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# the opinion

VOL. 3 NO. 5

FEBRUARY, 1964

## THE THOB AND TRUTH OF HERMENEUTICAL PRINCIPLES

by Dicran Aram Berberian

The purpose of this short article is to set forth the various disagreements I have to the hermeneutical principles of the Inductive Method of Bible study.

It seems probable that if we were never bewildered there would never be a story to tell about us; we should partake of the superior nature of the all-knowing immortals whose annals are dreadfully dull.<sup>1</sup>

A hermeneutic based upon a wish to know a "true word from God" in order to allay personal anxiety may have Platonic origins but, is not, itself, a supposition of the scriptures. It is an attempt to reduce the Eternal Truth to a physical object in the hope that this reduction of Truth (God) to object will facilitate our communication and knowledge of it. To employ this method is to be like the peoples of the Old Testament who found it easier to worship a god of wood or stone which they could see, than the Eternal Truth, spiritual and unseen. It is an attempt to remake our God a baal. The entire direction of this type of "faith" is to the external: it demands the externalization of decisions, beliefs, and love. It is no wonder then, that a person who would employ such a method, is made miserable when he sees the temporal passing away, when the external is not in evidence, when he realizes that life is a constant perishing. To long for perfect repose in perfect knowledge is folly. It is a weak man who stubbornly fights for annihilation and his security in annihilation. It should be remembered that extravagance and debauch have never been as ruinous to character and to personality as has comfort. A perfect relief from anxiety results in the cessation of all sensation and, in short, brings about the end of all being--it is the absolute death wish. To the degree then, that a man enjoys anxiety as his determinant quality, he is and continues to be and become a person. One is tempted to suggest to that person who is hopeful of perfect repose, the Buddhist search where he might rightly find the loss of all desire and anxiety in Nirvana.

Richard Niebuhr suggests several difficulties in the way of any man who seeks certainty or a "sure word" from the past: "in the study of history, we have to do, not with classes of entities primarily, but with individuals and hence with probabilities."<sup>2</sup> In addition, Niebuhr indicates that the arbitrary nature of reality is a hindrance to historical certainty: "this arbitrariness of existence lies at the basis of historical reasoning and explains why it can be no more than probable

(con't. p. 3.)

1. Henry James, "Preface to 'The Princess Casamassima'" The Art of the Novel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), pp. 63,64.
2. Richard R. Niebuhr, Resurrection and Historical Reason (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), p. 140.

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EDITORIAL

During the recent "Conference On The Inner City" the stagnancy and irrelevance of our middle class "WASP" churches was attacked as being a denial of the Gospel. The question before us now is not whether the Rev. George W. Webber went too far but did he go far enough? In viewing events at this school recently it appears that we are ourselves guilty of being a bastion of learning which tends to perpetuate such irrelevancy and stagnation. A few students (as evidenced by the articles in this issue) are deeply concerned about the "Spirit that is Fuller." Yet they are fearful that they are merely voices crying out in the wilderness.

Unlike many institutions we have the advantage of being an "Ecumenical Institution." Scholars and students of various and differing backgrounds and theological positions are bound together in the love of Christ in order to discern and communicate the meaning of God's word for our age. "Open dialogue" is the tool by which such a purpose is fulfilled. Such "open dialogue" occurs on two levels. Firstly it is among members of the seminary community and secondly between the seminary and the world which surrounds us.

Unfortunately true "open dialogue" is often difficult to attain. Various reasons can be postulated for this. The first one can be called fear. Fear that our constituency will misunderstand our attempts to be true to the Gospel and call us liberal; fear that our original theological positions are inadequate for a contemporary situation; and fear that our own personality is being attacked. This is evidenced by the frustrations encountered by the student committee trying to arrange a faculty forum on "The Inspiration of Scriptures."

Apathy is the second enemy of "open dialogue." Legitimate controversial problems are met with an apathetic desire to avoid issues. No one at Fuller, to the best of our knowledge, is an avowed segregationist, yet what has been done by our school, its students, and its faculty to support the Negroes desire for civil rights? Lineage can be found in a local newspaper concerning a faculty member's support of capital punishment but not one line can be found written by anyone at Fuller supporting the Rights of Negroes. Aren't we concerned enough to speak out on the number one issue confronting our nation?

