



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

I Timothy 4:15

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==ESSAYS AND ARTICLES==

THE ANOINTING OF JESUS

The Apostle Peter, preaching in the house of Cornelius at Caesarea, opened his summary of the Gospel story with the words:

"The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all): That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." (Acts 10:36-38).

Included in this segment of Peter's sermon we find one of the few passages of the New Testament Scriptures which explicitly affirm the act of God the Father in anointing the man Christ Jesus. In the preceding issue of the Journal a brief study of John 3:34 touched upon this matter (Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 7ff), finding also in this verse a clear allusion to the same subject.

A search through the Lutheran theological literature immediately available to us has yielded the impression that, while there have been many references to the Anointing of Jesus, relatively few extended discussions of this Scriptural truth have been undertaken. It is possible, of course, that in the vast bulk of patristic writings, theological studies and essays which could not be exhaustively explored some adequate treatment of the subject may lie hidden. But there is no reason to feel that a new discussion of this topic would represent an unnecessary effort, and the subject is not unimportant. It goes to the heart of Christology.

Thus Peter, in offering an exposition of Psalm 16: 8-10 to his Pentecost audience, was moved by the Holy Ghost to say:

" being a prophet, and knowing that God has sworn with an oath to him (David), that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up (Christ) to sit on his throne; he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ (Messiah, the Anointed), that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." (Acts 2:30-32). And again: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2:26).

This is the supreme title of Him whom Christians are taught to call "Captain of their salvation." He is designated as the "Christos" in more than half a thousand instances in the New Testament; and repeated debates with or concerning Him, from the time of His birth (Matt. 2:4) through His ministry (John 4:25; 7:27,42; 12:34) to the hour of His death (Luke 23:35,39), centered in His right to that title. That he was indeed the Anointed One foretold in promise from ancient days is the enabling factor in His soteriological work throughout. It was Christ who redeemed us from the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13); it was Christ our passover who was sacrificed for us (1 Cor. 5:7); and the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ (Rev. 11:15).

At the same time it must be pointed out that Scripture offers us a minimum of detailed information regarding the Anointing itself. In addition to Acts 10:38 already cited, we hear the congregation at Jerusalem in its prayer speaking to God of "thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed" (Acts 4:27); but no further definition of the divine act is given. These and the reference in John 3:34, Luke 4:18, together with the Old Testament quotation in Heb. 1:9, contain the New Testament specifics on the subject. What

answers are thus supplied for the questions that may properly concern us:

1. When did the Anointing take place?
2. What effect did His Unction with the Holy Spirit have upon Jesus?

1.

There is no statement of Scripture which expressly notes when our Savior was anointed; and from this fact some might conclude that the question is speculative and its answer a matter of opinion. Yet the matter cannot be casually dismissed. Sometimes Scripture reveals a truth by means of other truths, compelling its acceptance by leaving no Scriptural alternative. It behooves us to inquire whether, perhaps, in what we are told about the Unction of Jesus by the Father, our question may not after all be explicitly answered, especially since there have been inconsistencies in the teaching of this matter in Lutheran circles.

By implication as well as by direct affirmation some have taught that the Anointing took place at the time of our Lord's Baptism. Thus R. C. H. Lenski writes: "That anointing took place immediately after the Baptism of Jesus." (Interpretation of Acts, v. 418). The "Gausewitz" catechism, edition of 1956, permits this view by offering as Scripture reference Matt. 3:13-17 with the comment: "Christ anointed with the Holy Ghost at His Baptism." (p. 114). The old "Schwan" catechism carefully avoids the question of the "when" altogether, and the Synodical Catechism of the Missouri Synod (1943) makes no reference to the Baptism in this connection (p. 101-102), citing instead the words in Matt. 17:5. (p. 107). The new catechism of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (1966) uses Matt. 3:16-17 as reference, without further explanation, for the question: "How was Jesus anointed?"

A scanning of some of Luther's statements in his sermon on the Baptism of Christ (1526; Walch II, 2128ff) may leave the impression that he, too, would regard the

Anointing as coinciding with the time of the Baptism. He says:

"And there (namely with the Baptism of Jesus) the New Testament actually begins; wherefore also Mark and John make little mention of His childhood. Peter and Paul write nothing of this. Not that they despise what Matthew and Luke report of it; but they hasten at once to the critical point (zu dem vollkommenen Stueck) at which the office goes into action. For though He was born a child, the office did not yet begin; nor did He presume to administer it until He was called to it by the Father. In short, at His Baptism the office begins; there He becomes our Christ, our Savior, for which purpose He had come, as Isaiah says, 61:1, a passage which Christ applies to Himself in Luke 4:18, 21 when He says: The Lord sent me ... etc. To preach this gracious year, which opened with the preaching of John the Baptist - for this He had come, as Luke says in Acts 1:22; and Mark opens his Gospel with John's preaching and Christ's Baptism, Mark 1:1ff.

"But why does Mark begin there? Because here Christ begins to act as a Christ, here He is consecrated and enters His office; and God the Father wanted to let the world know with certainty, that there might be no doubt whatever with regard to Christ, since God Himself has confirmed Him."

Luther here proceeds in his usual broad, sermonic manner; and one must weigh his words carefully in their context lest one ascribe to him things which he neither said nor meant to say. Nowhere in this sermon does Luther mention the Anointing. He does, however, speak of the office of Christ; and this in a limited sense, namely insofar as it concerned the activity by which He fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah. Involved was His public ministry, the preaching of the Gospel, the forgiving of sins, the healing

of the sick and wounded, the deliverance of the captives. Until Jesus was publicly certified by the Father, says Luther, He did not enter upon the work of His public ministry upon His own initiative. It is very evident from the sermon, however, that Luther did not intend to say that Jesus was not the Christ until He was baptized. And we know enough of Luther's theology to be certain that he would never have suggested that Jesus did not suffer for us or fulfill all righteousness in our stead before the time of His Baptism.

Although it is hardly necessary to furnish evidence for Luther's position in this matter, we offer a few statements from a sermon on the Christmas Gospel, also cited by F. Pieper (Dogmatics, II, p. 331f):

"Our salvation was brought about by this very thing, that Christ and the believing heart are so united that, what the one has, is given to the other. And what do they give each other? Christ has a pure, innocent, holy birth; man's birth is unclean, sinful, cursed, as David says Ps. 51:5, which cannot be healed other than through the pure birth of Christ Thus, then, Christ takes from us unto Himself our birth and sinks it into His birth, and gives us His birth that we might become pure and new in it, as though it were our own (Walch II, 127).

Similarly Luther speaks of the Circumcision of Christ:

" that Christ for this purpose accepted circumcision so that He might deliver us from it, that thereby our faith might be strengthened." (Walch II, 2101).

