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# **Mission**



**SEPTEMBER 1968**

# Mission

IN THIS ISSUE

SEPTEMBER, 1968

Vol. 2, No. 3

|   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| EDITORIALS .....  | 3                       |
| THE LAMP AND THE MIRROR ..... <i>William J. Cook, Jr.</i>   | 5                       |
| THE DILEMMA OF CHRISTIAN YOUTH ..... <i>James Wilson</i>    | 8                       |
| THE DREAM LIVES ON ..... <i>Thomas A. Langford</i>          | 12                      |
| THE VISITOR UNAWARE ..... <i>E. E. Rice</i>                 | 17                      |
| SONG OF THE INNOCENT ..... <i>Neva Goodwin</i>              | 20                      |
| PILATE'S WASHBOWL ..... <i>Lewis Randolph</i>               | 21                      |
| CONFERENCE ON RACE RELATIONS .....                          | 24                      |
| MEDITATION ON THE LORD'S SUPPER ..... <i>Elton D. Higgs</i> | 26                      |
| MISSION REVIEWS ..... <i>William N. Fryer</i>               | 27                      |
|   | <i>Everett Ferguson</i> |
| MISSION FORUM .....   | 29                      |
| MISSING THE MARK ..... <i>J. W. Roberts</i>                 | 30                      |

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## The Atlanta Conference

Some may feel that the Atlanta biracial conference (see report in this issue) was anachronistic. Surely the church of Jesus Christ should already know that all men are the creatures of one God and that in Christ there is no distinction of persons. But the Atlanta conference was realistic.

Once again we are forced to realize that the church is composed of human beings—fallible human beings. Christians are children of God, but we children are often found to be juvenile delinquents. Or, in biblical terms, we are often prodigal sons. Occasionally we “come to ourselves” and confess to our Father, saying, “We have sinned against heaven and in thy sight.” Our hope is that our Father is as forgiving as the father of the prodigal son. And we hope that our brethren will forgive one another as our Father forgives us.

But we have always taught that repent-

ance precedes forgiveness. Here is the rub. It is one thing to confess our sins and display our guilt; it is another thing to *do* something to change the status quo. The proposals drafted at the Atlanta meeting are intended to be reasonable and realistic means to accomplish the end of discrimination in all of its forms in the life of the church.

If Christians are committed to the Word of God and its teachings, if Christians are willing to hold their Christian principles and practices above the local customs of men, then there is no reason why discrimination should continue in the churches. It may take longer for the secular society to end its discrimination, but if Christians are serious in their concern to avoid worldliness, then we should be ready to avoid the worldly attitudes and practices of racial prejudice and discrimination—NOW.

## Are We God-like?

Christians are to be “as God in the world,” as William Cook reminds us in this issue. But the dilemma which many face—especially among the youth—is that sometimes God-like attitudes and actions are more visible outside the church than within it. This is the dilemma of which James Wilson speaks, and it is one that should be considered seriously.

It has been customary to fear that young

people will be lost either to atheism or to some denomination. Our counter-attack in the first instance has consisted especially in the use of “Christian evidences” in order to demonstrate the truth and worth of Christianity over against atheism. Our counter-attack in the second instance has often been two-fold: (a) to argue for the “true” church and (b) to fashion the accessories of the Church of Christ more and more



after the main-line denominations (similar buildings with gracious interiors, similar youth programs and various status symbols).

But all of this is irrelevant to the dilemma of which Wilson speaks. He speaks of youth who do not need to be convinced about the truth and worth of authentic Christianity. He speaks of youth who are not really attracted by the status of main-line denominations (their youth are frustrated too). He speaks of youth who agree that Christians should be "as God in the world," but they are troubled because it seems to them that God-like values and practices are sometimes more evident among certain individuals and groups in the world than within the church.

An example of such an individual is offered in this issue: Robert Francis Kennedy. Of course, Kennedy was—and remains—a controversial figure. Author Thomas A. Langford does not offer unqualified support for Kennedy or the programs with which he was associated. What Langford does say is that in certain ways Kennedy exemplified Christian attitudes and actions that are worthy of emulation—not because of Kennedy but because of Jesus Christ. Even at this point you may wish to disagree with the assessment of Kennedy, but one thing is certain: many people, especially young people, share this assessment. If you want to begin to understand the attraction of Kennedy, read this article.

At the same time it should be recognized that the dilemma of youth as Wilson describes it carries with it a criticism of the church. How shall we react to such criticism?

It is easy—and very human—to react

defensively. I don't imagine that the Jewish lawyer who asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?" took too kindly to Jesus' parable in which it was a Samaritan, not a Jewish priest or Levite, who really practiced love of neighbor (Luke 10:25-37). After all, the Jewish lawyer could have argued (a) that many Jews do practice neighborly love, and (b) that in any case the Samaritans are doctrinally wrong since they worship in the wrong place, etc., etc.

We can even react to criticism inhumanly and offensively. The Israelites didn't like the criticisms of Jeremiah, and they jailed him. Jesus followed in the prophetic tradition, and you know what happened to him.

Or, we can profit from criticism.

We profit from the criticisms of Jeremiah and Jesus because we believe they spoke the truth. We listen to them, we assess ourselves in the light of their critical words, and, hopefully, improvement follows. We consider the criticisms of Jeremiah and Jesus to be "positive" criticisms, not "negative"—even though some of their contemporaries differed in their assessment.

Today the question of whether criticism is "negative" or "positive" depends in large measure upon the way in which we react to it. Some criticisms may be unjust. Some may be ill-founded. But we ought to listen. We ought to assess ourselves when criticism is made. And if the critic happens to be correct, we may be able to improve.

We are to be "as God in the world." We can learn what God is like from the Bible. The question which some critics are raising is, "Are we God-like?"

—RBW

## REMINDER

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## The Lamp and the Mirror

WILLIAM J. COOK, JR.

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him . . . ” (Genesis 1:27).

What does this statement mean? It has been properly interpreted, at least in part, as meaning that man is not the physical image but the spiritual image of God (John 4:24). Thus, the significance generally seen in this special creation is that man was given the ability to think, to reason, to love, to trust, to experience remorse, *et cetera*—abilities not granted to lower animals. However, to limit the significance to mental, psychic, or spiritual *capabilities* of the human being is to fail to understand the essential *nature* of the Christian.

The apostle John admonishes his fellow Christians toward greater purity of life by reminding them that as God’s children they are to be characterized by Godlike traits: “As he is, even so are we in the world” (I John 4:17). Just as Adam was originally sinless and in spiritual harmony with God,

so Christians must seek to develop the spiritual character that will restore them to a true likeness of the Heavenly Father, to the Divine Image. This is the purpose of the eternal plan of salvation.

Suggesting that Christians are “as God in the world,” John does not fail to illustrate exactly what this phrase implies. In the first epistle he discusses at some length three inclusive and essential characteristics of God, characteristics which he would have Christians cultivate in themselves. Repeatedly, God is spoken of in terms of (1) light, (2) love and (3) spirit.

*. . . light . . . the essentially righteous nature of God . . .*

The symbol of *light* is used to represent the essentially righteous nature of God. It is a theme not only in John’s epistles but

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throughout the Bible:

And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. (I John 1:5)

Light is symbolic not only of the righteousness of God but also of the revelation of this righteousness, of the incarnate Word of God, of Truth or knowledge of Truth. The Colossian letter contrasts the "kingdom of darkness" with the "kingdom of his dear Son" (Colossians 1:13). Peter also refers to God's kingdom as one of "marvelous light" (I Peter 2:9). Moreover, the Word of God is constantly identified with light: the Psalmist declares that "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my pathway" (Psalm 119:105); and Paul speaks of the "light of the gospel of the glory of Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:4).

Christ, the Word incarnate, who is "the image of the invisible God," is also described in the terms of light: Jesus himself declared, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12); and John in his account of the gospel introduces Christ as "the light" (John 1:4-9).

With Christians, as with his people from the beginning, God demands that his righteousness be shared. In fact, the identifying characteristic of the Christian is seen in Scripture as righteousness, metaphorically figured by light. Christ specifically uses this figure to speak of his disciples, calling them "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). Furthermore, in reference to the relationship of the Christian to the Word, Christians are said to "have the light" (John 12:36); they are encouraged to "walk in the light" (I John 1:7); and their defense against evil is the "armour of light" (Romans 13:12). The Christian's relationship to God, i.e., *saved*, and to the world, i.e., *saving*, is beautifully summed up in Paul's teeming metaphorical statement:

For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of dark-

ness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:5, 6)

*. . . the love of God . . .  
perfected in the hearts of men . . .*

But God is also revealed as *love*. Essentially, "God is love" (I John 4:8). He is, therefore, the source of and reason for all Christian love (I John 4:19).

So great is God's love for the human race that he gave his Son to save man from the consequences of unrighteousness. Jesus, our atonement, was the epitome of divine love; he willfully redeemed man; and he showed man how to love.