Conservatism is the third stumbling block to "open dialogue." With our varying backgrounds we shouldn't be committed to doing things in any one particular way. Just as the East Harlem Protestant Parish has experimented with the worship service so might we also with our chapel services. Yet the suggestion to serve communion around a table in the chapel appears too startling a break from the traditional life of the Seminary. Likewise have attempts to reach out to the world with new methods (i.e. religious drama, coffee houses, etc.) failed to receive wide spread support partly because they did not fit into the traditional patterns of evangelism.

Finally, time has a strangle hold on "open dialogue." Twenty-four hours a day are not enough for the married man who has to support his family, study his courses, and keep good relations with his denomination by teaching in the Sunday School. Where can he find time to discuss in depth the Honest to God controversy, no less read the book. Neither is the day long enough for the faculty member who is teaching a full load, writing at least one book, while carrying enough outside commitments to give him the title in labor circles of a "moonlighter." When can he find time to counsel a student who was unable to ask a question in class because the class is so unwieldy large that such

(con't. on p. 8.)

in its conclusions."<sup>3</sup> To study the Bible inductively is to join the perhaps too many Christians who fly in the face of reality armed with the weapons of their eschatological hopes. In so doing, it is adding to the confusion within historical Christianity; an unrealistic and unnecessary confusion which is quickly recognized by the world for what it is; this by Virginia Woolf indicated the nature of her insight:

There is a sadness at the back of life which they (the Greeks) do not attempt to mitigate. Entirely aware of their own standing in the shadow, and yet alive to every tremor and gleam of existence, there they endure, and it is to the Greeks that we turn when we are sick of the vagueness, of the confusion, of the Christianity and its consolations, of our age.<sup>4</sup>

What is the nature of reality? What is the nature of our human experience and understanding? The answer would seem to be simple, it is the human nature of our minds. Happily enough, the mind is quite unmechanical. The mind recreates experience into its own spectrum of life, into its own new world. The mind rearranges time and experience into a meaningful pattern just as Proust says: "when a man is asleep, he has in a circle round him the chain of the hours, the sequence of the years, the order of the heavenly host."<sup>5</sup> In every significant experience there are two poles: on the one hand, there is the immediate givenness of sense--the peculiar, unique color of the sea and air, the shape and texture of the receding wave as these force themselves upon us; on the other hand, there is everything which the sensitive mind brings to experience--call it interpretation, apprehension, imaginative synthesis, memory. We may put it thus: the mind has its own vivid color which blends and interpenetrates with the color of the sea or the air. Reality is there for the mind, as the seed bed of symbols. It is this dual and simultaneous functioning of reality which the Bible student should recognize and seek to capture. Nothing should be seen in isolation. We live in a world where between every object and every person there exists, in oscillation, a vital and completing relationship. There is no definition of an object in itself, it defines itself by its relationships, by its position in regard to other things; its position may be constantly changing and therefore it needs constant redefinition. That is the order of life. In the Bible, as in all literature, we identify most completely with what we sense to be part of our own experience. So we find ourselves lined in an intimate identification with all the common occurrences of existence which the Biblical writers bring to life. The mind is the creative tool of order, the actual determinant of reality. I refuse to accept the late Edwardian notion that any object is at any two moments the same object. Objective reality depends upon its appreciation by the mind of a human personality. The personality must create reality for itself. Before it does so "it is face to face with something which does not so far exist; to which it alone can give reality and substance, which it alone can bring into the light of day."<sup>6</sup> The creative mind builds the world. The world has no one shape to which the mind must mould itself. The mind is not presented with a given, ordered unity which it must understand. Rather, the mind has to forge its own unity, its own order, its own reality. Experience consists, not in the passive registration of events, not in the dull click of the

3. Richard R. Niebuhr, Resurrection and Historical Reason (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), p. 140.

4. Virginia Woolf, "On Not Knowing Greek" The Common Reader (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, A Harvest Book, 1953), p. 39.

5. Marcel Proust, The Remembrance of Things Past (New York: Random House, 1934), p. 4.

6. Ibid.

mind on fact, but in the active appreciation and apprehension of those same events as part of some creative fabric. The Christian is given the difficult task of becoming finely aware of his every moment existence, and richly responsible: "really to exist, so as to interpenetrate one's existence with consciousness, at once and the same time eternal and as if far removed from existence and yet also present in existence and in the process of becoming: this is truly difficult."<sup>7</sup> It is more difficult to know the past than it is to understand present reality because we remember the past. It arouses in us numerous passions; we glimpse in it moments of understanding; we cling to it with passion; we wish to communicate with it; we want to know it: but just when we feel we have it, like a stone in our closed hand, it escapes from us so that we no longer can say we possess it, that we have it there between our palms.