That Jesus was anointed for the purpose of serving us as our Prophet, Priest and King is a truth which we need not re-establish here. And since He thus served us before His Baptism, we must conclude that He was anointed before His Baptism, not during or after it.

Our thoughts return at this point to the Scripture with which we introduced this discussion; specifically the

words of Peter: " God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power." The mention of Nazareth was made for the benefit of Peter's audience and served the hearers as an identifying adjunct of the name Jesus, which was not uncommon among the Jews. We certainly may not regard it as a basis for claiming that the Savior was anointed at some unknown moment during His childhood in that village. For us the stress lies upon the name Jesus. This is the name He was given by the angel at the announcement of the Lord's conception. It was Jesus who was anointed, just as it was Jesus who became our Savior, not the preexistent Logos as such, the second Person of the Holy Trinity. Jesus is the name of the God-Man. He it is who served and serves as our Prophet, Priest and King. And this He did from the moment He became Jesus, namely from the moment of His conception in the womb of Mary. It was this mode, this method of the Incarnation of the Only-Begotten Son of God which initiated the work of the Christ in a state of humiliation, as we constantly confess in the Apostolic creed. At the point in time when the union of the divine and the human natures took place He became Jesus the Anointed, and not someone else who in course of time reached a stage of life when He was ready to receive the Chrism of the Holy Ghost.

To hold otherwise would be to alter radically the Scriptural doctrine of our redemption as we proclaim it and confess it in song and story. Why do we in our Christmas hymns and prayers call Him the Christ-child? Did not even Herod seek to resolve the "problem" posed by the Magi through research to determine the place where "Christ should be born?" When we accept that view of the Christmas event, do we do so with reservations? Would we consider it to have been more accurate to inquire where He who was to become the Christ should be born? We have long since disavowed the heresy of those Monarchianists who held (and hold) that Jesus was born a man who was later inspired and exalted by God; and of the autohypostasists who hold that the Son of God and the man Jesus gradually grew together and became the Christ. How then

is it possible to defer the hour of the Anointing to the time of our Lord's Baptism, or for that matter to any period subsequent to His conception?

Dr. Pieper puts it very succinctly. He writes: "Christ's official duties did not begin with His Baptism, which was His solemn induction into His public ministry, but with His incarnation, with which His humiliation coincided. Christ was the Christ for us in His very conception, birth, circumcision, filial obedience, etc." Dogmatics, II, p. 331.

2.

As we now approach our second question, we should note that to a degree the two questions are vitally interrelated. For if we now ask: What effect did His Unction with the Holy Spirit have upon Jesus? we find it necessary to examine further the position of those who relate the Unction to the events that took place at the Lord's Baptism.

The argument in support of this view points to Peter's sermon from which our chief text was taken. Here Peter speaks of "the word" which "ye know," namely the members of Peter's audience; the word which "was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached" The point is made that the Anointing must have been a public event which, like the other events of Christ's ministry, was reported and constantly re-told by His disciples and apostles, so that it had become common knowledge. Moreover, the public event is attached by Peter himself to the circumstances surrounding the baptizing activity of John.

This may seem to reflect a natural impression which might have been created by what Peter said. But we must reaffirm the compelling evidence of Scripture which is supplied by the clear teaching that Jesus was the Christ from the moment of His Incarnation. And we ask: Does Peter's reference to the Anointing conflict with that truth? We can agree, indeed, that the fact of the Anointing had become public knowledge, so that Peter could well say:

"Ye know . . ." We also concede that such knowledge was related in point of time to the Baptism of Jesus, after which through His public ministry He preached the Gospel of the Kingdom, presenting Himself as the Messiah of God.

The remarkable event that transpired after Jesus came forth from the Jordan after His Baptism publicly proclaimed the fact of His Anointing. For we read that "the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him . . ." Whether the people who were present, apart from John the Baptist himself, saw this phenomenon is nowhere recorded. But John did see it, "and bare record that this is the Son of God." (John 1:32-34).

It is readily perceived that from that moment the Anointing of Jesus became advertised, not by John or Jesus only, but by the disciples. This does not mean, however, that Peter designated the hour of the Lord's Baptism as the time of His being anointed. Nor does the account of the event itself as much as hint at it. Rather, the occasion simply affirmed the truth that this was God's Son the Anointed, whereof the appearance of the Holy Spirit was the witness. The Father also spoke, saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased . . .;" but these words do not declare that Jesus became God's Son only in that moment.

Unfortunately this very view is represented by those who through the ages of the Christian Church have continued to promote the ancient heresies to which we referred above. Against these and similar errors we must be on our guard also when we discuss the effect that His Unction with the Holy Spirit had upon Jesus. The view that the Unction occurred at the Baptism is not only without Scriptural support; it may also serve to minimize the significance of the Anointing.

As the union of the divine and human natures in Christ Jesus must in essence continue to be a profound mystery, so also the Anointing of Jesus according to His human nature is a truth into which we cannot probe too deeply without courting the danger of drifting into serious aberrations. It is well that we say no more about it than

has actually been revealed or is required by the doctrinal context. Jesus was anointed in order that He might thus serve as our perfect Savior and administer His divine office. For this the Anointing made a necessary contribution. To ask why it was so is to wander into the realm of theological speculation where the swamps of confusion await the unwary.

On the other hand, we can and must declare what the Anointing did NOT do for Jesus. It did not demonstrate, to Him or to us, that during the state of His humiliation He somehow ceased to be God, or had not yet attained to the rank of Deity at a given point, and therefore possessed the gift of the Holy Ghost as His sole source of guidance and power. No Lutheran Christian at home in Scripture would assess the effect of the Unction in that manner. Nor may the question be answered in this way, that in order to make His humiliation a genuine exinanition, Jesus wholly renounced the use of His divine attributes, so that he was able to function in His office only as a man might function when endowed with the powers of the Holy Spirit.

There are those who would let such a view of the purpose and effect of the Unction follow from what they consider to be the proper measure of Christ's humiliation. Thus they would hold that in this state He made no use whatever of divine ubiquity, omnipotence or omniscience, and that His work and miracles were performed essentially by means of the same power, though possessed in greater measure, which served the Prophets, Evangelists and Apostles, namely the power of the Holy Spirit.

Dr. F. Pieper, in his "Christian Dogmatics," has pointed out that "... Reformed theologians in general declare that the miracles of Christ, in so far as His human nature is considered, are on the same level as the miracles of the Apostles and Prophets." (II, 261). They of course derive this false opinion, not from their view of the Anointing and its effect, but from the rationalistic principle that "finitum non est capax infiniti" and their consequent rejection of the Scriptural doctrine of the unio personalis. They hold that "the divine power of the Son of God exercises itself through the human nature as water flows through a

pipe ..." (Ibid. p. 262). But an unscriptural view of the Anointing may, without endorsing the Reformed error regarding the unio personalis, lead by another route to the same conclusion.