But the love of God is incomplete until it is perfected in the hearts of men. Christians perfect the love of God by responding with obedience to the Word, by loving their brethren, and by sharing God's truths with others. Only growth to a spirit of love that encompasses God, fellow Christians, and lost souls can approximate the essential nature of God:

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God loved us, we also ought to love one another. No man hath beheld God at any time: if we love one another, God abideth in us, and his love is perfected in us . . . (I John 4:10-12).

*. . . the Spirit . . . the identifying  
mark of sonship . . .*

God is also revealed as *spirit* (I John 4:13). This essential quality of God is personified and designated especially in the New Testament as the Holy Spirit, one of the persons in the Godhead. Throughout Scripture it is God's Spirit that deals directly with man; in fact, the Holy Spirit has been frequently referred to as "God with man."



The Spirit is the agent by which God effects his will toward the human race, for it is through him that God reveals his light and love.

The prophets delivered God's word by inspiration of the Spirit; the apostles spoke and wrote by the power of the Spirit that Jesus was introduced into human history. Accordingly, the birth of Jesus was accomplished by the Spirit; his miracles were performed by virtue of the indwelling Spirit; his death was "through the eternal spirit" (Hebrews 9:14); and his resurrection was by the power of the Spirit.

Since the Spirit is promised to baptized believers, Christians share the Spirit of God as the identifying mark of sonship. By birth of water and the Spirit man is sanctified by the Spirit into the spiritual kingdom of God. Because Christians have been sanctified or anointed by the Spirit, he is able then to bear witness to them that they are God's children. Paul is explicit in assuring Christians that the Spirit dwells in them as individuals and as the church. Paul further describes the visible results of the indwelling Spirit (Galatians 5:22-26); in this way the Christian experiences and demonstrates the

completeness of his response to God's mercy. Probably the most succinct statement of the total spiritual relationship between God and man is this passage from Romans:

But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you (Romans 8:9-11).

. . . *the "new man"* . . .

For the Christian, then, the phrase "in the image of God" is especially significant because it describes the true Christian nature. Only by a studied reflection of the light, love, and spirit of God can the Christian assume the character of the "new man," the "spiritual man," the one who can truly say, "As God is, so are we in the world."

Men become what they are, sons of God, by becoming what they are, brothers of their brothers.

Martin Buber  
*Two Types of Faith*

Lord, give us all a nice feeling this morning. May Thy special blessing be with those who will be active in this service while the rest of us sit still and listen. We pray that we may enjoy the preliminaries, and that the sermon may give us all a glow. I know I have offended at least two people this week with my quick temper, but please do not let the thought of that intrude upon this spiritual feast. Praise God. Amen.

David Head  
*He Sent Leanness*

## The Dilemma of Christian Youth

It should come as no surprise today if ungodliness sometimes is found within the church and righteousness is observed in the world.

But suppose the world should become more Christ-like than the followers of Christ? Of course we who consider ourselves Christians do not foresee any such possibility, but there is some pretty confusing evidence to deal with.

Our fathers could clearly distinguish between the teachings of the Hardings, the Lipscombs and the Brewers and the selfishness of the world. But during the last generation in this country and most especially during the most recent years it sometimes has seemed that the world has been turned upside down.

When love and non-violence seem to have their most meaningful expression outside the church; when the most uncompromising opponents of murder and war are not the preachers but the irreligious; when the greatest critique of materialism is presented by bazaar social drop-outs; when sympathy for the misery of the masses abroad and concern for the aged, the infirm, the poor at home is greater among governmental bureaucrats than within the collective leadership of the body of Christ—at such a time is it any great wonder that there is confusion?

Many of the rising generation of younger Christians have been greatly disturbed in comparing the teachings of Christ, the church and the world today. Some have subsequently left the fellowship entirely. Others have no intentions of breaking with what they consider the closest thing to the New Testament—but they have spoken out on what they considered to be inconsistencies. Still others have quietly gone about





their long-made plans of filling their father's shoes in the pulpits and other places of responsibility in the church—but they have been deeply disturbed within.

For some it is hard to distinguish between what our preachers uphold in theory and what the Eugene McCarthys, the Jack Kerouacs, and the Sargent Shriveres are practicing. More disturbing still is the fact that at times the differences are apparent and those who profess little or no faith in Christ seem closest to his principles. "By their works you shall know them" causes many a conscientious Christian today to wonder.

*. . . the church has failed to inspire many of this generation . . .*

What image does the church present?

Take the race question, for example. Western Reserve University sociologist Jeffrey Hadden in his newly published *A House Divided* disclosed studies showing that 45 per cent of regular churchgoers "basically disapprove of the civil rights movement." Professors Glock and Stark of the University of California (Berkeley) more recently reported that among white churchgoers in California nearly half say that they would move out of a neighborhood into which Negroes were entering. It was found that conservative Protestant bodies were the most prejudiced of all. No studies have been made of members of the Churches of Christ alone, but the results would be predictable.

All too often the only voice heard within

the church has been that calling for action in granting rights to Negroes and that showing more concern for property rights than for the poor. Christian leaders who should have been showing an example of faith in peaceful principles have been among the earliest to despair and call for trust in armaments. Some seemed almost to be taking a page from the Middle Ages with their kill-a-Communist-for-Christ philosophy. Only derision was given to the young who saw too much hypocrisy in the world to want to conform to its standards. While the world took up the very theme of ecumenism that brought the Restoration Movement into being, Churches of Christ divided themselves over a score of petty questions.

There have always been many temptations to draw youth away from the church. But the new temptation from without differs greatly from the more classical lures of physical and intellectual pleasure, of selfishness or of ease. It is now possible that the rising generation may note greater good outside the community of believers than within it. Instead of a flaking off of the weak or nominal Christians, we could now see a dropping out of some of the most dedicated and idealistic of the youth.

The young Christian may look at the church today and see its main work as the hiring of preachers to preach to the already taught and the building of buildings to seat the already comfortable. Nor is there even much to commend in either the speaking or the architecture from the purely esthetic viewpoint—not to speak of the viewpoint of the transcendental nature of religion. "The medium is the message," thinks the

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young idealist in McLuhan terms, and he chooses to expend himself in a secular movement.

That the church has failed to inspire many of this generation is obvious. Each fall the graying heads in the Bible Departments of the Christian colleges sigh as they count the number of freshman Bible majors. They remember nostalgically the day when nearly all young men in Christian colleges aspired to be preachers. There was a time when the most talented sons of Christian families turned proudly to the pulpit as their life's work. Today, in spite of the greatly increased salary scales, the attractions of the ministry have weakened. Even with the added professions of music or education director, minister to youth and others, the proportion of full-time church workers has dropped considerably. Those who in a former day would have been seen preaching as the principal channel for directing their New Testament inspired idealism now are shunning it as a career. Some are rejecting even the church itself.

*. . . a new approach to  
Christian witness . . .*

Where have they gone? They have gone into medicine and psychiatry. They have become social case workers. They have gone into governmental agencies such as Vista, the Peace Corps or the Job Corps. They are public school teachers or college professors. They have chosen all sorts of service professions—maybe doing a bit of political work or even protesting on the side.

That the largest percentage group of students in Christian colleges today intends to teach should be indicative of something. Many are going to large metropolitan areas, maybe with an exodus group, where they often find jobs teaching the underprivileged children of the slums. Of course not all or even most of these are Young Turks, but

they have all chosen a new approach to Christian witness.

Even the most innocuous clean-cut preacher boy in the most stalwart of the Christian colleges might surprise some of his older admirers if he expressed all his feelings of ambivalence about what sort of figure in the 1960s most typified the teachings of Christ to him.

*The times call for strong men  
to speak for the right . . .*

What is to be done?

The problem must be attacked head-on. This is not the Wait Generation. American society, not to mention most of the world, is passing through revolutionary times, and the Churches of Christ are not going to escape unscathed. If the church has lost its spiritual leadership, it can regain much of it by standing up now as the most disinterested spokesman for righteousness in human relations.

Some may say that the church is not something that can be led. No matter how idealistic its leaders are, it moves at the will of those who compose it. This is to assume that Christianity is some sort of electoral process whereby the majority decides what is good or evil. The church is no popular democracy; rather it is the reign of God on earth. The times call for strong men to speak for the right. The church should not be outdone by the world in this competition to do good.

We must always be ready to endorse good works wherever they may appear. We must put aside the concept that the only purpose of helping the needy is to entice them to worship services. Teach them when we can, of course, but that is not our only goal. Loving the unlovely and helping the down-trodden are Christian ends in themselves.

There is not a great deal to admire in a money grubbing rising lower middle class. This is the picture many young people have



of the church today. Their elders talk of keeping in the old paths while they glide through the slums in a shiny \$4,000 automobile on their way home to the trim suburbs. The principles of Christ may not change, but the inequalities of man do.