We should not try wholly to objectify and control our past as if that could be done! Milton, like a prophet three centuries ahead of his time, advised: "let us then discard reason in sacred matters and follow the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures exclusively."<sup>8</sup> Again Niebuhr is helpful: "the irrevocability of the past is not taken seriously; instead of exploring its traditions and modes of thought, reductionist research treats the past as though it could be introduced into a laboratory where all the attending conditions have been carefully defined in advance."<sup>9</sup> How is science to recognize a truth which by its nature is unscientific? Yet, this is what the attempt to come to a "sure" understanding of the scriptures through the application of scientific principles repeatedly does. Since the end of the 19th century and more particularly since the First World War this idea has been a constant theme of realist literature, and a growing contention of historical philosophy.

But since the facts which I should then have recalled would have been prompted only by an exercise of the will, by my intellectual memory, and since the pictures which that kind of memory shews us of the past preserve nothing of the past itself, I should never have had any wish to ponder over this residue...To me it was in reality all dead.<sup>10</sup>

When will Christians find out that Newtonian Physics is dead? How long must the world wait for the Church to extricate its theology from the grip of its uninspired past? It is always well to remember the remark of Chief Justice Holmes when he said: it is a mark of a civilized man to doubt one's own first convictions.

The problem of historical knowledge is complicated in regard to scripture, by the "believers" view that scriptural understanding must always be the same for all men, in all places and at all times. We must learn to admit "that every exegete carries with himself a basic philosophical orientation that either consciously or unconsciously colors his reading of the texts...He (Bultmann) has made the pretensions of objectivity espoused by earlier critics impossible."<sup>11</sup> Some specific perspective controls the way and the what of questions we ask. "To translate means to make understandable, and this in turn presupposes an understanding."<sup>12</sup> A communication is a dialogue between the object that gives the communication and the subject that receives that communication within the ever changing framework of the

7. Soren Kierkegaard, Concluding Unscientific Postscript (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941), p. 273.

8. John Milton, The Christian Doctrine, Complete Poems and Major Prose of J.M. (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1957), p. 935.

9. Niebuhr, p. 141.

10. Proust, p. 33.

11. Niebuhr, p. 57.

12. Rudolf Bultmann, "Is Exegesis Without Presuppositions Possible?" Existence and Faith (New York: Meridian Books, Inc. 1960), p. 292.

moment, of the Now. Bultmann says that "scripture...only is what it is with its history and its future."<sup>13</sup> We must admit the multiple interpretations of scriptures in order that they (the scriptures) might speak to multiple persons, not just ourselves, in multiple circumstances and, at variously different times. Again Bultmann is extremely helpful: "the word of God never becomes our property. The test of whether we have heard it aright is whether we have prepared always to hear it anew."<sup>14</sup> "For historical understanding, the schema of subject and object that has validity for natural science is invalid."<sup>15</sup>

It is a fact that there are varieties of religious experience and varieties of interpretation. Hopefully, God accepts this variety as a principle of his own nature: "for He communicates in creating (variety), so as by creating to give independence over against Himself."<sup>16</sup> The Christian must learn to accept this frustrating but Perfectly Beautiful principle of God's creativity and of his creation in order that he may learn how to live in harmony with men. He must always remember that "the historical picture is falsified only when a specific way of raising questions is put forward as the only one."<sup>17</sup>

By looking at the Resurrection of Jesus (in the past) we become assured of our own particularity in the present and come to believe in our own resurrection from the dead in the future. We study the scriptures because they are the "channels of memory" that bring us to the depiction of the Christ Event. Jesus Christ, by his unique resurrection, is our analogy by which we in faith are justified from our sin, by which we also come to see our own uniqueness and particularity. In order to be a Christian one must deny the existence of Natural Law and believe in the infinite possibility of nature. Because, to be a Christian is to believe in Christ Risen and to be justified by faith in Him. This is what Richard Niebuhr means when he calls for a New Reformation from the bondage of the Law. It is a reformation that will enable the individual to understand his own uniqueness, and particularity within creation. Such a reformed Christian will insist that the Resurrection of Jesus is that Past (history) which gives content, analogy, and meaning to his entire understanding and interpretation of life. It will enable him to comprehend the principle of love for the particular--to develop as the particular in a unique way--which God chose as his method of creation. It will enable that Reformed Christian to help others to a knowledge of God through a belief in the Risen Christ without insisting that that other person undergo an identical experience as he himself has undergone because, that other human being will be understood in the new and unique terms of God's love.