It is not our purpose here to pursue such related issues of Christology. But we must emphasize the fact that the Unction of Jesus did not provide the God-man with a supply of such power for His work as He already possessed through the communication of attributes and which He on occasion also used. In saying that Jesus was "anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power," Scripture simply sets forth the truth that He carried on His work in cooperation with the Holy Ghost (as with the Father) and with the power which He shares with Him (as also with the Father). Thus Scripture testifies to the uninterrupted unity of the Trinity and the participation of the three Persons of the Godhead in the work of our salvation.

That the Holy Ghost did indeed work with and through Jesus is evident from a number of passages. Thus our Lord told the Jews: "But if I cast out devils by (literally: 'in connection with'; NOT 'by', KJV) the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." (Matt. 12:28). On another significant occasion Jesus quoted Isaiah as referring to Him: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me" (Luke 4:18).* But the Lord in similar manner speaks of the Father working

.....
 * Heb. 9:14: " ... How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? "

Consistent with what Scripture repeatedly affirms is this clear assertion that in bringing the redeeming sacrifice our Savior Himself performed the all-sufficient offering, yet at the same time did so through the Holy Spirit. The argument of commentators who attempt to rule out this reference to the Holy Ghost by translating Pneuma as "spirit" (with lower-case s) is wholly unconvincing.

with and through Him (John 8:28; 12:49-50; 4:10, et al.). At the same time, in many instances, displays of divine power exhibited by Christ in His state of humiliation are described as originating from the use of the innate divine attributes of the incarnate Son of God (John 2:11; John 5:19; 12:37-41, et al.).

The interrelated and integrated nature of the activity of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity in the work of our Savior is as indisputable as it is beyond our power of analytical dissection. We do well to refrain from such an effort, just as we will be careful not to ascribe to the Unction of Jesus an effect which, by implication or deduction, goes beyond or contrary to what is clearly stated in Scripture concerning His work. It is enough to say that, at the moment of His coming into the world, Jesus was endowed by the Father with a measureless Unction of the Holy Spirit because He came to serve mankind in unqualified, unlimited perfection in the saving office and work established by God for this purpose. Precisely what that Unction contributed to the work, or how its power factor functioned, is not revealed to us.

E. Schaller

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THINGS TO GUARD AGAINST IN OUR
APPROACH TOWARD RE-ALIGNMENT

Essay prepared for Spring Conference
Cheyenne, Wyoming, May 6, 1958



Ten years ago this month of May there gathered in Cheyenne, Wyoming a group of pastors and teachers who, not long before, had suffered the shock of separation from their former fellowships. Having neither formal organization nor a specific name, they simply called themselves the Interim Conference. Aware both of the obvious need for some realignment and of the pitfalls connected with such an undertaking, the Program Committee had among other subjects formulated the above topic and assigned it to the undersigned. Now that our CLC, organized some two years later, is approaching its own Tenth Anniversary, it is perhaps in order that we re-examine our original ideals. Were they sound? If so, have we held to them? Are we still of the same mind?

This is the reason for reprinting them here and at this time.

E. Reim



I.

When your program committee asked me to write a paper on the subject indicated in the above title, I welcomed the assignment, not for the sake of having something to keep me busy (that has been the least of my problems during these recent months) but for the sake of the topic. Although the committee gave me a free hand to reword its formulation, I have left it just as it appears on the conference program. It recognizes the necessity of a realignment. It suggests careful deliberation rather than precipitate action. It implies that we do not consider ourselves the Remnant, but as part of a remnant; not the end-product, but a stage in a process of sifting, the duration of which is entirely in the hands of our good Lord. Above all, it recognizes that there are "Things to Guard Against,"

dangers to be faced, pit-falls to be avoided, temptations to be overcome. I am well aware of the responsibility involved in the writing of such a paper. I know that this will call for searching and perhaps painful self-examination and self-criticism. I pray that you may not be disappointed in the trust which you have placed in me.

We are gathered as a group that has taken matters of doctrine seriously, both with regard to the statement of such doctrine, and the way in which it is to be translated into life. We have come through a crisis and arrived at a decision. At such times it is so natural to relax, to find a certain measure of satisfaction in having stood one's ground, to engage in a process of building up one's own self-esteem, usually at the expense of others who (in our estimation)* did not meet the test so well. For after all, haven't we stood for the right doctrine?--Or we may sense the danger of such an attitude of complacency and, feeling the need of justifying ourselves before the world as well as before our own consciences, launch forth into an endless round of reviewing the issues, restating the arguments, refuting the counter-arguments, reformulating our conclusions--all with the plea that we are contending for the doctrine! Yes, let us hold fast to the form of sound doctrine. But let us not forget another matter which also calls for our keen concern. In his letter to Timothy (I, 4:16) Paul says: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them, for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

This Apostolic word suggests not only the need for, but also the direction of our study. Let there be no doubt as to the need, namely that we take heed, that danger threatens. Paul spells this out for us in detail when he warns, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." And the direction of our study must be that we search our own hearts, frankly and unsparingly. For the foe who has wrought such havoc and confusion in our be-

* This does not, of course, imply that the issue itself is merely a matter of human judgment.

loved Synod** is still at work. The partial success that he undeniably achieved last summer will not satisfy him. If some have resisted him when he was seeking to move us to the left, in the direction of indifferentism and incipient unionism, will he not then seek to swerve just those into the opposite direction? To ignore this danger would be the very blindness against which the Apostle so urgently warns us.

Satan is defeated when men stand on the simple truth of God's Word. But he gains precious ground, not only when men weaken in their adherence to this Word, but also when in an excess of zeal they go beyond it, when they seek to fortify it by well-meant but misguided additions of their own. That is how the Scribes and Pharisees became what they were in the days of the public ministry of our Lord. Let us clearly understand that one particular danger facing us lies in the direction of developing a superorthodoxy, an arrogant attitude of pride and self-esteem that someone in Germany has with rare discernment described as "Lehrgerechtigkeit." I am not suggesting that this would be anyone's conscious and deliberate attitude. But that Satan will be trying to move us in that direction, of that there can be no doubt. And since he did not hesitate to use God's own Word in tempting our Lord Jesus, he will certainly come to us also with his deceitful "It is written." There is good reason for careful and even critical scrutiny of the way in which others have handled Scripture in our controversy. We shall need to continue this procedure. But in so doing, let us learn to be most critical of ourselves, of our own method of interpreting and applying Scripture. Having some rather strong convictions, and aiming at some rather definite objectives, let us be sure, very sure, that we are really drawing those conclusions out of Scripture, rather than reading them into it. The Devil is an expert on the psychology of controversy!

