journey by their flesh, so our Savior expended His sacred body and life in order that we might put up a powerful sign against death, cover our mortality with the red of His blood, and feast on His innocent body for our life.

We are seeing what He means to us in the Passion history. Think of Him, remember Him as the compassionate Savior who looked upon a fallen disciple with tender pity and moved him to repentant tears. Is He such a blessing to us, as He wants to be? Or are we hard in our disobedience and unfaithfulness to Him?

We see Him as the Easter Christ who proved His saving power to a doubting Thomas-heart; who, when we waver in our loyalty and our certainty of the Truth, says to us: Come hither, and touch my wounds. So He says tonight: Take, eat, drink ye all my body and blood, shed for you.

He is all these things, and many more, to us. This we confess in remembrance as we come to His Table. By this we shall be strengthened and encouraged also for the days ahead. He will not fail us. He remembers us; this the Sacrament will help us not to forget.

Easter Sunday. Text: I Cor. 15:20-23.

How far away is Easter from you? Is Easter today, or was it nineteen hundred and thirty-five or more years ago? How far are we from its fright and its joy?

We are bound to ask these things, knowing that for many people Easter appears to be a once-a-year wonder that brings them to church if the weather is nice, but also gets mixed up in their minds with bunnies, hats, eggs and parades. How few there are who seem to feel the reality and present power of Christ's resurrection.

Much is being said about the Easter faith; but when that expression is used, we are sometimes made to feel that it is, after all, only a faith - something which we would like to believe but which is without any certainty whatever, just a sort of hopefulness, as when people say: Let's hope the weather will be nice for our picnic. Hearts that feed on such a belief are truly far from Easter.

Before there can be any real faith there must be a fact. Before we can speak of our Easter faith, we must be able to point to an Easter Truth. When we look for that Truth, we find that it involves far more than the fact that Jesus Christ arose from the dead. For Easter is not merely the anniversary of a great event, a one-time miracle which we admire at a distance. The Apostle Paul speaks of resurrection as a continuing event, a process which profoundly affects our lives now and in the future. Those who would feel truly near it must come to understand, according to our text, that God has given us

A NEW ADAM FOR EASTER.

I.

The story of this great day begins in a garden. A small garden it was; a garden that resembled a cemetery because there was a grave in it. What a familiar sort of place it is for us. We do spend much of our time living in a world that has been a great cemetery for a long, long while; a place where everything dies, where our thoughts and minds must sooner or later and again and again return to that hardest of all realities. "For since by man came death"

Nobody understands Easter at all unless he has been with us in that first, huge garden called Eden. How great it was and how beautiful; and there lived Adam, the man from whom we all come according to the flesh. He turned the garden into a cemetery. Though it was created as a place from which he should harvest abundant, blissful and happy life, the first crop taken from it was death from the tree that stood in its midst.

The first time anyone ever heard the word DEATH was in that garden. And there, for the first time, death struck. It struck man's soul, for Adam sinned and became separated from his God. In time the disaster took his body also. And since then, that is all there had been for us to see, to look at, far and wide. By man came death. In Adam, that is, in connection with him and because we are flesh of his flesh, all die. For sin did not leave, neither did sin heal. Is anybody ever far from that first cemetery? Is the Fall of Adam something that happened for us thousands of years ago? Are we far from its frightening hour? Or do we live with it every day, every moment? Do we in this life ever forget how sin has claimed our mortal bodies? Every pulse-beat, every breath we draw leaves a moment for a question: Will there be another? We put our hands into our bosom and find Adam there, and death, without hope. We need no faith to accept this fact: "... as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned ..." (Rom. 5:12). That is where the story of human life ended. But then there was Easter.

Again we are in a garden. Much smaller than Eden, of course, and made by man, not by God, just like the grave that was hewn out of the rocky ledge. But in this garden a harvest has begun so amazing, so huge and majestic that it has changed the shape of our lives. The grave in the garden is open and empty. By it stands a Man, more glorious than Adam in the day of his creation, with a body of splendor. It is Jesus Christ, risen from the dead. God is beginning all over again; and this time He will finish what He started as He started it. For sin and death have had their day. They ruled until they took hold of the Only-begotten Son of God who Himself had taken on the flesh and blood of Adam. They ruled until He went again to a tree, this time a harsh and ugly tree standing gaunt on a mound called Calvary. From that tree this new Adam brought a new product. It is called Resurrection. It means that the rule of sin is ended and the power of death is broken. It means that the blessings of the first garden have been restored.