A church militant led by vital and significant men can reclaim a great deal of the idealistic leadership of this generation. But also a second and maybe even more difficult step should be taken. Not only should the church assume greater moral responsibilities itself, but at the same time it should readjust its attitude toward good works which may happen to be done outside of the sphere of obviously religion-related works. We should welcome rather than distrust the new age of man's concern for man. We need not celebrate the secular city with such gusto or so uncritically as a Harvey Cox, but it is time that we admitted that Christian ideals may be promoted outside the traditional channels of the brotherhood. Rather than cast doubt on those in social development, we should commend their efforts.

*. . . in Christ . . . refuge  
from meaninglessness . . .*

None of this is to say that man can live by bread alone. If the older, more experienced generations suppose that youth's present emphasis on demonstrative Christianity will lead to a lessening of spirituality, they should observe the young moderns more closely. On the contrary, youth today is highly skeptical of mindless materialism alone—as the expression of the Hippy fad clearly demonstrates. The young Christian has in Christ that refuge from meaninglessness for which his frantic fellow students or co-workers search. There need be no fear that "you are in the world but not of the world" is forgotten today. As the Beatles put it, "We all live in a yellow submarine."

The new spokesmen are just trying to put into practice what they have been taught

all of their lives. The germ of most of the "radical new ideas" was probably planted in them while they still wore crew-cuts and sat lined up with their buddies on the front pew of the church back home. There is no need to blame liberal professors, leftist entertainers or opportunistic politicians for their opinions. A sympathetic reading of the Sermon on the Mount plus a drive through any nearby urban ghetto could very well do the trick.

In conclusion, we live in a society which—though jaded in many respects—claims and often practices a standard of social morality more demanding than that of the church. The totally irreligious man today is not uncommonly more concerned for the good of his neighbor than the average faithful Christian. The parallels of the good Samaritan and the Pharisee are frightening. Yet rather than an attack on the value of religion, the times present great opportunities. The church must wake up to the challenge.



## The Dream Lives On

THOMAS A. LANGFORD

Not long ago we heard tributes to a great American leader who had given his life to the cause of human brotherhood and the most fundamental Christian principles. He was a man who grew up in the South, knew poverty firsthand, and chose to serve the people who needed him through religious leadership. Like many other great leaders, he was cut down in the prime of life, when his dream was approaching only tokens of fulfillment. And his death as a martyr became an even more powerful force for the cause he had lived for.

Just two months later another great leader was cut down in his prime, the victim of hatred and political insanity. He was not like Dr. Martin Luther King, if you consider merely outward circumstance. He was not born in the South; his parents were among America's wealthiest. Where Dr. King served as a churchman, he served as a representative of the people in government circles. But these outward circumstances are perhaps the least significant as we think of the two men whose earthly ends have come so close together and in so similar a way. For though Robert Francis Kennedy sought the highest office of our country, he was very much a man of the people, as was Dr. King. Though the sena-

tor was a millionaire, many times over, he shared the burden of the nation's poor and had adopted as an integral part of his political platform measures to deal with that poverty. And though he was a Roman Catholic, he believed, as did Dr. King, in the God of Abraham and Isaac, of the Jew and Gentile, bond and free, in the God whose revelation our founding fathers trusted and built. Senator Kennedy had won no Nobel Prize, but the esteem which a grieving nation displayed showed that he shared that plateau of greatness for which the Nobel committee honored Dr. King.

It is thus fitting that Christians who come together to honor the lowly Gallilean and to learn of his ways pause to mark the life of a man who dedicated himself to human needs and, in so many ways, exhibited the principles and compassionate concern of Jesus Christ. The Scriptures themselves instruct us to mark those who have followed the example of Christ, that we may learn from them. I am not suggesting that Robert Kennedy was a man without fault, or that our tribute to him should go beyond that due to men. But insofar as we have seen in his life an image of what Jesus teaches us to be, or a pattern for the concerns with which our heavenly Master would have us

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involved, we rightly reflect and pay our respect.

*. . . be rich in good deeds . . .*

Inasmuch as Senator Kennedy was a rich man, I have thought of Paul's writing to Timothy:

As for the rich in this world, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on uncertain riches but on God who



richly furnishes us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good deeds, liberal and generous, thus laying up for themselves a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life which is eternal.

The Scriptures frequently warn us of the real dangers of riches, of their power to turn us away from compassion, humanity and spiritual pursuits. Hear Paul again:

Those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and hurtful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of

money is the root of all evils: it is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced their hearts with many pangs.

It is against such teaching as this that Robert Kennedy's life is so remarkable. With his wealth, he could have remained on the sidelines. With the hazards and almost unbearable responsibilities of political service, how much easier it would have been for him to concentrate merely on increasing the personal satisfactions which his wealth might be presumed to afford. But for Robert Kennedy, as for his brother John before him, personal satisfaction could be measured only in service to mankind, to the country whose problems cried out for solutions. How famous have become those words: "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask rather what you can do for your country." I have remarked before how similar this sentiment is to the spirit which Jesus had and which all true disciples of his seek to have. It is the spirit of service, of unselfishness, the spirit of those who do not see themselves in isolation, or as individuals self-contained, but as involved with all men as brothers, suffering when others suffer, rejoicing when others rejoice. It is the spirit of which John Donne wrote in that passage made famous in Hemingway's novel:

No man is an island, entire of itself. Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.

And so Robert Kennedy sought public service and, having entered it, sought for higher levels of office. Some have interpreted his bid for the presidency as evidence of mere personal ambition and a desire for power. Others of us saw him as a man dedicated to his country and its unfulfilled promise, as a man who was impatient with his government's halting and ineffective efforts to alleviate human misery and racial separation, as a man reaching for the ulti-

mate leverage to hasten reform. We honor him for his example of dedication, the more remarkable because of his personal background of comfort and wealth. And we mourn for ourselves and our country now that his leadership and example are taken from us.

*. . . good news to the poor . . .*

I recall that when Jesus, early in his personal ministry, returned to his home synagogue in Nazareth, he arose before the congregation and took the Book of the prophet Isaiah, reading the following passage:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

We have read and heard this passage in the traditional religious context, so that we regard its message in only the figurative sense. It is true that Jesus was perhaps most interested in the spiritual welfare of people and that his gospel was primarily the good news of spiritual salvation. But we must not forget that wherever he went, Jesus was moved by human misery, by poverty, disease and ignorance. He forgave men their sins, but he also healed their bodies and fed their physical hunger. It is in the light of this human compassion (or should we say heavenly compassion?) of Jesus that the greatness of men can be measured today. Jesus saw others as creatures of his Father, a part of himself. He was indeed "involved with mankind."

It is not thus blasphemous to measure Robert F. Kennedy against the pattern of Jesus. For the Christian, this is the only valid criterion for judging the lives of men. Robert F. Kennedy also sought to bring good news to the poor. Dr. Ralph Abernathy, leader of the Poor Peoples Campaign in Washington, said, "He was our friend.

He was one of the few people in Washington who really wanted to do something about poverty." Although he was personally wealthy, it was not among the affluent that the senator found his greatest strength and support as he sought the presidency. It was the poor who were caught by his message and encouraged to hope by the good news he sought to bring.

In a very definite sense Robert F. Kennedy felt sent "to proclaim release to the captives, . . . to set at liberty those who are oppressed." As Attorney General of the United States, he took the task of enforcing the nation's new laws against discrimination and enthusiastically supported those who sought to break down the barriers against brotherhood and human dignity. He recognized that the black citizens of our nation had for many years suffered a captivity not much less degrading than that their fathers endured before the Civil War, that although in theory they were free, in fact they were still oppressed and hampered by attitudes unworthy of a civilized nation. And so, although he was a white man, Senator Kennedy had no stronger source of support than that from the Negroes of this country. They knew that, although he was not alone in his influence, Senator Kennedy has contributed immeasurably to the changes that are taking place in the country's attitudes. Because of the leadership of such men, attitudes which once were almost universal among whites, are now seldom voiced without apology and self-defense. Persons who once were ridiculed and charged as agitators for extending their hands across the racial barrier are now regarded with respect, and the racist and bigot is beginning to be uncomfortable in respectable society.

*. . . recovering sight to the blind . . .*

The lamentable thing about our past discrimination is that we have always known better but were blind to the hypocrisy and



inhumanity of our behavior. It has been men like Robert Kennedy who have aided in the process of "recovering sight to the blind." History will reveal, sadly enough, that that institution which supposedly best represents the teaching of Christ, the church, has not always led the way in the field of basic human rights. And in the Church of Christ, there are still many who, although they read their Bibles regularly, are so blind as not to see such passages as Paul's "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh" and James' "If you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors." Such "Christians" do not hear James say, "If you say to the poor man, 'Stand there,' or 'Sit at my feet,' have you not made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?"