** Referring to the outcome of the 1957 Convention of the Joint Synod of Wisconsin. -- Footnotes added for the sake of preventing possible misunderstanding.

Another vulnerable target at which he is sure to aim is our flesh, the flesh which we admittedly all have. Was he not already doing this when, long before we came to the point of breaking with our Synod, he showed us in greatest detail just what the dire consequences of such an action would be for our respective careers, when he pointed up the external advantages of staying with an organized church body, when he suggested methods of modulating one's voice of protest just sufficiently to remain in good standing, even while quieting one's own conscience by what one has said? Was not this the old familiar "Spare thyself!" "This shall not be unto thee!"? --And if, by the grace of God, this temptation has been recognized for what it is, will he not come right back with an attack on the other side of this same flesh, seeking to move us to an excess of righteous indignation, to a type of polemical discussion which is deliberately provocative and insufferably sure of having a monopoly of the truth? Furthermore, he knows all about the corrosive effects of self-pity, and will make every effort to lead us into feeling ourselves wronged, misunderstood, mistreated, and to see ourselves as men whose true worth has not been recognized--until we yield to discouragement and withdraw into a shell of bitterness and paralyzing hopelessness. There are many facets to this morbid phenomenon of the martyr complex, and he will explore them all in his efforts to ensnare us. He will try to close our eyes, our understanding, yes, even our hearts, to the efforts that others are making--perhaps along other lines than we have chosen, yet with the same end in view and in sincere support of the same principles. Their way may perhaps be by methods, the inadequacy of which has already been demonstrated to our satisfaction, but to which they still are clinging in a desperate effort to stave off what they--even as we--consider a profound catastrophe. If he can get us to ridicule their efforts, to denounce them with an air of lofty condescension, if he can get us to judge them without first sincerely seeking to understand their thinking, then Satan will again have scored a signal success in his unceasing warfare against the souls of men.

These are at least some of the dangers that confront us, or--as our topic has it--"things to guard against in our approach toward realignment."

II.

After touching on at least some of the dangers that confront us in our approach toward realignment, the hope is expressed "that recognizing the quality of these dangers will immediately suggest the nature of the cure."

It is first of all, of course, the example of our patient Lord and Savior Himself: who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously. Let us learn to pray the "Father, forgive them...", not with an air of smug superiority, but as men that are keenly aware of our own need for forgiveness, and who desire nothing more than the restoration of the fellowship that we have lost.

The Apostle Paul elaborates the thought suggested by the above words of Peter, when he writes to the Philip-
pians (ch. 2:5-8):

*Let this mind be in you, which was
also in Christ Jesus:*

*Who, being in the form of God, thought
it not robbery to be equal with God:*

*But made Himself of no reputation,
and took upon Him the form of a servant,
and was made in the likeness of men:*

*And being found in fashion as a man,
He humbled Himself, and became obedient
unto death, even the death of the cross.*

The point which the Apostle is here making, the mind that he would cultivate in his Philippians, is the double one of humility and obedience, or better still, the blending of these two concepts into the single one of a humility that manifests itself in absolute obedience. We shall do well to take each of these concepts by itself; Note how Paul emphasizes the amazing quality of the humility of Christ by

pointing to the fact that though He was God, He did not exploit this to His own advantage. Forgoing by deliberate design the opportunities to build His own reputation, He took the successive steps that were to lead to His shameful death. The mind fails to grasp such utter humility, such complete forgetfulness of self. Yet that is the attitude which Paul is trying to instill in us. This will cure us of all posing, of the striking of heroic attitudes, of any attempts to become dramatic in the role that has fallen to us--as well as of any tendency to become impressed with a sense of our own importance. This will make us willing to be truly humble servants of God, after the pattern of the EBED JEHOVAH, the great Servant of Isaiah 53. And yet, even here a word of warning must be spoken. For true humility is not achieved by talking about it. It is not for us to describe ourselves in such terms time and again. Such an attitude can become both pharisaical and nauseating. Rather than talking about it, let us simply be humble, and let others say it of us. We know that we shall never achieve perfection in this Christian virtue, but we shall be on our way.

The humility of our Lord culminated in His obedience unto death, an obedience that did not falter even though it was the most shameful and cruel death that human ingenuity could invent. It was an obedience that followed along the way that the Heavenly Father and His Holy Spirit led, that implicitly accepted every decision that was thus made for Him. -- Here again our obedience inevitably falls far short of that perfection of our Lord, so that our sole comfort is that He was obedient for us, fulfilling all righteousness. And yet we follow after, haltingly indeed, but earnestly nevertheless, in order that this mind be also in us, which was in Christ Jesus. Learning His spirit of utter willingness (I delight to do thy will, O my God.--Ps. 40:8); observing His method (It is written--It is written again); striving for that attentive listening which notes every inflection, every shading of the Word (which is the real HYPAKOUEIN); and finally, the full and unqualified acceptance that simply says, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Admittedly, we have much to learn in this respect. But surely, we can desire no other way.

III.

In addition to these references to the example of our patient Lord many other apostolic injunctions are given, all for the sake of fortifying us further against the dangers of which we have been speaking. But surely, none goes into the matter more thoroughly, and none appeals to the heart more strongly, than Paul's great hymn in praise of Charity, AGAPE, -- of Christian Love! And what can be of greater practical value than the section which so eloquently describes this love in action? -- verses 4 to 7 of First Corinthians 13:

Charity suffereth long, and is kind;

In the face of severe trials and opposition, of injustice and malice, of injury and persecution, it does not give way to anger, does not aim at reprisal, but reveals something of that MAKROTHYMIA which is most often attributed to God in His patient and forbearing way of dealing with sinners. It shows something of that kindness, that CHRESTOTES that was characteristic of the ministry of Christ. In short, it shows something of a spirit of which the human heart is utterly incapable save when it has been transformed by the gracious work of the Spirit, where a spark has been kindled that has its origin in the pure flame of the Love of God, the God whom we love because He first loved us.

Charity envieth not,

Is not given to jealousy, even where there is such a wide difference in the distribution of what are commonly called "the good things in life," as in the case of Dives and Lazarus.

Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

The thought of proud boasting is utterly foreign to it, even as it always must be when we remember the example of Him who made Himself of no reputation, but took upon Him the form of a servant. It does not become enamored of its own reflection as seen in a sort of mental mirror, it aspires to no place on a pedestal. It is a very sober thing, having both feet on the ground, the solid base of God's Holy Word.