On that first Easter morning the inhabitants of Judaea's valleys were not thinking of Golgatha. When they arose from their beds and stepped out of doors, they let their eyes roam over their fields of barley grain and said: Behold, the fields are ripening. Let us make a first round today; let us bind the first bundle, and take it as the first-fruits of our harvest to the house of God. Then we shall return; and on the morrow we shall gather the crop. Little did they know or understand that God was doing the same thing. For in His grace He had redeemed mankind from sin by the sacrifice of the Cross. God had abolished death. He had written an end to the way of life which began with Adam. And now he had cut the first-fruits of a large harvest. He had brought a Man from the grave, the First One of His kind.

This was to be the beginning of an entirely new order. For as in connection with Adam all men were constantly dying, so in connection with the risen Christ shall all be made alive. God has indeed made the first round in his harvest field. He raised His Son from the dead. But if the first sheaf be harvested, will not the rest follow? As surely as we were one in Adam, and out of his sin and death we all were afflicted and doomed, so surely Christ Jesus is also flesh of our flesh, Our guilt was laid on Him, our death was His death. From this no man is excepted, but all are included. If then Christ is now risen from death, shall not all men come forth from their graves? We therefore celebrate today the beginning of that harvest which shall not end until, the day and the hour having come, all shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth (John 5:28-29). Many, too many, alas, shall rise only to receive the reward of their unbelief. But for us it will mark the dawn of everlasting life which we have found in the second Adam, our Easter gift.

We shall continue to live in the world of graves until we lie each in his own. But the stone has surely been rolled away, as it has been removed from our hearts.

I am flesh, and must return
Unto dust whence I am taken;

But by faith I now discern
That from death I shall awaken
With my Savior to abide,
In His glory, at His side.

II.

The New Adam has reversed the course of our lives. That which died in Eden, namely our righteousness and holiness in which we shall live before God, was restored in Joseph's garden by Jesus. We all left Paradise with the first Adam. We can return to it only with the second Adam. For this, however, it is not enough to celebrate Easter and to say: "He lives, He lives, who once was dead." We must begin to live with Him, and the new Adam must become a gift of God in our own hearts. As we found him in the risen Christ, we should find Him living within us.

Christ's coming forth from the grave is a fact not to be doubted. Without that resurrection the Christian faith would cease to have meaning or purpose, and all that would be left to the world is the memory of paradise forever lost. But as all the witnesses of our Lord repeat over and over, and as God confirms the Truth in our hearts: Now IS Christ risen from the dead. Likewise it is certain, then, that God accepted the sacrifice of His Son for the reconciliation of the world. Nor has He withheld from a single human soul the fruit of His Son's Passion or the power of the Resurrection.

Yet we know, and speak of it in sorrow, that for many there will be a resurrection without the power. They will not rise on the last day as such who have their places in that grand order which is headed by the risen Highpriest of their salvation, and will not live with the second Adam in the new world designed for them. Our text indicates that with its limiting phrase: ".... Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Manifestly this excludes those who are not Christ's; excludes them, not from resurrection, but from its Easter glory. The Book of Revelation describes their order. They are

"the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars" (Rev. 21:8). In this company belong all who like the inheritance of the first Adam and continue to enjoy the fruit of the forbidden tree. They will take that, and they shall have it. They look at the open grave and see nothing.

By these tokens, however, we may also readily perceive who they are that are Christ's. Again the Book of Revelation spells it out: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." (Rev. 20:6). To simple students of this Book and of all the Scriptures the message is very clear. Christ's people are the people who, by faith in His resurrection, have risen to a new life here on earth. Not only do they believe in their deliverance from death; they also believe and know that they NOW live with Jesus, here. They have drowned, and do daily drown in sincere repentance and the putting away of sin, the Old Adam who would rule them, and seek the guidance of the Spirit of the new Adam in heart and life.

Easter, then, is both the Way of Life and a way of living. And we would therefore close with the question with which we started. How far is Easter from you? How far is it from governing the purpose of your life and dictating its terms? May God make fully known to all of you its riches; and that is, "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:17).

.....

E. Schaller

== PANORAMA ==

A "BISHOP" WHO IS NOT A BISHOP

On his travels across the nation "Bishop" Pike landed in Eau Claire February 25. Speaking on the topic "The New Morality" he drew a crowd which nearly filled the Wisconsin State University field house. His rather disjointed and poorly delivered address ran the gamut all the way from Viet Nam and the Alamo to sex and usury. Cutting across the frivolity, the irreverence, and the vulgarity which could only nauseate even an insensitive disciple of the Scriptures, one realized that the controversial "Bishop" was disclosing the heart of his philosophy when he got around to the discussion of ethics. Here, as so often is the case with those who strike at the immovable and unchangeable foundation of Scripture, he drew a caricature of those who believe that there is a stable and unshakeable will of God which covers all the phases of life as to its moral aspects. Those who follow the "situation ethic" were lauded and extolled as those who take a truly responsible position in the great decisions of life, while those who are guided by a stable and unchangeable standard were characterized as mechanical robots who do not really operate responsibly, but move across the scene as automatons with pat answers for every conceivable situation right down to the choice of color for traffic signals.