Is it not likely that when the church and her leaders become so blind as to permit and encourage such anti-christian discrimination and racial prejudice, God raises up men in government to help the blind recover their sight? Though not the first of such men, or perhaps even the most influential, Robert Kennedy was certainly one of those who helped the nation and the church to see the state into which time and tradition had carried them. And because of such men, both the nation and the church are gradually moving to levels of brotherhood which enlightened institutions ought to have occupied all along. There is much yet to be done. We have a long way to go. But the examples and leadership of men like Dr. King and Senator Kennedy make our own course clear, even as that course had been clear all along for those who have read their Bibles with unblinded eyes, without the unfocused spectacles of tradition and narrow orthodoxy. May God hasten the day when all who are blind recover their sight, and our spiritual astigmatism may be healed in the refocusing power of Christ's own love.

***Without love . . . tinkling brass  
and sounding cymbals***

I am not so much interested in praising Robert Kennedy as I am concerned to impress upon our consciousness as Christians the principles which he advocated, principles which I feel are in the truest sense biblical and Christian. The text which we have considered from Isaiah foretelling the mission of Christ in the world ought to be the theme for all who claim to be his disciples. He was anointed to go to the poor, the benighted, the oppressed; we are anointed to follow in his footsteps. As a people, we have not always done that. Satisfied to preach what we identify as "gospel" from our pulpits, we have not frequently brought really good news to those living in poverty. All of our eloquent sermons about the plan of salvation and the right church bear little relevance to people whose bellies know with hunger, especially when we show no concern to share our comfort and affluence with them. "But if any one has this world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and truth." Our preaching has done very little to change the world because a "gospel" without love is merely "tinkling brass and sounding cymbals."

Leo Tolstoy, the Russian novelist, brought upon himself the scorn of his family and the world because he took Jesus so seriously that he liquidated his holdings and gave all he had to the poor, seeking to make himself one of them. We observe that he was not very successful, that his experience was a failure. But how much credit was due to him for trying! At least he did not share our guilt for loving merely in word and speech and not in deed and in truth. His was not just a theoretical religion, a philosophy reserved for discussion and analysis, but a way of life, however imperfectly practiced.

Senator Kennedy knew that our nation could not indefinitely ignore its poor and ignorant—that if compassion would not



move us now, consequences eventually would. And what is true of the nation is equally true of the church. Compassion calls upon us to do more than talk religion. It calls upon us to become involved with mankind, to move into the arena where life's battles are being fought, to herald the good news of the kingdom of heaven by giving purpose to life on earth. If the church refuses to be involved and continues to wait for the world to get respectable enough to come to it, it will wither into oblivion in the atrophy of an organ which has lost its proper function. With the candlestick of the Lord removed, it will fade into the darkness of history as the relic of another age.

### ***The real church will never die . . .***

I hasten to say that I speak of the church as we know it, the institution of our childhood, the establishment religion. The real church will never die, for in every age God's saints pursue his work. When the organizational church becomes so phlegmatic and insensitive that it no longer reflects his will, the called out will do his work in other ways, quietly but faithfully moving among the world which Jesus died to reclaim from its fallen state. From the church on Park Avenue we will turn again to "the church in thy house" which the Scriptures so frequently speak of. Elton Trueblood wrote twenty years ago in his *Alternative to Futility* that the real hope for our nation might well lie in small groups of Christians, praying, worshipping, working with the intensity of those who have been saved to save others. The passing years have made Dr. Trueblood's observation more timely than ever.

I am hopeful that traditional institutions may yet have the vitality to respond to the hour's needs. Robert Kennedy never gave up his belief in American democratic institutions, although impatient with a lumbering bureaucracy. His faith in the people, and their power to respond to critical problems never wavered. Though impatient with authorities, he continually stressed the

necessity of respect for the authority of law and counseled the orderly and responsible expression of all dissent.

May we not hold equal hope for our religious institutions? The winds of change are blowing. The ecumenical spirit and desire for spiritual renewal, if not yet universal throughout the church, has affected all Christians and may yet produce the harvest we look for. The fruit of hatred, strife, division and indifference is becoming too monstrous to be tolerated by people who think at all. God help us to be the agents of that change which we know he wills. Dante wrote, "In his will is our peace." May we never have peace while we are indifferent to his will and anesthetized by our own comfort and false well-being. Another (I cannot now recall who) has written:

The will of God is the only basis of our peace. The whole harmony of the universe is a harmony, just as the universe is a universe, because of the one in whom all things hold together. Anything that sets itself against the current of his will is a disharmony. It is doomed to ultimate defeat because it is attempting the impossible task of making a multiverse. Those whose wills are not offered to the divine will, seeking to be one with it, finally are found to be in a state of "dis-ease." Health is to be in harmony with environment.

Spiritual health is to fit into the environment of God's will and purpose.

Finally, Senator Edward Kennedy said at his brother's funeral, "My brother need not be idealized or enlarged in death beyond what he was in life. He should be remembered simply as a good and decent man who saw wrong and tried to right it; who saw suffering and tried to heal it; who saw war and tried to stop it." He was not an island unto himself, but was truly "involved in mankind." The torch has passed to those who are yet running. May our involvement hasten the coming of God's reign throughout the earth.

## The Visitor Unaware

E. E. RICE

An unpretentious almost totally unnoticed little man startled the entire population of the United States when he engaged two hours of prime evening TV and radio time. Many questions were immediately forthcoming. What's his racket? Who is he? Where'd he get the dough? Where's he from? And on and on.

The little man's picture appeared in all newspapers, news journals and TV news programs. The reaction was amazing. It seemed that everyone had some faint recollection of seeing him, but none could remember where or when. No one could recall his name or the exact nature of his contact with the little man. The excitement grew with each passing day, and finally the big day arrived, the day when the little man would address the nation and shed some light on the greatest mystery of recent times.

The TV announcer, conducting the preliminary activities of the "Big Show," reviewed the events of the past ten days leading up to this moment. This commercials were completed. The network symbol faded. A slight tone announced exactly eight PM, and the millions of TV screens across the nation were filled with the face of the little man. He smiled, acknowledged a signal from off camera and began to speak.

"Good evening. My first task will be to identify myself, and then I will explain my purpose in reporting to you at this time. Let's say for the time being that my name

is TIM. Tim can stand for *The Inner Man*. You see, I have been visiting the spirit of every American Christian over the past few months, and I will now reveal you to yourselves as I report my findings to the One Who sent me."

When these words made their impression on a startled nation, all activity slowed and most of the highways soon emptied as a concerned populace centered its attention on Tim's message. The little man paused a few seconds to allow his opening remarks to sink in. Theaters and other arenas of amusement tuned their sound systems to bring the program to the few audiences who had shown little or no interest in the little mystery man.

Tim continued, "I have been sent to explore the Christian Spirit of America, to evaluate it, and report my findings to our Creator. My report will be completely objective and will cover many subjects. I encourage you to listen carefully, take notes and conduct your own personal evaluation as we proceed." There was a scurry for pen and pencil. Tape recorders were loaded and turned on. Note paper rattled everywhere for there would be no rebroadcast or video tape of the program.

For twenty-two minutes Tim reported on the many projects and activities, some national, some private, but all associated in some fashion with Christian principles. Some were to relieve suffering and hunger of the

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poor and homeless. Some were to battle diseases. All in some way or another reflected a degree of charity, that is, love and concern for mankind.

Tim leafed slowly through his notes, then raised his eyes to meet the smug and contented smile of the nation. "Now," he said, "I want to address your individual innerman, your spirit, your real self where you keep hidden your most cherished secrets. It is here, in your spirit, that I found the most frightening things imaginable. It is here that I found so many Christians weak, afraid, calloused, unconcerned, arrogant and full of fear. Why, I asked myself, should this enlightened age sow so much darkness and despair? I explored your spirit further and seek answers to this most perplexing situation. I found answers in each one of you, but since time will not permit an individual report, I will speak in general terms, and each of you can apply the remarks to himself as appropriate."

All but the most essential activities to keep this nation alive had ceased by now. Many listened and watched with sincere concern. Others scoffed. Some were indifferent. Some complained that their favorite programs would not be seen tonight. Many also heaved a big sigh of relief when Tim promised to generalize. At least no names would be mentioned.

Tim continued, "Although you appear to be strong individuals, I find you are really a quivering symphony of fear. You have lost or failed to find the basic lesson in the words 'love drives out fear.' I found the fears of losing wealth, possessions, face, health, and position as dominant, even to the extent that you violate your own spirit and conscience thus creating a greater fear. This paralyzing enemy of a healthy spirit was most evident in those with the most for which to be thankful, if they would but be honest with themselves. From my observation, there must be some kind of rule that says 'fear of loss grows in direct proportion with attainment.' This is utter nonsense if

attainment is by honorable and lawful means and responsible stewardship is practiced. Therefore, you have not learned how to cope with abundance, and your spirit must be trained in love, humility and the true meaning of stewardship. You must again learn to take a stand for what your spirit knows and assures you is right and accept the consequence."