*Doth not behave itself unseemly,
seeketh not her own,*

Even in what are often considered the minor matters of common courtesy, of polite conduct, of good manners, Charity has no difficulty in conforming to the pattern that constitutes the accepted SCHEMA of the life that brings us into daily contact with countless other men. It has no difficulty here, because it has discovered the secret of all true courtesy: not seeking her own. To be considerate of others - how different things become when viewed from this perspective! And how many doors are opened that might otherwise have been barred only the more firmly by the lack of these qualities!

*Is not easily provoked, thinketh no
evil;*

The "easily" of the AV may be misleading, as though grave provocation would justify stern retaliatory measures. The Greek is simple: OU PAROXYNETAI. Charity is not enraged, does not react violently to insult and injury, nor is it embittered thereby. OU LOGIZETAI TO KAKON. It does not brood over the evil that it may have suffered. It does not keep book on these things, taking each separate incident that has occurred, each wrong that one may have suffered, and entering it, as it were, in a voluminous ledger with indelible ink! How wonderful that in the one account book that includes the sins of all the world, God is ME LOGIZOMENOS, not imputing their trespasses unto them. Let that serve as the cure for bitterness on our part.

*Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but re-
joiceth in the truth;*

Just when it seems that Charity must be a weak and ineffective weapon against evil and error, as though it were simply yielding the verdict by default, there comes this turning point. Charity does not abdicate in the face of evil. It does not weakly condone what has occurred. It does not fail to react, does not yield to indifference. When confronted with wrong, with ADIKIA, it is fully capable of recognizing this for what it is, namely an affront to, and a denial of, the righteousness, the DIKE of God. It is grieved as indeed it must be, particularly when this

ADIKIA is threatening to disrupt, or has perhaps already disrupted, a very precious bond of fellowship. And therefore Charity is ready to go into action, as was the case when Paul took the Corinthians to task for their disorderly conduct at those feasts that were dedicated to the cultivating of AGAPE, but which had nevertheless degenerated until a true observance of the Lord's Supper was made impossible thereby (I Cor. 11). We see it when Paul reproved this same congregation for its default in a serious matter of church discipline (ch. 5), as well as for their factionalism (ch. 1). He did it likewise in the case of the seducers of the Galatians, even as he had done to a fellow-apostle, Peter, withstanding him to the face, because he was to be blamed. (Gal. 2:11) For Charity knows the lone remedy for such a situation, the one way of restoring what once was and removing the occasion for grief. It rejoiceth in (with) Truth. It does not trust in the skillful use of human reason, it does not operate with the argumentum ad hominem. It invokes the Truth, the absolute Truth of God's Word - that Word of which our Lord said, "Thy Word is Truth." That is the one measure which under such circumstances can alone be effective.

Yet in all this Charity is still Charity. Love has not ceased to be Love. But it is Love bound by the Word of God. It is Love together with the Truth. SYNCHAIREI DE ALETHEIA. The two go hand in hand. If Charity would forsake this Truth, it would cease to be Love, AGAPE, a love that is a reflection of the Love of God. If, therefore, this Word of God prescribes stern measures, Charity does not hesitate to apply them, for it knows that they have their origin in God's desire that all men be saved. It may shrink from the thought of a separation, and yet will accept it nevertheless, if God directs it. It has but one thing to go by, and that is the Word, to which it resorts ever again - for its own enlightenment, as well as for the means of restoring the joy that was. And it is in the use of this weapon against ADIKIA that God's grace has put into our hands that Charity meets its final test.

Bear eth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Yes, it is no light task that Charity is undertaking. There will be many difficulties with which to cope, mountains of misunderstanding to be removed, pangs of disappointment to be endured. Nor will it be easy to gain even a few successes, for there will be failures without number. Yet Charity assumes the burden, for it has not lost sight of the goal. This is why it is also so ready to believe the best, so unwilling to let its efforts be undermined by suspicion or doubt. Charity really works and speaks "in all good faith." It has no time for pessimism. It hopeth all things, not with a fatuous Pollyanna type of optimism, but because it has committed matters to the grace of God, because it trusts in the power of his Word. That is why it endureth all things. It has learned to wrestle with God like a Jacob, and like an Abraham interceding for Sodom and Gomorrhah it has learned to win one concession after another with its unabashed pleading. It has a tenacity that time and again has snatched victory from defeat - and will do so again.

That is Charity! We need it!

Without it --

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not Charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not Charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not Charity, I am nothing.

But with it --

Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is CHARITY.

God grant us a full, rich, ever increasing measure of His Love! AMEN

E. Reim

== PREACHING THE WORD ==

THOUGHTS FOR PENTECOST

The Text: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." 2 Corinthians 4:5a.

An observance of the Pentecost festival brings us fresh reassurance and comfort for our faith. It is an occasion at which we are once again made aware of how faithfully the Holy Spirit of God undertook the task of making the Gospel unfailingly clear to men. He did this through the preaching, teaching and writings of the Apostles of our Lord. His tongue of fire spoke through them. The Truth revealed in Jesus Christ was presented to the world, not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches. The language of the Holy Ghost is understandable to the human heart which He enlightens by His message. Men can know the Truth; and the Truth works saving faith.

But Christians may ask: What happens to this Truth when sermons report it today? Do our preachers speak with the tongue of the Holy Spirit? What about differing interpretations of the words of the Holy Ghost? Why is there confusion in doctrine?

In confronting these and similar questions, let us not lose sight of the basic truth of Pentecost. Jesus assured His disciples: "If ye continue in my word ye shall know" (John 8:31-32). The Holy Spirit who at Pentecost revealed how this promise comes true will not fail us. He will make all the Truth unfailingly clear to us. Men may reject it; but that is their own fault.

Yet it is entirely proper for us to inquire about the relationship between present-day preaching of the Gospel and the comfort of Pentecost. No man since the Apostles and the other authors of the New Testament Scriptures has been inspired as they were. Yet the Holy Ghost speaks also through those whose preaching is like that of Paul who asserted of himself and his co-workers: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord."

I.

"We preach not ourselves." What did Paul mean with that statement? Did he mean that he never preached about himself? Obviously that was not his meaning; for he did frequently speak of himself, his work, his success, his difficulties, his feelings. Nevertheless he did not preach himself: he did not try to put himself across to his hearers, that is, his own personality, his own attitude, his private views, his subjective ideas, so that men could say: That is how Paul saw the Truth; that was his personal theology.

Let us consider a typical example of what it is like when preachers do that, when they preach themselves. Leafing through the pages of a religious book written by a pastor of London's City Temple one comes to a portion in which the author is referring to that well-known Bible story of the stilling of the storm on the Sea of Galilee. Our Lord was in a boat with His disciples when the storm arose and threatened to sink them, and the disciples were very frightened. Then Jesus stood up, stretched out His hand and said: "Peace, be still!" In explaining this, the author expressed his belief that Jesus spoke those words to His disciples, not to anyone or anything else. He was, it is said, commanding them to quiet their hearts and be calm.