"Scientific analysis" has made scripture the vitiated corpse of history. To study the Bible inductively, to search for a "true word" is to ignore the fact that any given communication has many levels of meaning. It supposes a two dimensional, flat communication. It does not recognize that the meanings of words are not scientifically precise, that the writer of any given passage was never aware of the grammatic-rhetoric examination his communication would receive, and that language itself is not a precise tool of communication. If these things were not so, Peter would never have been inspired to proclaim that Paul was a man of many surds.

Why does the Christian insist upon a scientific certainty for his faith? Why must he make himself absurd by looking to "find a scientific and true interpretation?"

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13. Bultmann, "Is Exegesis Without Presuppositions Possible?", p. 296.

14. Bultmann, "How Does God Speak To Us Through The Bible?"

15. Bultmann, "Is Exegesis Without Presuppositions Possible?"

16. Kierkegaard, p. 232.

17. Bultmann, "Is Exegesis Without Presuppositions Possible?"

Is it not presumptuous to assume that one has the authority to rightly divide the word of truth because he is at rest in God--and so will not make the mistake of interpreting the scriptures in order to make peace with his own sin? Thusly, only one Man can rightly interpret the scriptures, and His interpretation of the scriptures was not always as "scientific" as that of the Inductive Method. The entire quest seems to be misdirected. Do the scriptures claim that a belief in monotheism will solve the problems of a man's anxiety? Have we as Christians not learned the story of Genesis three, that it is wrong to presume to be like God, and to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil? Must we betray our own lack of faith by creating an Absolute God, by seeking an Absolute Interpretation, and by structuring our own Absolute Word; our Absolute Image of God, our Golden Calf?

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#### AN ANSWER TO MR. BERBERIAN

(The following is the text of a letter Dr. Daniel Fuller gave to the opinion in reply to our query concerning Mr. Berberian's article on the inductive method of Bible study. ed.)

I welcome the dissent from my views as outlined in my syllabus, The Inductive Method of Bible Study. I wish that there were more in this student body who, like Mr. Berberian, were wrestling with the issue of whether in the Bible we really have an objective Word from God, or whether revelation is the result of my faith interacting with the Bible.

I would say, first of all, that Mr. Berberian has understood my syllabus. Despite all the particularities of his individuality and background in comparison to mine (and every other individual, for that matter), his individuality has not hindered him one bit from grasping my concept.

The fact that he has understood me so well makes me wonder why he is so pessimistic as to the possibility of finding out what is apart from us and objective to us. He has said, "There is no definition of an object in itself," but he has defined my syllabus without changing it in any way through the "completing relationship" of his mind and individuality. I know that his own individuality has, after understanding me, declared that my understanding of the subject dealt with in the syllabus is false, and that leads me to ask this question: On what basis can we achieve the agreement that Adler declares is always possible? (I assume that Mr. Berberian believes agreement is possible because he has taken the trouble to write this essay.) We will simply have to work with the sum totality of the reality which we share in common. That Mr. Berberian has understood my syllabus shows that it is possible to define the objects of the reality in which we live, for my syllabus is one, though perhaps not the most pleasant, reality at Fuller Seminary. We must ask ourselves where we find the knowledge and possibility for the kind of life we want to live. Mr. Berberian feels that the good life is an anxious one; I feel it is bad. Who is right? I believe I am, because so long as I am anxious I am only going to put myself and my own goals first and will not live authentically in the way Bultmann (whom Mr. Berberian finds helpful) declares we should live. So long as I am anxious, I will look out for my own ends and consciously or unconsciously will make others a means to them. I do not want to be a means to ends of other people, and therefore I want them to be relieved of anxiety so they won't misuse me. But the only cure for their anxiety and mine is in the God revealed in Scripture. I want to learn what he has said so I can overcome this anxiety. I must therefore study his words grammatically and historically.

