

C H R I S T I A N   W O R S H I P  
an Examination of its Place in a  
Theory of Christian Nurture,  
in the Light of the Christian Doctrine of Man.

A Thesis

by

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submitted in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the  
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in the Faculty of Divinity of the  
University of Edinburgh.

December, 1957.

(June, 1958.)



"Because liturgy is the vital act of  
the Church's life, in the end it will  
mould the ideas of those who live  
that life."

Dom Gregory Dix: "The Theology  
of Confirmation in Relation to  
Baptism", p. 32.

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PART I

HUMAN NATURE AND CHRISTIAN NURTURE

## HUMAN NATURE AND CHRISTIAN NURTURE

### A. Introduction

Educational theory cannot escape the problem of man. As soon as the attempt is made to discover what are the determinants of education, one is confronted by Augustine's question: "Quis ergo sum, Deus meus. Quae natura mea?"<sup>1</sup> - the same question as was asked by Job,<sup>2</sup> and by the Psalmist.<sup>3</sup> This is inevitable, since education, being concerned with changes in the self, must inquire into the nature of the material with which it deals. At the core of the entire educational process there is presumed the question: In the interest of what view of the person do I, the teacher, engage in this work of interference with the spontaneity of growth?

It follows that the ontological question has priority over the empirological in education. To have an understanding of the psychological dimension, dealing as it does with partial aspects of human nature, is not sufficient, nor is it the primary concern. It is necessary first, with the

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted by Buber: "Between Man and Man", p. 128.

<sup>2</sup>Job 7:17.

<sup>3</sup>Psalm 8:4; 144:3.

the help of those studies which deal with the structure and the character of being, to view man's individual life in its wholeness, and as participating in a totality. This the various forms of empirical enquiry, relevant though they are to a total view of man, are incapable of doing, giving us, rather, "excerpts from a larger whole."<sup>1</sup> The various expressions of contemporary existentialism draw attention to the limited usefulness of objectification as a means of reaching the centre of the mystery of man's nature. They have also pointed out that significant and valid knowledge about man is derived from within his own moral and spiritual experience. "I know reality in and through myself, as man!"<sup>2</sup>

The importance of establishing the primacy of the philosophical and theological<sup>3</sup> disciplines as normative sources of educational theory has to be recognized, if only because educational writing has sometimes appeared to be over-determined by psychological considerations.<sup>4</sup> It is not accidental that many of the major figures in philosophy, from

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<sup>1</sup>Allen: "Existentialism from Within", p. 127. The same point is made by Niebuhr, Brunner and Berdyaev.

<sup>2</sup>Berdyaev: "Destiny of Man", p. 17. This is a typically Augustinian point of view.

<sup>3</sup>Brunner: "Man in Revolt", p. 102, makes the point that "man must first be defined theologically -- before any philosophical or psychological statement can be made about him. His relation to God is the summit of the hierarchical pyramid". I.e. the summit is not "the I-self, or reason.

<sup>4</sup>Numerous illustrations might be given. "A Modern Philosophy of Education", by the late Sir Godfrey Thomson, my revered teacher, is, as he himself admits in the book, ineptly named from this point of view.

Plato and Aristotle, to Locke, Rousseau, and, in our own day, Dewey, Bertrand Russell and Whitehead, have occupied themselves with the subject of education; since the fundamental questions regarding the nature of personal existence and the purpose of life are common both to philosophy and education. And it may be argued that where there is a lack of a clear directive sense in education, as has been noted by some writers,<sup>1</sup> it springs either from the fact that empiriological insights have usurped the place of a clear and regulative doctrine of man, or that where education has not lacked a philosophical foundation, it, like western culture as a whole, has been offered an interpretation of man that does less than justice to his full stature. Perhaps no single element in the thought of leading exponents of education more sensitively exposes the strength and weakness of their system than its implied or explicit anthropology; since this is, in fact, the crux of educational theory.<sup>2</sup>

B. The Relation between Scientific, Philosophical, and Theological Interpretations of Man.

An initial problem is created by the fact, noted

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<sup>1</sup>E.g. by Sir Richard Livingstone, in "Education for a World Adrift", and other writings.