This story is related in Scripture by three men moved by the Holy Ghost: Matthew, Mark and Luke. And all three inform us that Jesus was speaking to the wind and the sea. Thus Mark writes: "He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea" (4:39). But this clergyman-author writes: "He spoke - as I believe - to His disciples.

Whom was this man preaching? Without regard to the words which the Holy Ghost had taught the writers, and therefore without regard to Christ who gave the Holy Spirit to His Church, he placed his own intellectual interpretation upon the event. This kind of preaching is being done constantly and in many places. Out of it arise human doctrine and confusion. It is all done in the name of the Lord, but

not by His Spirit. The deadly nature of such preaching, as the sainted Dr. F. Pieper pointed out in one of his sermons, is that it does not and cannot save men, but can only destroy their faith.

One of the famous preachers of early America was Phillips Brooks. In the city of his ministry, Boston, a statue of him was erected near the center of the city; and it attracted much attention from the multitudes that passed by. But it was not the figure of the preacher which created the interest. The monument is made up of two figures. Closely behind the image of Dr. Brooks stands the figure of Jesus Christ with the right hand laid upon the preacher's shoulder as if to push him forward into the crowd.

The story is told that some citizens did not like the artist's expression very well. They said the idea behind it was old-fashioned; and they had another statue made, of Dr. Brooks alone. They wanted him standing on his own two feet, as it were. The new statue was put up a few blocks away from the old one, and for a year or so people passed them both. But the new one was soon not looked at any more. The old statue commanded all the attention. So the new one was ultimately removed, and the old one stands to this day. For the mass of sinners, for mankind in its need, a preacher without Christ is nothing. He preaches only himself.

The ministry of the Gospel is as solemn a task as it was in the days of the Apostles. The Christian pastor is not like others who use the spoken word to influence men; he is not an attorney, a politician or a statesman. These may spin their own theories, impose their personal judgments upon their hearers and hope to persuade with rhetoric; they may titillate their minds with enigmatic utterances or insinuations and leave them to draw their own conclusions. But the Christian preacher is, above all else, a herald, a proclaimer who dare not proclaim himself or what is his. He must not even be outstandingly individualistic in the pulpit, but an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostle Peter says: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God . . ." (1 Pet. 4:11). Oracles are sayings; and in Christian preaching the sayings

of God must hold the floor, wholly and entirely. This can be done only when Christ is allowed to speak; and Christ speaks when the words that the Holy Ghost taught the Apostles and Prophets are faithfully presented, expounded and applied. When this is done, the Holy Spirit speaks today; and all that He says leads to Christ. No matter what the subject, all Scripture is Christ's message to us for our faith and unto salvation in His blood and righteousness. When this is proclaimed, every pastor can say: I preach not myself, but Christ Jesus the Lord!

II.

There are many who claim to be doing this, and are not. Therefore Christians may still be beset by doubt and misgivings. The question of interpretation is brought up. So much depends, they say, upon how a preacher interprets the Word of the Lord. Some say it means this, others say that it means something else. Even when men preach Christ, they may preach Him differently. How may one be sure that Christ Jesus is actually being preached, and not the preacher?

The Apostle writes: "We preach Christ Jesus the Lord." Let us begin there. We have been told and shown how wonderfully the Holy Spirit made it possible that the preaching of the Apostles was, without fail, the Truth as it is in Christ. The words were His, and the words were clear. They are and remain that to this day, even when they have been translated into other languages. This difficult work has also been wonderfully done. The Holy Spirit has seen to that. He who enabled the Apostles to preach in many tongues has guarded and protected and preserved the Word also through translations. Though human beings err, and therefore even the work of confessing Christian scholars such as Luther was not perfect and needs to be improved here and there, the Holy Spirit has graciously provided such aid that even where the translation did not perfectly reproduce the original because of a deficiency in the linguistic knowledge of the translator, this does not affect the clarity of any of the doctrines of Holy

Scripture, which are all fixed in clear, correctly translated passages, and in many of them. We still have a sure, prophetic Word! When it is preached, Christ is preached in truth and purity.

And how do we recognize when this is being done? We must not let a false use of the word "interpretation" frighten us from our hold upon the blessed promises. Scripture can be truly interpreted in only one way, namely, when it interprets itself. The words of the Holy Ghost are always clear. Let us remember that. When we know what a word means in our language, we know what the Holy Ghost said. Moreover, Scripture reveals its meaning when we compare one passage with other passages dealing with the same subject. For a divine truth is not taught in one verse only, but in several or many places in Scripture. The God who redeemed us, lost and condemned sinners, certainly did not leave Himself without adequate witness toward those who trust in Him for their salvation. If through weakness of our mind we fail at once to see what God's Spirit is saying in one place, we bring the rest of Scripture to shine upon that place and thus learn the Truth. Our Savior has taught us to do this, as have His Apostles.

It is Satan, not God, who makes this seem complicated and difficult. But the Holy Ghost speaks through Peter, saying: "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby." (1 Pet. 2:2). Do infants have trouble discerning their natural food? Let us believe the Holy Ghost, not men. Then shall we know when Christ is being preached and when men are preaching themselves. Indeed, and we shall also know in ourselves whether we are following Jesus, or ourselves.

.....

UPON GRADUATION FROM A CHRISTIAN SCHOOL.

The Text: "... From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

2 Timothy 3:15-17.

By common consent it is agreed that congratulations are in order these late May and early June days. As many thousands of young people are being graduated from day-schools, high schools and colleges, their friends and relatives gather about them to wish them well. To be congratulated what does that mean?

We will be observing in our midst the graduation of the members of classes who have completed courses in our Christian elementary and secondary schools and are entitled to congratulations. Let us express these in our own way. As is so often the case, we cannot here honestly follow suit with the world. In general, graduates are congratulated because they have achieved something. They have managed to pass their tests, they have put their minds to work and mastered a course, they have won some sort of victory, and for this they are honored. It is like congratulating an athlete who has completed and won an obstacle race.

For thinking people it ought to seem far more fitting to congratulate students for what they have received than for any effort they have put forth. Understanding this point of view, it is possible for us to congratulate, not only the graduating classes of our Christian day-schools, high schools and college, but all of the students in them who have finished another year of training, and their parents as well. In doing this, we are following a fine, Scriptural example; for thus, in our text,

St. Paul congratulates Timothy

For the things he has learned
For the success they bring him.

I.

"From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures." These are words of congratulation; for they speak of the true achievement of education.