Dr. Daniel Fuller

## BACKWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS

By Dave Erb

As young trainees we are deeply entangled in the various tasks which constitute our boot camp experience. The intellectual and emotional wrestling which occupies most of our energies deludes us into thinking that all of life hovers behind seminary ivory walls. But we must not lose contact with the war which is raging in the world, a conflict which will be ours in a few months. As we contemplate our position as warriors, we cannot help but be concerned over the condition of the chariot from which we are to fight. The many sided vehicle is rusty, scarcely mobile and almost useless; it is commonly known as the institutional church. The task of keeping this complex, sprawling instrument repaired and breathing will require a major portion of our time and energy. Therefore we must begin some solid research into its many problems and potentials while we are still within the confining walls of our training cells.

The church today is existing within the gates of her structural walls, enjoying reams of activity and living miles from the people who need her most. We find that she encourages her members to attend all of the events on the church calendar in order to feel a part of the community and serve Jesus Christ. Consequently, the church is filled with people who are deluded into thinking that by painting the church basement they have fulfilled their obligation to the great commission. We can also discover that the communication lag between the clergy and the laity within these activities is appalling. The minister who has spent most of his life within the church walls and knows little about the world in which his parishoners work or think, feels little compulsion to make his sermons meaningful because the organizational wheels need to be oiled and programs need to be planned. This results in a static pattern of meeting which leads to mental drowsiness as soon as one drops comfortably into the cushioned pew. As a spectator, it is very easy for this parishoner to feel good about having been in church and look forward to the next time he can soothe his hunger for meaning. But where is he to gain strength and acceptance for the week's trials? From the weekly monologue? Never! He must have a place where what he is can be expressed in an open and honest manner, where the love of Jesus Christ can be experienced through a mutual bond, and where the church can become a vital and meaningful place of involvement. But it is at this point that the greatest needs arises, because this meaningful experience must be related to the mission of the church in the world.

The church has offered the world to come within her community for years, using every communication medium possible. But the pagan world has not responded, because it could find very little meaning in the long prayers, jargon filled sermons, large cold buildings and de-personalized welcomes. We now find the breach so wide that the church is answering questions which have never been raised and completely ignoring those which are desperately heard from the many millions who exist in a world of despair.

The pagan no longer considers the church an option, but merely believes that here is a group of people who like a different type of activity. He is really not certain how they think, because he has never had a relationship with one. If perchance he does find one available, released from church related affairs, he quickly discovers that he is judged at several counts with few strides towards an I-thou experience. Why? Because the church is afraid to relate to those who might conta-



minate and spoil the "testimony."

Here lies the crux of our contemporary problem. What is the church in the world? Is it possible to really grasp the fact that the incarnation is not over? Is it normative for the church to be scattered instead of gathered? We need some bold, creative men to spend time wrestling with the practical steps of getting the church into the world. It would seem that we must begin by communicating the need for this to our sleepily parishioners. But even previous to this step the clergy needs to listen to the world. We as young warriors, must understand what it is like to be in the world in order for us to understand what our congregation faces every day. How many non-Christian people do we know today on a level beyond merely saying "hello?" When was the last time we socially entertained a couple in our homes who were searching for life?

The church of Jesus Christ can only exist in the world where men are crying for answers and especially for love. The message that God loves must be given tangible expression in the lives of those who worship Him to those who are without. Our total church existence rests on the basis of mission and we have become so interested in getting together for food, fun and fellowship that the church has ceased to be a life giving organism.

We, within this ingrown institution, face a tremendous task -- that of keeping our integrity on one hand and our sanity on the other. Therefore we must begin now to grapple with this grave problem of being the truly redemptive community out in the refinery, the doctor's office, the clothing store, the insurance office. If we do not wrestle with this our lives are in jeopardy because we may well be satisfied to spin the ecclesiastical plates for the rest of our lives.

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EDITORIAL (Continued from page 2.)

questions are not only a traumatic experience but are looked upon as delaying the class?

With such hinderances to "open dialogue" it is no wonder that our integrity is sometimes compromised for the sake of expediency. Let us not fall into the "middle class" trap of being content with our situation. Let us speak out and be creative in finding new and better ways to have "open dialogue" -- in order to use this tool which enables us to discern and communicate God's word to our age.