Tim paused a few seconds to reflect on what he had said. Many Christians asked themselves, "Can that apply to me?" Tim continued, "My next observation is equally perplexing. In your spirit I found much genuine love, that is, well-wishing for your casual acquaintances and strangers, but utter dislike for many of your closest friends. Is it true that 'familiarity breeds contempt'? There seemed to be a great expectancy for *others* to be perfect, without fault or weakness, while you, yourselves, forgive yourselves even before you do wrong. I even noted some singing praises to God in your assembly while their spirit was busy condemning Mrs. X for her short skirt and Mr. Y (He looks so smug and righteous). And there were thousands of other thoughts completely incompatible with the song. ("With their lips they praise me, but their heart is far from me.") My friends, perfection left this earth way back in the mid-30s in the form of the risen Son. Yet, you continue to look for it in everyone and fail to see that only by the grace of the Creator does anyone remain in His favor. The fence post in your own eye makes you completely inadequate to remove the speck of dust from the eyes of Mrs. X and Mr. Y.

"Each and every soul is precious to its Creator, and there is no expressed relative value or worth between them. The Father sees two categories only: lost and saved. The contemporary mansion of the soul has no significance, whether it be red, brown, black, white, fat, slim, straight, or crooked. Who can judge a gift by the wrapper? Therefore, your judgments are basically empirical in nature and lack spiritual in-



sight. I'm sorry I have to report this, for you've had over 1,900 years to develop spiritual discernment, but you are no better off than that old Job's friends. This is a most discouraging condition as the Father clearly proclaimed himself as Spirit and also as Love, but you have yet to grasp even the slightest meaning of the message. The Father still loves the unlovable, and the Son still holds the door of adoption to the family wide open. He will not break down the door of your heart, but with every pulse he knocks to be admitted."

Again Tim paused, checked the time and reviewed his notes. Christians shifted in their seats, and some even admitted that the remarks had hit them a little. Most were glad Tim was in the TV studio where they could see him and not poking around their spirits again. Tim cleared his throat, looked slightly upward, then leveled his gaze on the camera. "The Bible is on the best-seller list again this year. As I visited your land I found God's message not only the best-seller, but the most discussed, most quoted, most neglected, most misused and most misunderstood volume in your world of books. I found some exacting a bit here and a bit there to prove a point. Another would throw up his hands and say, 'I can never understand it.' Another says it's out-dated; others, 'conflicting ideas.' Some simply label it 'hog-wash.' I even found some writing their own Bibles and revelations. God's message for man has been preserved. Why those who earnestly seek truth feel they must protect the truth is incomprehensible. Truth, the essence of God's message, stands—period. It was proclaimed without you and will exist when you are long gone. It is not a matter of who has the truth or who claims the truth. What really matters is 'What is the truth?' Simple and unrecognized by many, the *truth*, in all its glory, blinds its protectors.

"The heart of the matter is that you're ignorant, not stupid. You're just unlearned, and some, regrettably, unteachable. It is

true that you do not have Laws of stone, but you do have Laws of paper, tons and tons of paper. It was meant to be in your HEART, but I found very few hearts containing any of God's Law. You rush madly from one new 'truth' to another, ever seeking, never finding. For you ignore the message in the words, and praise the One Who brings them to you. Be still. Be quiet. Study. Pray. Hear the Lord. The Kingdom of God is the same today as it was explained by the Son in many parables. A new birth is still required, just as it was explained to Nicodemus. Many of you are ignorant of these simple facts, yet you show no interest or curiosity as to their meaning."

Tim fell silent. A puzzled look came across his face. He was listening with all his being to that which was unheard by all others. For a full two minutes Tim remained absolutely still. He smiled, looked into the TV camera and spoke: "There are many other subjects I would like to discuss with you, and I must apologize for rambling so much. My instructions have just been altered by the Power from above, so I must summarize quickly. Love, truth and spirit are the main topics discussed so far, and all other subjects are related to them. Think seriously about what has been said so far. My new instructions are for me to consider this as an interim report and return to your spirits for another quick visit to observe any change . . ." He was gone!

Many sat in near shock as they realized that Tim was once again on the loose. Maybe he's here, now. Some frantically searched for their misplaced Bibles. The churches were jammed. The spirit of America was troubled, concerned, even soft.

Two days passed. Mr. Arnold of Kansas City was seated next to Mr. Scott from Chicago as the big jet sliced through the clear sky. "Did you see that little fella on TV the other night?" asked Arnold. "Sure did," replied Scott. "But don't worry. The Big Movie will be back at the regular time next week."

# Song of the Innocent

In an unlit middle year of those darkest ages  
I was one of a great band of souls who travelled  
Across a harsh mountain, wooded, and cruelly gravelled,  
Where lay such snow that even the stones shuddered—  
This cold on their backs. Those forests had never before been awoken  
By voices. We sang, but in silence so large it could hardly be broken.

Coming down the far side of the mountain we slipped  
Repeatedly, and our horses too, so that they had to be led.  
Some horses died, and the silence was given to do what it would with the dead.  
I led a big horse. His breath warmed my hands holding the reins.  
This dream of mine, appearing in a tossed sleep, was so real  
That I was able to feel heavy foam on his bit, and the death's-hand cold steel.  
I could feel, too, the jostlings and dismay of that frightened crowd;  
It was so dark—so terribly dark! Some men tried to lead  
Or direct, but they, too, slipped and fell. They had as much need  
For a guide as the rest. Only one man, who walked near the front,  
Dared to sing differently. He had a deep voice that rang  
Out above all the rest, all the tenors. Being frightened, we sang  
Only a little less quietly than the snow, except for him.  
In strength he was gigantic, and taller than the rest. Almost coarse, robust,  
But a very simple man, of infinite compassion, and a giant's trust.  
As we descended the mountains we drew near the valley of shadows.  
The woods above became hugely dark, with the branches so enlaced  
We were forced to stand still; even the lights from the stars were effaced.

A baritone singer came out of the dark of the woods,  
Into the dark of our company, and he mocked us, telling  
In song of the sorrows and sins of our race, and calling  
By name all the cruelties mankind would do to mankind.  
And we were forced to listen, expressionless and heavy with remorse  
That these tortures were inevitable, that we could in no way avert the course  
Of the horrors that would come. Partly recognizing the dream,  
I tried to say that this pageant was nothing but myth in a book,  
But the book would not close. My eyes closed; I could not look.

After each mocking verse of the dark, laughing singer  
The company groaned, and we were forced to repeat all his song.  
Groaning, our souls had to lift up their voices and sing of their wrongs,  
But after each verse when the innocent sang it once more,  
And then he sang of hope. "Man shall hunt man," his words, "you  
"Will find yourself hunted. But here, by this thorn-bush the hunted may sue  
"For my mercy. Your refuge is here, by the mark of these thorns."  
So the innocent sang; but each new dark verse was so long—  
Some men said they saw light, but I felt we would never be out of that night and dark song.

—Neva Goodwin



# Pilate's Washbowl

LEWIS RANDOLPH

Have you ever read Walter Rauschenbusch's account of what happened to Pilate's washbowl? It is the parabolic portrayal of all who share with Pilate the guilt for the crucifixion of Christ, as they are seen washing their hands in his lavatory. Here is the parable:

On the eve of the day (of the crucifixion) the washbowl disappeared from the palace. Nobody knows who took it. Some accused Judas Iscariot of selling it; but that is plainly a libel, because Judas was honest enough to go and hang himself. At any rate, ever since that time, the Washbowl is abroad in the land, carried by infernal hands wherever it is needed, and men are constantly joining the invisible choir which performs its imperceptible ablutions therein. The statesman who suppresses principles because they might endanger the success of his party; the good citizen who will have nothing to do with politics; the editor who sees a righteous cause misrepresented and says nothing, because it might injure the circulation; the deacon who sees a clique undermining a pastor's position and dares not create a disturbance; the preacher who sees Dives exploiting Lazarus and dares not tell him to quit, because Dives contributes to his salary; the Sunday school superintendent who sees a devoted teacher punctured by pinpricks of well-bred jealousy and dares not champion her; all these are using Pilate's Washbowl. Listen! Do you hear the splash of water near to you? The Devil is pouring it.<sup>1</sup>

Let us contemplate the provocative question: what were the forces that were brought to bear on Pilate, inducing him to make such a mockery of justice? Perhaps there were many, but the two major ones are

quite germane today: (1) character weaknesses and (2) external pressures.

. . . *a superficial solution* . . .

Is it possible that Pilate had reached his level of incompetence? Had he perhaps overextended his intellectual and administrative abilities? Had he been a statesman, it is hard to image that Pilate would have made such a dramatic gesture of handwashing. Did not this reflect an innate weakness in the presence of these Jewish colonials, and would it not put Pilate in a perplexing position with respect to the emperor? If he declared Christ to be innocent, he might be asked why he had him executed; if, on the other hand Christ was guilty, then as governor, Pilate should have pronounced the verdict.

But if Pilate had been just and morally courageous, he would never have given such a sentence. The condemnation of Christ is in fact a dramatic display of the spiritual debasement of humanity. Men constantly acquiesce in slaying the innocent and the dispossessed in order to protect their own privileges, or to preserve the "right social order," or to spite the directness with which the preacher disquiets their self-righteousness.