The "Bishop" (we put the title in quotes since the Episcopal Church has disowned him as the head of a diocese while retaining him in its fellowship)---the "Bishop" proceeded to divide the differing views on ethics into four categories: antinomian, consensual, codified, and situational. At the outset he ruled out the antinomian and the consensual, since he did not want anyone to identify his

position with a total disregard for law or with mass conformity. This left code ethics and situation ethics for further discussion. The speaker showed plainly that he was out of sympathy with those who believe that there is a fixed standard according to which moral behavior may be judged and determined. Disregarding the references made to conflicting hierarchical actions by councils and papal decrees, the clear implication was that even Scriptural moral standards do not hold up as reliable guides for human behavior. The conclusion could only be that here was a man who did not believe in absolute objective truth, but was struggling within himself for answers and decisions which would adequately fit the occasion and be responsive to the times and circumstances. In his speech the "Bishop" ranged himself on the side of the Situation Ethics theologians, who believe that each situation must furnish the material and the standard on the basis of which one makes up his mind which way he should go. If he is convinced that circumstances before and after will not injure himself or others and if he is subjectively convinced that a certain line of action is desirable, he is free to act. This shall apply to cases ranging from the burning of draft cards, acts of civil disobedience, to sex relations and, I suppose, to the holding of seances, although this was not touched upon. The flaw in all of this is, of course, the fact that there is a total absence of a standard on basis of which decisions are to be made. Judgments and decisions are wholly subjective and in the final analysis emotional. Entirely overlooked is the fact that there is such a thing as sin which remains sin, fornication which remains fornication, disobedience which remains disobedience, and will be injurious to the offender and those offended regardless of subjective judgments to the contrary. It was interesting to hear the "Bishop's" definition of the code. Here it is: "code is the summary of all human experience." It would seem then, in his view, that those who follow a code are in the final analysis adopting consensual ethics. Far from his mind is the teaching that there is an unchanging will of God which tells us what is wrong and what is right in His sight.

In conclusion then the philosophy of situation ethics is highly lauded as calling for a personal involvement in actions for which one takes full responsibility and for which one is ready to be judged, himself passing his own sentence on the basis of his own judgment. On this note the speaker concluded his address. Situation ethics presents one with a philosophy, which far from bringing happiness and joy, rather plunges its devotees into despair and pessimism. This we have seen in such advocates of license as Bertrand Russell and this we have seen in the "Bishop."

Among other things, "Bishop" Pike claims that he will expand upon the "Passover plot". That denials of the Virgin Birth, of the Resurrection, of Miracles, and of the Deity of Christ can come out of this brew is not hard to understand. That there was some mixture of truth with error in the speech of "Bishop" Pike no doubt added to the confusion of those who did not discriminate. We are happy to rest our case on the Word from the Psalms: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward." (Psalm 19:7-11)

C. M. G.

A PARTITIONED FELLOWSHIP

Is fellowship vertical or horizontal, parallel or diffuse? The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod seems to be having trouble with this question. Ever since it became involved in the exercise of partial fellowship without complete fellowship, Missouri has been having difficulty in defining its position. Former brethren have pointed out that any form of worship and church work with those who are disagreed in doctrine is unionism. Those who have heretofore not been in fellowship with Missouri have pointed out that she is indeed practising fellowship with them even though it has not been officially declared and has therefore forfeited its right to raise objections to membership in such organizations as the Lutheran World Federation and certainly should find no reason for remaining aloof from the practise of pulpit - altar - and prayer - fellowship with its constituent members.

Now comes a statement as given by Lutheran Witness Reporter, Feb. 18, 1968 which quotes from a brochure "Toward Fellowship--The Current Quest of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church for Altar and Pulpit Fellowship". This brochure was prepared by the office of the Synod President, Oliver Harms. In a parenthesis the following observation is passed along to those who are preparing for joint meetings with members of the A. L. C.: "The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) does not hold that the establishment or maintenance of fellowship relations with another church body automatically involves the Synod in all the relationships which this other church body may have. For instance, the Synod maintains fellowship relations with various free churches in Europe. The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) likewise maintains fellowship relations with the same European churches. Yet the LCMS and WELS do not practice fellowship relations with one another."

It appears that this situation is being offered as an answer to those who are objecting to the establishment of fellowship with the ALC on the basis that Missouri would thereby become involved in interchurch agencies and activities of the ALC which at least some of its members consider unionistic. Is it possible to cut up fellowship into a number of pieces and then choose which ones to accept and which ones to reject? Or is it so that fellowship is of one piece and cannot be divided and subdivided to suit the occasion? The answer should be obvious.