RBW

STUDENT COUNCIL CORNER

During the recent controversy on civil rights, silence has characterized our seminary. There has been no Fuller voice speaking to the conscience of our society. Recently several students and faculty have shown marked interest in this area. If you would be interested in participating in a group of students concerned with social action, see me.

Al Cash

FULLER SEMINARY AND THE CHURCH'S PREDICAMENT

By Jon L. Yost

The church today is in a predicament. It is one that is two-fold. First, the church is confronted with the necessity of reforming its own inner life, putting its own house in order. Second, the church must face a world that is making new demands of the church and an age that has been designated as "post-Christian." The first, internal reform, is no less demanding than the second. What is the nature of each of these demands?

The Protestant church is committed to the principle of reformation. The sixteenth century reformers sought to renew the inner life of the church. The call was for reform. Today we do no justice to these men of faith by merely perpetuating their theology and particular perspectives on life in general. Some who have sought to do so have only succeeded in embalming a theology of a past era and ossifying the church into a lifeless institution. This was the mistake of eighteenth century Continental orthodoxy. It is the mistake of segments of the church in the twentieth century. The internal reform to which we must commit ourselves goes beyond parochial questions of theology and structure. It goes beyond pietistic and moralistic concern with the individual's inner-life and "worldly amusements." It involves the very mission of the church in the world. Book after book is rolling off denominational and secular presses calling for a renewal of the church. For example, time-honored but erroneous and often devastating distinctions between clergy and laity are being called into question. The church, on this issue and others, is called into court. It stands at the bar. The judge is none other than the church itself. The church must judge the church. It must be ready to testify against itself! The biblical witness of prophet and apostle is to the responsibility of ALL the people of God to order their corporate life aright. The realization exists - at long last - that only as the valley of dry bones is filled with the Spirit of life can the church make its impact felt. Theology, structure, lay responsibility, worship, etc. are all under scrutiny.

The second aspect of the predicament is inextricably bound to the first. How can a church have an effective witness unless it is willing to reform itself? And what use is internal reform unless its end is more effective witness? The church has been too long bound to traditional forms of ministry. New forms of ministry must be found. "The way Grandma did it" can no longer reach a progressive but frustrated world. In this context one can welcome a J. A. T. Robinson's Honest to God, jazz liturgy, coffeehouses where Espresso is sipped and theology discussed, church-operated drug addiction centers, and rehabilitation centers for released prisoners and alcoholics. A chaotic world has forced upon the church these demands for new forms of ministry. The church is responding. But its response must be accelerated.

In sum, internal reform of the church must eventuate in a dynamic witness by the church. This is the two-sided predicament of the church. While setting its own affairs in order, the church must accomplish its mission of redemption in the world.

Where, then does Fuller Theological Seminary fit into this picture? I submit that, without becoming exclusive or proud, Fuller Seminary can face this predicament and extend a helping hand to the whole church. This statement, however, needs

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qualification. There are conditions to be met.

First, Fuller Seminary must free itself from a too personalistic theology. I do not say that it must lose its conservative orientation. But the seminary should alert itself to society's problems. Racial tensions, inadequate housing, human suffering and hunger, problems of church and state and of world peace and justice are all in need of a responsible word from and saving action by the church. Some quarters of the church are responding which is encouraging. However, Fuller Seminary could do more to open its eyes to society's needs. Courses could be offered on contemporary social problems and the church. Projects could be undertaken which would involve students in some of the new forms of ministry mentioned above. In this way the Fullerite would see that the gospel is for the whole world and the whole man and not just concerned with individual soul-destiny.

A second condition is that Fuller Seminary realize more from its own inherent ecumenical situation. At my last count, there were some forty-odd denominations and groups of Christendom represented by the student body. Recently I learned that the Methodist Church has more students at Fuller this year than ever before. Surely some concerted effort could be made by students and faculty to share this heritage. It is said that Fuller's raison d'etre is not to create a "new" church but to feed the life of the whole church. Students gather from many denominations. During this period of "mixed-life," why not organize miniature "Councils on Faith and Order" to explore in depth the various traditions of worship, polity, ministry, and outreach? Why not, in addition, become more involved in the Inter-Seminary Movement?