Pilate's display of handwashing was a superficial solution to a problem of monumental dimensions. We also yield to the temptation of oversimplifying all of our problems. The simplest way to deal with a foe is to slay him. But if we recognize him as being human, one possessing a soul, we feel a sense of responsibility toward him. We live so that he may see Jesus, we act so that he will repent, we love him so that he may be our brother, and we pray so that he

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may say "Amen." Christianity is not a set of rules, nor is it a magic potion that will quickly solve all of life's problems. It is not specifically designed to solve moral demands *but to present them*. Such demands enhance man's awareness of guilt, and consequently, the grace of God becomes more tangible.

Since medieval times monks have entered the cloisters to slay their tempters, but in so doing they have only discovered that in such solitude they were to encounter the greatest tempter of all—themselves. We cannot destroy our adversaries by simply hiding from them, prohibiting them, ignoring them, or adopting legislation against them. John says that this victorious force comes from within man, "even our faith."<sup>2</sup>

To give a dime to a "bum" appears to be a simple solution to an ethical problem. But we must be warned that we dare not pursue it further if we are not willing to get involved. Why is he a "bum"? Is it alcoholism, domestic problems, unemployment, neurosis, or an inequitable social relationship that made him that way? The cardinal question is: can I help him to feel like he is my brother? How can he discover the love of Christ? It must be observed that the more complex the circumstances, the greater our involvement.

To be comatose toward the vagrant is solving the problem by slaying it. If this is our solution for the depressed and depraved of the earth, then we can hear the splashing of water in Pilate's washbowl. However, in wrestling with human problems, one knows that every expression of compassion will require more compassion; one act of mercy will demand forgiveness "seventy times seven"; each act of kindness will compel greater kindness. It will mean turning the other cheek, giving the overcoat and walking two miles instead of the one required.<sup>3</sup> Does not fellowship with Christ lead to a moral struggle: "Can you drink of the cup of which I drink?"<sup>4</sup> The fundamental truth is that through this struggle alone can one truly come alive in Christ. Only then will his passion and compassion for human and

spiritual health be revealed through us.

. . . *their rubber stamp* . . .

The puccillanimous Pilate was also the victim of intimidation by Tiberius Caesar and the mob. Pilate was a man for one season. He had his ear to the ground, and he would not rock the boat lest it blight his career. He half-heartedly admitted that others judged Christ and that he was satisfied just to be their rubber stamp to sentence him. He rationalized his decision by shifting the responsibility to the Jews.

But the will of the majority is not the divine oracle. Despite what we may think, democracy and the gospel are not synonymous. God is not exclusively American. It is gratifying to observe that the rule of the majority for our society has proven to be successful, but in history, the majority is seldom right. Some minority is. Therefore, it is imperative to protect the minorities; one of them may be the voice of God. It was in A.D. 33!

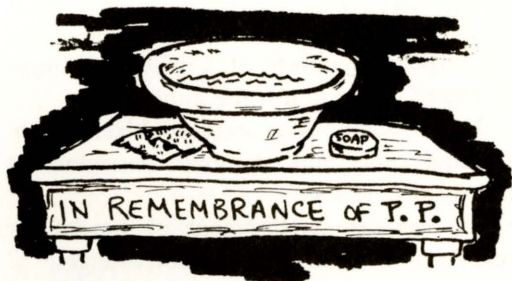
Senator Edmund G. Ross of Kansas is virtually a forgotten man in the annals of history. In the face of his opprobrious accusers, who labled him as "the beast," "Benedict Arnold," and "traitor Ross," he unflinchingly cast the deciding vote that acquitted Andrew Johnson in the Presidential impeachment of 1868. His refusal to be intimidated by his constituency and his colleagues cost him dearly. "He and his family suffered social ostracism, physical attack, near poverty, and his bright political career was sacrificed."<sup>5</sup> Time vindicated his decision so that he was later described as "the man who saved a President."

Edward Norman, editor of the Raymond Daily News in Charles Sheldon's *In His Steps*, risked his wealth, prestige, and future because he had the courage to act independently, being unshaken by the intimidation of popular demand. He struggled to answer positively the question, "What would Jesus do?"



Just as in Luther's day, the forces of orthodoxy attempt to indict those who dare to challenge our thinking and question our beliefs. These iconoclasts are tabbed or stabbed as being "modernists," "liberals," and "neo-orthodox." They are first ignored, then laughed at, then warned, then castigated in print, and finally ostracized and excommunicated. Once a year in various locations the "Party Presidium" reaffirms our self-confidence in having virtually reached the summit in the Restoration Movement. We unabashedly proclaim that now that we have restored New Testament doctrine, only a restoration of the spirit of Christ has eluded us. To question this is to invite the wrath of the "party bosses."

Regardless of the foregoing claims, the intimidating forces of the upper-echelons of the brotherhood, the emendators of religious journalism, or the members of the "body politic," there has been no restoration of New Testament Christianity, if such proclamations are canon law. Such an ideal in doctrine and in spirit shall ever be in the process of discovery. Not only should every congregation protect the preacher's right to search, explore, question, and challenge the tenets of our faith, but they should require



it! The question from the first century has not been, is it new, but is it true? Today's voices of concern must be heard, although intimidation through collective rebuke and harassment will do as it has always done: bury some truth and justice that we need to hear and embrace. It has been parroted with regularity: "We have the truth!" If so, why are so many afraid of questions? Truth is eternal, is it not?

. . . *pass the washbowl!*

Pilate could have saved Jesus, and he should have saved him; but there seemed to be less risk to Pilate in Jesus' dying than in his living, and so Jesus died. The plain fact is that everyone has some share in the deep guilt of the crucifixion. We must lay that to our own charge. No hand washing could have availed. How easily we think we can transfer our culpability! How easily we devise expedients to excuse ourselves! Listen! Can't you distinctly hear the dripping water of people washing their hands in Pilate's lavatory? Occasionally we hear it said, "I don't like racial segregation and discrimination. But, what can I do about it? It isn't my fault. It's not my responsibility." More frequently we complain, "Why don't they run our schools more effectively, produce better TV programs, and clean up the movies?" Our Pharisaical attitude rears its ugly head as we ask, "Why don't they improve our Sunday school classes, do more to relate the church to the community, encourage and involve our young people in the work of the church?" "I don't see why someone doesn't do something about it." Please, pass the Washbowl! Do your hands feel moist? Do you need a towel to dry them?

<sup>1</sup> Halford E. Luccock, *Living Without Gloves* (New York: Oxford, 1957), pp. 96-98.

<sup>2</sup> I John 5:4.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 5:38-42.

<sup>4</sup> Mark 10:38.

<sup>5</sup> John F. Kennedy, *Profiles In Courage* (New York: Harper and Row, 1955), p. 121.

## Conference on Race Relations

Approximately fifty Christians conferred in Atlanta, Georgia, in a two-day biracial conference June 25-26th to discuss ways of "improving race relations in the Churches of Christ."

Chairmen of the meeting were Eugene Lawton, minister of the Newark Church of Christ, Newark, N.J.; R. C. Wells, minister of the Harlem Church of Christ, New York, N.Y.; and Jimmy Allen, evangelist of Searcy, Arkansas.

The following statement was drafted:

We, the undersigned individual Christians, acknowledge the sin of racial prejudice which has existed in Churches of Christ and church-related institutions and businesses. Because we love the church of Jesus Christ and want to see her fully committed to the principles of spiritual equality and racial justice for all persons, we plead for the end of discrimination in all of its forms in the life of the church. To this goal the following proposals are directed:

### I. Re: *Local Church Activities*

1. Plan race relations workshops for church leaders and entire church membership (preachers, elders, deacons, teachers) in every region of the United States.

2. Encourage Christians to attend interracial meetings and worship with churches attended by Christians of other races.

3. Begin serious educational programs in local churches including sermons, to inform

the brethren of the Bible teaching on racial discrimination.

4. Integrate local congregations as those opportunities exist, seeking to achieve the meaningful involvement of Christians of all races in the total program of the church.

5. Publicize the fact that the church is open to persons of all races, if this is true.

6. Plan all cooperative efforts in evangelism and benevolence to include Christians of all races.

7. Evaluate all missions programs to ascertain if they are based on genuine fraternity, and not paternalism.

### II. Re: *Church-Related Institutions*

1. Increase efforts at Christian colleges to recruit more non-white students.

2. Consider hiring qualified black teachers and other non-academic personnel at Christian colleges.

3. Consider appointment of blacks for boards of trustees of Christian colleges.

4. Totally integrate all social activities at Christian colleges.

5. Study the possibility of introducing courses of learning on black culture and Afro-American history.

6. Sponsor a race relations workshop on every Christian college campus (making available printed materials on this issue to all students).



7. Urge Christian college lectureship directors and committees to plan lectureships on the theme of spiritual equality, using speakers of all races.

8. Integrate children's homes, homes for aged, and Christian camps and seek to have integrated staffs, boards of trustees, and counselors at camp.