The end of the school year is report card time; and report card time is a time of judgment, for the children and for the parents. For teachers also, we may add; but chiefly for the pupils and their parents. Report cards pass sentence on the work that has been done in the school. The subjects are listed and marked according to the pupil's relation to them. This can be important. But unfortunately this is all that many parents and children seem to see. How can one tell from a report card what effect the school term or the school years have had upon the soul of a child? This cannot be measured by grading; and yet it is the most important element in education. What has the school done for the child? Here they have spent so many of their waking hours. Here their characters have undergone extensive development. Physically, mentally, socially and spiritually they have absorbed more shaping influence than their report cards will ever show. Teachers and school, books and laboratories, libraries and gymnasiums leave their mark on the coming generation; but you won't find this mark on report cards.

Therefore the end of a school year is, primarily, a time of judgment for parents. God holds them responsible for what happens to their children in school. In truth it is an unusual thing that parents do when they send their children to school. They would vigorously resist the idea of putting them into the care of any other type of institution with a similar degree of control over their children, or placing them into the hands of some professional group to feed, clothe and house them. Yet they do exactly that in the realm of education, of character-building. For the result they must then also be prepared one day to give account to God. Do they know, then, for what they are actually congratulating their child at his graduation? They will be wise if they do not merely have the report card or diploma in mind. It may even be well for them to hope that

the child has not learned too much; especially that he has not acquired an allergy toward absolutes.

Nowadays, when a person breaks out with a rash on his body, the doctor may tell him that his disorder is due to an allergy. He is allergic, perhaps, to dust, or to dogs, or to paint. From then on this person tries to avoid the source of his trouble. Modern education has often made young people mentally and spiritually allergic to absolutes. They have been so trained that they face life with the suspicion that nothing is really sure, nothing is final, nothing is absolutely true. They are not sure about anything. For them there is no absolute right or absolute wrong. Everything depends upon the occasion, the opportunity and how you feel about a thing. They shun finality; it makes them nervous. They have been turned into people without a sure and certain hope and without a true aim in life. Are such to be congratulated?

In the Apostle's message to Timothy we have a list of absolutes. These are truths which have always been and will always be. As the North Star is fixed in one position and thus becomes a sure guide for anyone, no matter in what swamp or wilderness he may have lost his way, so it is with the things Paul mentions. "Salvation - there is but one, prepared by God for lost sinners. It was in God's heart before time began, and its content is unchanging. Faith in Christ Jesus - there is but one, just as there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby they may be saved. The Lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world is the Way, the Truth and the Life. It does not depend upon how we see it, or how we look at Him. He has revealed Himself and His work. Righteousness - there is but one which avails in God's sight, namely the righteousness earned and won for us by Christ. We have no choice here, no alternatives. And last, but not least, the Scriptures - inspired by God, inerrant, infallible, they are powerful because the blessed Holy Spirit works through them in the hearts and souls of men.

In the true sense of the word nobody has ever really learned anything unless he has been taught to live by these absolutes. And nobody can manage to make anything

sensible or profitable out of his life unless he charts his course by them. And what pupils have gained or achieved in this direction cannot be put on report cards. Such wisdom is learned by daily living with the Scriptures from childhood on. This does not merely mean learning a few Bible stories and memorizing a few Scripture passages. It means to know the Scriptures: to be at home in them, with them, and especially with the Spirit who alone teaches such wisdom.

Congratulations are indeed in order for those young people who have been trained in a school where the divine absolutes have become their foundation and their compass, What Paul said of Timothy is true of them. They are to be congratulated upon the great blessing which they have enjoyed. Their parents are to be congratulated. The Lord has enabled them to give a good answer to the perplexing problem of parents: What shall we do so as to be able to give a good account to God for the training of our baptized children? For all concerned, graduation from a Christian school is a triumph of God's Grace.

II.

But have we no interest in the earthly future of our children? Do we lay no stress upon the development of their minds for successful living? What have we been doing for them in the three R's? We would answer this as the Apostle answered it. We would congratulate as he congratulated Timothy; not only for the things he was privileged to learn as a child, but for the success they brought him.

In what way was Timothy's training profitable? In this, that he had become thoroughly furnished unto all good works. We consider: Could anything more be asked or required? Let us look for a moment at the quality and content of success being offered the children of this world as a result of their schooling.

We need not rehearse the story of the countless millions of dollars that are being lavished upon public educational facilities in this country annually, with the purpose of giving the youth every opportunity for success and

equipping them to advance to the top. Yet there is a growing complaint that the younger generation is bringing us a serious shortage of well-qualified leaders in almost every area of life. Reliable reports indicate that we have an inadequate supply of physicists in this atomic age; that we are short thousands of engineers and lack the necessary number of physicians. Certainly this is not due to restricted means for training them. But youngsters are growing up without any serious convictions and loyalties. Their understanding of success consists of a luxurious income in exchange for little work and plenty of leisure time.

On the other hand we are also getting something else. Every day we are shocked by statistics and stories of juvenile crime and lawless irresponsibility. And we ought to be shocked! But what is the answer? Are we still to look for it in the three R's, in more modern equipment, in youth programs and the like?

Timothy's mother and grandmother had a youth program, and it worked. The result was that Timothy was thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Can one ever hope for more? This does not mean that he always made full use of his equipment; but at least he had it. For every human work that was good, profitable, beneficial to himself and his fellow-man, he had the means. And that is what you cannot say of millions of our young people today. Good works, a good, sound life that makes use of all physical and mental talents allotted to us, are not guaranteed by intellectual knowledge alone. This can be just as useful in the service of crime. The equipment for good works comes from having learned the Holy Scriptures and being filled with the Spirit of the living God. To be without this is like a costly watch without the mainspring. And that is what is happening to much of our youth. It is hard to congratulate them for being graduated into active living without a mainspring.

Parents of children who have received a Christian training enjoy a satisfying comfort. However their children may fail God and their parents, it will not be because they have been sent out into the world unequipped to meet it. The power of God has been active in their basic training;

and there is no other road to true success. They will not all achieve the highest honor among men, nor will they always supply that which a sinful world will require of them. But that is good, too. For they are furnished unto every good work. The devil gladly assumes the job of furnishing them for every evil work. But this had been countered with the wisdom of God and the love of Him. They have been taught to understand that they are children of the most High; and if we look to them for great things, we are not asking too much. They have the furnishings. For this God is to be thanked, and our young graduates are to be congratulated.

E. Schaller



== PANORAMA ==

The Millennium -

How?