A third condition is basic. Fuller Seminary should study the real nature of the church and its total life. This would include study of biblical data relating to the church, historical perspectives on the ecumenical movement, and contemporary concerns and issues which confront the church of Jesus Christ. When this basic foundation is laid, Fuller can offer the church graduates that are more aware of the church's real nature and mission.

When I was at Fuller (B.D. '62) there were rumblings that some of these efforts might materialize. I hope they have. The question still remains, however, whether Fuller Seminary can adapt to the needs of the world and the needs of the whole church. I believe it can, if it will. Let us all pray that it will.

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PLEASE NOTE!

It has been brought to the attention of the opinion that the Annual Spring Banquet has been scheduled for Friday evening April 24, 1964. This is one week earlier than originally announced and published in the Seminary Catalogue.

## Letters to the Editors.....

### RELEVANT SCREWTAPE

During the last war Screwtape wrote to his nephew Wormwood,

"Whatever he adopts, your main task will be the same. Let him begin by treating the Patriotism or the Pacifism as a part of his religion. Then let him, under the influence of partisan spirit, come to regard it as the most important part. Then quietly and gradually nurse him on to the stage where the religion becomes merely part of the 'cause', in which Christianity is valued chiefly because of the excellent arguments it can produce in favour of the British war-effort or of Pacifism. The attitude which you want to guard against is that in which temporal affairs are treated primarily as material for obedience. Once you have made the World an end, and faith a means, you have almost won your man, and it makes very little difference what kind of worldly end he is pursuing. Provided that meetings, pamphlets, policies, movements, causes, and crusades, matter more to him than prayers and sacraments and charity, he is ours-- and the more 'religious' (on those terms) the more securely ours."

(Screwtape Letters, Chap. 7)

More recently Dr. W.S. McBirnie preface his booklet The Church and the World of Tomorrow (which we were all given) with this statement,

"This book is an earnest appeal for every churchman to realize that the average layman expects the church to lead in the crusade to destroy the evil conspiracy of communism, and he is disillusioned when it does not do so.....If the church is to find itself again it must clean its skirts of socialism, and go on the offensive against communism, or our very civilization is lost. The issue is no less drastic than that!"

It seems that Wormwood is still with us.

Keith O. Piper  
William H. Stannard

### TRAUMA AT NOON

As I sit here writing this letter I am still trembling inside from an event that happened over an hour ago. Whether I tremble from anger or fear I cannot detect, but I have a hunch it is from both.

At exactly 12:30 I was midway down the stairs on the South end of the Classroom building when I heard a bell and then a loud rumbling which increased in intensity. Suddenly behind me appeared a group of humanity moving en masse and in increasing speed down three flights of steep stairs. There were shouts of "Hurry up!" and "Hope I make it to the front of the line." There was pushing and cutting in front of individuals with such frenzy and purpose that I felt sure they must be trying to escape the judgment (and that of the wicked, to be sure, for there

was nothing Christian in their attitudes).

I tried to walk at my normal pace down the stairs hoping that others would be slowed up by my slowness, and if not by my example then because of gentlemanly courtesy and Christian courtesy which would not push a lady downstairs or push her aside in an endeavor to pass her. But the speed of the mass had increased so by this time that a note of fear for my very safety struck in my heart, and I was forced to go faster myself to escape their trampling me to death.

By some miracle of grace everyone made it down the stairs safely, though the action had gone against every safety law and common courtesy in existence. At the bottom of the stairs I found that they were not running from the judgment, but were trying to be the first in line for lunch. I could deduce only that these beings were half-starved grade school children visiting the Seminary, for certainly no seminary student would act in such an immature, unsafe, and unChristian manner.

If any of those children are reading this letter, let them laugh at a "trembling old woman," but let them take heed and walk slowly down the stairs as they laugh. I had rather endure heckling than death.

Charlotte Quick

#### THE ULTIMATE IN RELEVANCY

Because I have been at Fuller, I have learned that I ought to strive to make the Gospel relevant to this modern age by finding new and creative ways of confronting modern man with his need for Christ. Towards this end the school introduces its up and coming "theologues" to the campus by informing them thus, "You are now walking on the loggia which forms part of the boundary for our stylish garth. On the far side of the garth you see the school's refectory -- What? -- Of course it is not a monastary eating compound for monks." This, as you see, is one of the creative ways in which Fuller is contributing to the "new" theological jargon.

A selection from "Refelctions from Barth's Garth" composed by Rodger Zeller.

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