9. Open all Bible Chairs to Christians of all races and seek to integrate staffs and all social activities.

10. Integrate the staff of Campus Evangelism. Program and develop interracial materials.

III. Re: *Herald of Truth* (only national mass-media effort of Churches of Christ).

1. Speak courageously on the sin of racial discrimination on both radio and TV programs.

2. Use blacks in TV film series in various roles (not simply subservient roles).

3. Use black speakers on radio and TV series in the course of a year.

IV. Re: *Publishing Companies and Christian Bookstores*

1. Solicit articles from qualified black

writers and ask them to prepare articles on all subjects.

2. Publish more articles on the issue of racial discrimination and injustices.

3. Publish more articles on news of activities of black churches and Christians, and run photographs of these activities when available.

4. Develop Bible school literature, books, film-strips and slides to include proper representation of all races—to aid in the process of identification for minority groups.

5. Urge Christian publishers and Christian bookstores to seek out qualified persons of all races to assume front-office jobs as well as the other jobs usually assigned to minority groups.

V. Re: *Christian-Owned Businesses*

1. Urge employment of qualified persons of all races.

2. Plan in-training programs to qualify members of minority groups for jobs other than deadend jobs, offering them the opportunity—if they are qualified—for positions of supervision and management.



—Flair Photographic

About 50 men met in Atlanta for a biracial conference on race relations. **First row** (l. to r.): O. H. Trone, Wesley Reagan, Prentice Meador, Jr., Robert Randolph, John Allen Chalk, Dwain Evans, James Thompson, James W. Nichols, William Caywer, Art Haddox, **Second row:** R. N. Hogan, Eugene Lawton, Roosevelt Wells, Jimmy Allen, Jim Bevis, Humphrey Foutz, Carl Bacchus, not identified. **Third Row:** Andrew Hairston, Jim Lundy, not identified, Dennis Crowder, Franklin Florence, Woodie Morrison, Bud Stumbaugh, G. P. Holt, Clifton Ganus, John Stevens, Cled Wimbish, Landon Saunders, Ray F. Chester, **Fourth row:** George Gurganus, Bob Ross, Ralph Sweet, Harry Risinger, Walter Burch, David Jones, Jennings Davis, Jr., Jim Bill McInteer, George Washington, Robert Butler, Carl Spain.



VI. Re: *All Christians*

1. Affirm without equivocation that equal opportunities in housing, jobs, and schooling should be granted to all persons in our democratic society.

2. Employ one's total influence to support these convictions on equal rights and opportunities.

Jimmy Allen

Jim Bevis

Walter E. Burch

Robert L. Butler

John Allen Chalk

Ray F. Chester

Dennis Crowder

Jennings Davis, Jr.

Brooker T. Ellis

Dwain Evans

Franklin D. Florence

Humphrey Foutz

Robert M. Fulmer

George Gurganus

Andrew J. Hairston

Maurice Haynes

R. N. Hogan

G. P. Holt

Richard Horton

David Jones, Jr.

Eugene Lawton

William C. Martin

Prentice A. Meador, Jr.

Woodie Morrison

James W. Nichols

Robert W. Randolph

Wesley Reagan

James Robert Ross

Landon B. Saunders

Carl Spain

Lawrence (Bud) Stumbaugh

James W. Thompson

Orum Lee Trone, Sr.

R. C. Wells

Cled Wimbish

26 June, 1968, Atlanta, Georgia

## Meditation on the Lord's Supper

"I tell you I shall not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matthew 26:29). With these strange words Jesus ended his last Passover with his disciples, and he concluded the institution of a new ceremony by which they were to remember him and look forward to being united with him finally. Jesus' statement is open to several interpretations, all of which are useful in helping us to understand the regenerative feast in whose context they occur. In the sense that the feast was not to be fully significant until it became a regular observance after the death and resurrection of Christ and after the powerful manifestation of the Kingdom of God on Pentecost, Jesus did indeed "drink it new" with his disciples as they realized that he was yet with them in a new but still powerful way. In another sense Jesus was no doubt looking forward to the perfection of God's Kingdom when he will have gathered all his own unto himself in an everlasting communion. Finally, there is a third way that Jesus' words here are relevant to an appreciation of the Lord's Supper. In a very real sense, we drink the cup of life anew with our Lord every time we partake of his Supper. We renew our faith in him, and he renews his power in us. And yet, Jesus might well say to us each time we commune with him, "I will not drink this cup with you again until and unless it represents in your heart a true renewal of our fellowship together." That renewal will be seldom, or often, or never, as we ourselves dictate by our attitude.

—Elton D. Higgs



### College Problems

*Your First Year at College (Letters to a College Freshman)* by Joseph E. McCabe. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967. 93 pp.

Solomon once said, "of the making of many books there is no end." It would appear that this is doubly true of books in the field of college adjustment literature. In the last decade numerous books have been published each year. Most of them fit the pattern of being rather large, wordy, and giving the impression that they represent *the* answers to *all* problems. It is rather refreshing to discover a volume that is small, is well written, and that seems aware of some of the really relevant problems that beginning college students encounter.

It would seem to this reviewer that Dr. McCabe has made a real effort to communicate in choosing the style of excerpting letters to his son as vehicles for treating subjects of college adjustment. Informality is the keynote throughout these letters, expressed in simple language, representing reactions and experience of the *father* reminiscent of his own college days, as well as reflecting problems recognized and dealt with as professor, doctor, or president—all professional designations of the author in his years of working with college students.

Dr. McCabe, a graduate of Muskingum College, Ohio State University, Princeton Theological Seminary, and the University of Edinburgh, has been a Navy Chaplain, a professor, and an author. He presently is the president of Coe College. He states, on the book's jacket, that his letters tended to get into what he would call "the gutsy issues," those prompted by things mentioned

by his son in letters home—such as fraternities, student demonstrations, specific courses, racial discrimination, and vocational uncertainty.

Parental advice-giving is an activity little enjoyed by young people. At the same time, young people need information to guide them in understanding themselves and in making wise choices among alternatives available to them.

Dr. McCabe does not tell his son what he *must* believe or choose. Neither does he offer information in such a manner as to leave the student unaware that he believes there are such things as right and wrong choices. For example, in Chapter 18 (*Of Sex and the College Man*), the writer states:

The great mistake of traditional religion has been to treat the whole matter as a hush-hush subject. "Don't" was the only clear word, and it wasn't very helpful under the elms on a spring evening. But we're living in an age at the other end of the pendulum's swing. We're so hip on the word "freedom" that we're in danger of debasing it. There isn't a worthwhile achievement possible in art, music, science, or any other endeavor without some perimeters to the word freedom. One of these years we will look back and call old-fashioned today's idea that your life is your own and that freedom of expression in the area of sex is a primary freedom.

Another representative statement in Chapter 16 (*God is Dead . . . for Whom?*):

Know what? I'm really convinced that most moderns for whom God is dead have come to that position because "their God is too small." That's J. B. Phillips' phrase, but I believe it to be accurate for many in our time.

Some other topics treated in chapters are: . . . "you wrote 'I'm going through some unsure periods'"; . . . "ten commandments for a college freshman"; . . . "let's exchange ideas on campus discontent and student un-

rest"; . . . "knowledge alone isn't nearly enough"; . . . "the administration is not the real enemy"; and, . . . "because the extra-curricular is so significant."

In the foreword to the book Dr. McCabe notes that liberal use of three dots (. . .) denotes omission of purely personal references in the correspondence, but that he hopes "some freshman, or some parent, will find concerns here that sit close to reality."

It is believed by this reviewer that this book will be useful to parents and students whose orientation to Christian values is of primary concern.

—William N. Fryer

*Dr. Fryer has recently resigned as Associate Professor of Psychology at Abilene Christian College, Abilene, Texas, to become Chief of Psychological Services at Abilene State School, a school for the mentally retarded.*

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### Restoration Studies

*The Pilgrim Church*, by E. H. Broadbent. London: Pickering and Inglis, 1963. Pp. 421.

*The Restoration Principle*, by A. T. DeGroot. St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1960. Pp. 191. \$4.00.

*The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism*, by Franklin H. Littell. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1964. Pp. 231. \$1.45.

*The Reformers and Their Stepchildren*, by Leonard Verduin. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdsman, 1964. Pp. 292. \$5.75.

The first two books are concerned with the "restoration" motif throughout church history. Beyond this they have little in common. *The Pilgrim Church* is the reissue of a work which first appeared in 1931. With inadequate documentation but extensive quotation of the sources, Mr. Broadbent tries to trace a continuity of groups outside the Roman Catholic Church which have preserved the New Testament faith and

practice. He is especially interested in an evangelical conversion experience, adult immersion, weekly communion, and congregational organization under elders. The author is much too inclusive in the groups he claims. The reviewer does not believe Mr. Broadbent sustains his thesis, but the reader will thrill to the story he has to tell.