C. M. G.

BOOK Christian Reflections, by C. S. Lewis;
REVIEW Edited by Walter Hooper of Wadham
 College, Oxford. Published by Wm. B.
 Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich. Paper-
 back, 176 pages.

Those who became acquainted with the thoughts and style of the late Dr. Lewis through the reading of his better-known works, such as the "Screwtape Letters" or the "Reflections on the Psalms," will look forward to reading this slender volume containing fourteen essays, some of them never before published, on subjects directly or indirectly related to theology.

It would not be an easy matter to locate C. S. Lewis in the spectrum of confessional Christianity. Any announced findings in this respect would doubtless invite instant rebuttal from some quarter; for in his written expressions Lewis wraps himself in a certain ambiguity. He can declare himself "a Christian, and even a dogmatic Christian untinged with Modernist reservations and committed to

supernaturalism in its full rigor" ("On Ethics," p. 44), and his friend Dr. Hooper saw him as one "believing in the Creation, the Fall, the Incarnation, the Resurrection, the Second Coming, and the four Last Things (death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell)" (Preface, p. VIII); yet Lewis did not wish to be called a "Fundamentalist." He spoke of the Nicene and Athanasian creeds as "documents which I wholly accept" ("Christianity & Literature," p. 5); at the same time he rejected the historicity of the Book of Jonah ("Modern Theology and Biblical Criticism," p. 154), and in general declined to operate with the concept of verbal inspiration, professing respect for a measure of agnosticism in this field (p. 164), just as he consistently refrained from discussion of "differences" in belief, addressing himself chiefly to a defense of the "common ground" in Christian faith (Preface, p. XI).

Despite regrettable inconsistencies in the expression of personal convictions, the Lewis essays are a fascinating study in Christian apologetics. Their approach to pseudo-scientific and modern-theological sacred cows is often unique. A gentle wryness of logic probes deeply into the weaknesses of anti-biblical attitudes.

One of the most readable essays is the one entitled: "Modern Theology and Biblical Criticism." The author professes to speak as a "layman," "educated but not theologically educated;" "a sheep, telling shepherds what only a sheep can tell them." Then he begins to "bleat." The burden of his bleating is that "a theology which denies the historicity of nearly everything in the Gospels . . . if offered to the uneducated man can produce only one or other of two effects. It will make him a Roman Catholic or an atheist." The Lewis attack upon the theology of a Bultmann, a Schweitzer or a Tillich is as ingenuous as it is devastating.

A judgment of Lewis' faith we leave to God, to Whom it belongs to discern the heart. But his contribution in the field of necessary Christian apologetics was great and must be recognized.

E. Schaller

JOHN BEHNKEN --
IN MEMORIAM

As we go to press CHRISTIAN
NEWS reports the death of Dr.

John W. Behnken, long-time President of the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod. A man of great ability and personal charm, it was his lot to be the leader of his synod in the era of its greatest outward growth -- and inward change. One need not question the sincerity of his frequently expressed desire to keep his synod in what he in his autobiography ("This I Recall" -- 1964) himself calls the "old paths" of strong evangelical conservatism. Opinions will differ sharply as to his success in attaining this goal.

This was a noble goal, indeed. Some will disagree when we say that the reality fell far short of the ideal. Those were trying times. The trend toward church union flowed strongly, but not smoothly. There were dangerous cross currents. The membership of his synod was not simply of one mind. A younger generation was becoming increasingly impatient of the "old paths," and (encouraged by some of their teachers) eager to try some new ones. And through it all it was he, as president, who felt he had to defend the policies and actions of the body, to hold it together, to lead it to ever greater prestige and influence. He tried to check or control some of these trends, but the tide rolled on. That seems to be the price of success. Man becomes the prisoner of his office, of the organization he heads. And the organization, like a machine, acquires a momentum of its own, to the peril of him who seeks to control it.

Yet we like to think of those early ideals, of those occasional efforts to stem the tide. We like to think that CHRISTIAN NEWS is right in quoting him as having expressed regret to some of his close friends that he had fought for his synod's membership in the Lutheran Council in the U. S. A. -- LCUSA. We like to think that this may have been the prisoner's escape.

E. Reim

C O N T E N T S

VOLUME 8

MARCH 1968

NUMBER 1

ESSAYS AND ARTICLES

- ✓ The Rising Tide of Translations 1

E. Reim

- John 3:34..... 7

E. Schaller

PAIDEIA

- Spiritual Readiness..... 12

R. Gurgel

PREACHING THE WORD

- The Easter Season 15

E. Schaller

PANORAMA

- A "Bishop" Who Is Not a Bishop 30

- A Partitioned Fellowship..... 33

C. M. Gullerud

- Book Review..... 34

E. Schaller

- John Behnken -- In Memoriam 36
-