In an editorial appraisal of the current socio-political scene the Reformed-fundamentalist periodical "Christianity Today" (issue of April 26, 1968) has made some incisive and courageous observations which in these days are rarely seen in print. Having commented on the aftermath of Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination and on certain Administration policies at home and abroad, the editorial cuts into the core of the prevailing modern philosophy, exposing its sick heart:

"The invisible thread that holds together many major headlines is the pursuit of political millennialism. Over and above the persistent and necessary denunciation of social injustice, contemporary Americans seem obsessed by a passion for social utopia and look to politico-economic forces to provide it. Whether they center the coercive pressure for a new order in revolution (as do Communists, radical theologians, and black-power militants), or in welfare legislation for a Great Society (as does Lyndon Johnson), or in non-violence escalated into civil disobedience for political goals (as did Martin Luther King), the assumption reigns that environmental re-adjustments can achieve the ideal future society.

"Despite deepening awareness of rampant wrongs and social evils, most vocal leaders today ignore human degeneracy and the stark need to humanize fallen man. Contemporary analysts focus on social and economic imbalance as the fundamental problem of history. Their underestimation of man's sinfulness, and consequent unrealistic view of society, spells inevitable disillusionment for proponents both of reform and of revolution. Modern crusaders borrow their indignation against social evils from prophetic Judeo-Christian sources, yet forfeit the revelatory and regenerative facets of scriptural revelation. They concentrate instead on limited politico-economic objectives."

" If and when peace returns to Viet Nam, if and when the United States has enacted the last necessary item of civil-rights legislation, and if and when racial tension comes to an end, Americans will discover that their hearts are still restless and troubled. One can forgive Ho Chi Minh, stranger that he is to Christian views, for pursuing the delusion of political millennialism. But one can only pity Americans - white or Negro - who nibble at the same materialistic bait."

One can also only wish that Americans who lard their utterances with phrases resembling the values of the Christian faith while they deny its content might hear and honestly evaluate such forthright testimony. And it is to be deeply regretted that we must ask whether their studied

indifference to the admonition may not, at least in part, be due to the inherent contradiction which mars the Christian image of the editorial's testimony and colors the theology on which it is based. Granted that "only the Christian revelation holds out hope for a new and better future," as the editorial affirms; but a future - when? And where? Does the Christian revelation contain its own theory of "political millennialism?" From the editorial it would seem so. For it closes with this message:

" The demolition of liberal optimism need not lead to hopelessness that turns only to violence and destruction as a last resort - a solution that undermines the foundations of social stability and human worth. Christ's incarnation and resurrection are the pledge and assurance that human nature can be recovered for enduring righteousness and dignity. Because of His triumph, sin and injustice cannot forever prevail. "

In its context such a statement will immediately be understood as advertising its own brand of millennial promise. It seems to encourage the hope that mankind is indeed capable of establishing a state of earthly felicity if only the power of the risen Christ is acknowledged and allowed to work. It implies that a superstructure of perfectionism can be erected upon the foundation of Redemption and Sanctification. Such a version of utopia is as unscriptural and vain as any other. The kind of "enduring righteousness and dignity" that would assure an ideal society is not to be achieved by human nature in its present environment, and the Risen Christ holds out no such prospect to the world. To suggest that He does is to promote further a cruel deception which, being widely preached in past decades, has only succeeded in causing countless disillusioned people to turn their backs upon the true hope of the Gospel and remain untouched by its regenerating power.

E. Schaller

THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT -- United Bible Societies' Edition. American Bible Soc., New York. Maroon Plastic, \$1.95, Red

Morocco, \$4.40, Small Cloth Edition
(Pocket Size), \$1.25

This new edition of the Greek New Testament is the fruit of an undertaking sponsored jointly by the following Bible Societies: American; British and Foreign; National of Scotland; Netherlands; Wuerttemberg. Headed by Kurt Aland (joint editor with Erwin Nestle of the latest editions of that standard text), an editorial committee of four worked with a group of forty-three other N T scholars from twelve different countries for almost ten years.

Their goal: to publish the Greek text without the familiar mass of cumbersome detail concerning innumerable variant readings, and to do so without sacrificing the accuracy of the text or the high quality of editorial supervision and final product. Impossible? Not at all -- for, at least in the judgment of this reviewer, it has been done in this UBS edition of the Greek New Testament.

The overall plan was simple, direct, -- and bold: to reserve the critical apparatus for only those "variant readings significant for translators or necessary for the establishing of the text." So at one stroke the bulk of petty detail was reduced by more than ninety percent. This is instant recognition of the fact that most of the variants recorded in the standard texts either deal with minor matters or have no vital bearing on determining the text. They are indeed there, and so they have to be recorded and documented by someone. But fears that they might undermine the reliability of the text have been proved unfounded.

Another benefit resulting from this basic decision is that by the elimination of the many references to the apparatus the text itself has become much more readable. Yet the apparatus has not been skimped. On the contrary, this new design has enabled the editors to make the important references more informative than ever before. Documentary sources such as ancient lectionaries or quotations gleaned from the writings of the church fathers are added to the manuscript evidence previously listed, sometimes with powerful effectiveness. The apparatus is the better for this new material.

Another innovation (new at least to us) is the method by which the editors have indicated the degree of certainty for the readings they have received into the text, ranging from "A" (virtually certain) to "D" (very high degree of doubt). This is refreshing frankness. It does not mean, however, that the D-classification consists of inferior readings, readings that are poor for lack of manuscript support. It means rather that the evidence is so evenly balanced that the final choice of the editors must have been difficult indeed. Galatians 4:25 is a case in point. The apparatus reveals an almost even weight of evidence for the several readings, and the rating of "D" marks the problem. The reader must be made aware. Yet the entire question is only whether the name of Hagar, Abraham's maid and the mother of Ishmael, shall appear twice, first as the last word in verse 24, and then again as the second in verse 25. The former version would call for the AV and RSV translation of verse 25: "This Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia," a reading which is hard to understand. The latter is a simple geographical statement (NEB: "Sinai is a mountain in Arabia"), enabling one to follow the racing thoughts of the Apostle and put Hagar, Ishmael, Sinai and Law (as it was being pitted against the Promise) into one single category of law-mindedness. An obstacle has been removed. The thought has not been changed. But the reader has been fully and fairly informed and thus enabled to make his own choice.

Other examples might be listed, but this should be enough to support our conclusions: on the one hand, that this new type of text and textual criticism will not and should not supplant the work of Nestle's and similar editions; but that on the other it will prove a valuable supplement to the standard works. It will be an invitation to the student who does not consider himself an expert in regard to the technical methods of textual criticism that seem so formidable to the amateur -- an invitation to avail himself of the best fruits of that scholarly specialty and to benefit by this easier access. That is true joy for one who has learned the value of going to the sources in his Bible study. We welcome this valuable addition to a pastor's library.

E. Reim

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