Professor DeGroot of the Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University has produced a more scholarly book but one out-of-date in references to current research. He has demonstrated that the ideal of restoration is an important element in vital religion and has characterized all of Christian history. The "restorationism" which he finds in the ancient church was especially a concern to recapture the faith and spiritual life of Christ. The sources reveal a much greater concern for preserving apostolic doctrine and finding apostolic authority for the ecclesiastical form of the church than the author is willing to grant. Instead of tracing a line of dissenting groups, Professor DeGroot looks for the motif of restoration, and it is truly amazing to see how many groups have had this concern and the different forms it has taken. A strange omission is the Anabaptists of the Reformation age, the subject of the other two books under review.

Verduin, although a Reformed pastor, defends the view of the church advocated by those whom he calls the "stepchildren" of the classical reformers, namely the Anabaptists from whom modern Mennonite and Brethren churches are descended. In a similar vein to the above two books, he traces the characteristic concerns of the sixteenth century restorationists back through medieval sects to ancient separatists, especially the fourth century Donatists. However, the author does not bring out the fact that these elements in the faith of the Anabaptists do not appear in the same combination, or in combination at all, among earlier bodies. These Anabaptists were no doubt the most thoroughgoing restitutionists be-

(Continued on Page 31)



### Senator Paul?

Dear Editors:

I seriously doubted that an issue devoted to the subject of politics [June, 1968] could treat that subject without some social-gospel or political-gospel tint. C. Thomas Nelson confirmed my doubts.

Why did he have to suggest that men in political positions can "help further the Lord's kingdom and enhance the image of the church"? I find no scriptural evidence that Christians ever furthered the Kingdom by political activity. Nor have I any personal evidence. I can understand that a Christian politician could improve the climate of society in which the Kingdom might flourish better, but such a contribution would be for all religion, not just the church of Christ.

The "image of the church." What's that? Mr. Nelson does improve upon that malapropism a few lines later with the expression, "enhancing the image of the Christian" and " 'advertising' Christian living." That sounds better, but is Mr. Nelson afraid to say that the Christian in politics should "advertise" Christ? But that's ridiculous in American politics. Maybe that's why I am suspicious of any real progress of New Testament Christianity coming via politics.

Your whole issue might have had a great impact on me had it contained some real-life examples of politicians whose Christian lives shined through their political notoriety. I keep thinking of the Billy Sol Estes types I have known in politics, or at best those church of Christ office-holders who were known at best as members of the church of Christ. I can't envisage an apostle Paul in contemporary American politics. Had he engaged in politics in his day, I'm sure his impact on history would be diminished considerably.

William Pile

Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Editors:

. . . I am particularly gratified that you would devote an issue to the theme of "politics" and thus demonstrate that those of us who are followers of the Messiah are still living on this earth, and cannot divorce ourselves from the problems and struggles of earthen vessels.

Lord Acton wrote in *The History of Freedom and Other Essays*: "The influence which religious motives formerly possessed is now in a great measure exercised by political opinion." So our influence has not disappeared, but it has changed hands. The fact that we have abdicated it is no occasion for commendation upon our part . . .

W. Carl Ketcherside, Editor

*Mission Messenger*

St. Louis, Mo.

### Two Suggestions

Dear Editors:

. . . The first two articles on race [July, 1968] were especially worthwhile. So many "Christians" attempt to justify their prejudice on the basis of Negro immorality without realizing the difference in the backgrounds of the white and black man. If the roles had been reversed, would we be any different today?

In regard to the article, "Whither the Professional Ministry?" I wonder if a lot of preachers haven't overlooked the most effective teaching method of all, that of example?

. . .

Donna W.

Torrance, Calif.

MISSION Forum is devoted to comments from those whose insights on various matters differ. Letters submitted for publication must bear the full name and address of the writer. Letters under 300 words will be given preference. All letters are subject to condensation. Address your letters to MISSION, P. O. Box 326, Oxford, Ohio 45056.

## Missing the Mark

I vividly remember in a Classical Greek course reading Xenophon's *Anabasis* that I came across the word which I had learned as the word for "sin." A fellow Greek was mad at his commanding officer for bringing the army on a wild-goose chase. He hid in a dark corner and as the commander came by hurled a spear at him—but he "missed the mark."

Here in a nutshell is one of the major differences between the God-given, revealed religion of the Bible and the concepts of contemporary secular man: its view of what constitutes the human foible.

It is true that we must deal with a whole host of complex words and ideas in discussing the words for "sin" and "error" in Greek, Hebrew, and New Testament usages. Among the Greeks there were ethical and cultic mores, and among the Hebrews also the most basic word for "sin" could express the secular notion of movement which misses the mark or loses its way. However the difference is vast. The Greeks had no theologically conditioned concept of sin as the disposition of the creature at rebellion against God. One noted Classicist has said,

There was very little preoccupation with sin, and of course, no doctrine of the Fall of Man from innocency into sin, coupled with the later view that mankind starts from infancy in a state of wickedness. The Greek word *hamartia*, often translated as "sin," really meant "failure," "fault," or "error of judgment," and distinction would be made between (a) such error or folly—your own affair; (b) the failure of duty to men—a tort; (c) offence against the State—crime; and (d) offence against a god—sin. . . . Clearly the only sin was to commit a personal offence against a divinity. As for guilt, like the guilt of Oedipus or of Orestes, that was altogether a different matter; it had put upon you by a Fate beyond the gods, and there was nothing for it but to be purified by a god. It was dire misfortune, but no fault of yours.

Charles Seltman, *The Twelve Olympians*  
(Pan Books, London, 1952, p. 23)

Over against this, the Word of God pictures man's disposition to do wrong or sin against the religious and moral law of God, thus bringing under the judgment of "sin" the human folly, torts, crimes, as well as the express affront to Deity. Nor is this concept of the "law" of God an arbitrary or capricious legislation of God. There is a qualitative relationship between the nature of God himself and the standard or norm of conduct demanded by his will (the so-called "Moral or Ethical Monotheism"). This idea that man's conduct must follow a divinely prescribed pattern of right or goodness is the essence of sin. Man as he is constituted is confronted by this divine will in such a way that his own will is involved. "Sin is thus a spontaneous human reaction to the holy and the divine" (Quell, *TWNT*, Vol. 1, p. 274). The portrayal of the beginning of sin in man's projection of his own reason to be lord and master of his own life rather than submit to God is the essence of the story of the fall.

The enormity of the drama enacted by sinful man upon the stage of life is seen only in the light of the final act—sin's necessitating the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ: The Son of Man came to call sinners to repentance (Luke 5:32). Here, too, are seen the



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dimensions of God's love in calling men back to holy association or sonship with himself—out of sin and into light. A little bit of heavenly communion here in the midst of sin, the whole of heaven after a while.

For nearly a hundred years now Western man has engaged in a "noble experiment." He has attempted to find essential goodness in man, a principle of optimistic evolution at work in the natural and cultural world which would ultimately lead to the bright tomorrow. Sin was redefined as personality conflict; man who presented less than his best was simply mixed up. This bubble has burst in our century, and man has found himself caught up in existential despair which threatens anarchy and the ruin of society.

At this vantage point man ought to be able to see that sin as presented in the Bible is realistic. It is the very mirror of truth. With this realization man can know himself as he really is, confess his sin for what it is, and find the meaning for his life in accepting the grace of God.

—J. W. Roberts

MISSION REVIEWS—(continued)  
fore the Campbell restoration of the nineteenth century.

Verduin has learned from Franklin Littell, who wrote the foreword for his book, that the crucial distinction between the Reformers and the Restitutionists was the nature of the church and that it is to the latter that we owe the separation of Church and State and the accompanying characteristics of American church life. *The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism* is a revised edition of Littell's *The Anabaptist View of the Church*, first published in 1952. Now brought up-to-date and issued in paperback this epochal study will have wider reading and continued usefulness. Littell defines the Anabaptists as the "church of the Great Commission." Their ideal of the "restitution of the true church" makes them especially attractive to later groups who have shared a common vision.

These historical studies would seem to indicate that the appeal to New Testament authority and the attempt to recover the life

and practice of New Testament Christianity answers to something inherent in the Christian faith. As DeGroot observed, "Progress can sometimes be made by going backward . . . to guiding principles" (p. 24). There has often been much disagreement about what this entails. But historically it would seem that the effort itself is valid, even necessary. All of the religious bodies which fall under study in these volumes have had a concern to search for truth. They have been convinced that this truth is found in the sources of the Christian faith and not in the human traditions or the contemporary forms of church life. Their courage to break with tradition in order to be true to the New Testament may inspire the mission of the church today.

—Everett Ferguson

Dr. Ferguson is currently on leave from Abilene Christian College, Abilene, Texas, to spend a year in London, England. He is the author of *Church History, Early and Medieval* and *Church History, Reformation and Modern*, published by Biblical Research Press, and serves as the general editor of *The Living Word Commentary*, published by R. B. Sweet Co., Inc.

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From "Communication Crises" by Calvin Downs:

"Effective communication . . . involves the ability and the willingness to listen with understanding—a sincere attempt to understand (not necessarily to adopt) the other person's point of view."

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