<sup>2</sup>This is evident in comparing the different educational points of view represented in "Modern Philosophies and Education".



above, that there is a diversity of interpretations of human nature, psychological, sociological, philosophical, and so on. The problem, which is a real and complex one for education, since it employs a variety of approaches in its work, concerns their interrelation. Is the relation one of conflict, or is it that of contributory aspects of a total structure? Obviously, the relation cannot be one of ultimate incompatibility, since truth is one, and since man is a unity, albeit a disturbed or disrupted unity. Where irreconcilable opposition appears to arise, as between an evolutionary and a theological account of man's origin, for example, the insolubility of the conflict may be due to a science which has become "crypto-metaphysical",<sup>1</sup> or a theology which has misconceived the nature of its task.<sup>2</sup>

Ultimately, therefore, there can be only one true doctrine of man, a reading of his nature which covers all its aspects. But since his being is multi-dimensional, since he is, in Evelyn Underhill's phrase, "an amphibious creature", both organism and spirit, he may be described at different levels of his nature, and each separate account may be true. If the separate descriptions are valid, they will not be in

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<sup>1</sup>A phrase borrowed from the chapter on Tillich's anthropology by Roberts, in "The Theology of Paul Tillich".

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Tillich; "Dynamics of Faith", p.

opposition with one another. Each will contribute to the understanding of the total complex "Gestalt" which is Man. The relation, moreover, will be one of interdependence, insights drawn from the representation at one level providing an interpretative point of view at another. Since the essential structure of man's being cannot be regarded as other than unitary, and since, (to put the matter differently), man "responds as a whole",<sup>1</sup> the separate accounts cannot be treated as dealing with contradictory elements in man's nature, or with isolated parts of it, but rather with separate accounts of the whole person viewed under different aspects. What man is, philosophically or theologically speaking, influences all his responses, even at those levels where man is closest to the animal or to nature. The various dimensions of the person are contained within each other, and within the mysterious and dynamic unity which is Man.

It introduces an inescapable complexity into the study of man at any level, to remember that he is both subject and object in the enquiry. The scientist dealing with some aspect of human life or behaviour, for example, is not only a scientist using the methodological tools of his particular discipline; he himself is also "a human being having the philosopher's power of thought and need for conceptual under-

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<sup>1</sup>The point of view in Hebrew psychology, as well as in certain types of contemporary psychology.

standing";<sup>1</sup> and he is, at all events in Tillich's own sense of the term, a man of faith, laid hold upon by an "ultimate concern".<sup>2</sup> He is always, himself, part of any observation or experiment, as selector and interpreter of data, for example. In other words, objectification is, in the final analysis, impossible, even in the study of nature, and least of all in the study of man. For the reconciliation of the different dimensions of anthropological description, the presence of an underlying and ever-present frame of reference, which is both philosophical and, in the broadest sense, religious, requires to be recognized, if intellectual distortion is to be avoided. It is when the presence of such an element in all thought is repudiated or remains unconsciously hidden, that basic conflict arises between theological anthropology and the sciences of human nature. And, on the other hand, the refusal on the part of theology to face up to the ontological questions regarding the structure of being, which are part of the total discussion about man, is also productive of distortion.

There is, then, a point of identity in the truth sought by science and philosophy, and the existential concern of faith which is a fundamental aspect of our common human-

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<sup>1</sup>Tillich: "Dynamics of Faith", p. 92.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

ity. The mutual involvement of these aspects of a total view of man is an expression of the fact that man's nature is not a chaos or a "multiverse", but a "dynamic organization",<sup>1</sup> reflecting the essential order of God's creation as a whole. For one must assert the ultimate union of scientific, philosophical, and religious truth, even while bearing in mind the distortion introduced into all these areas by man's fallen condition, if the declaration of a fundamental split in the structure of being itself (i.e. of ultimate reality) is to be avoided.

Such considerations, if borne in mind, enable one to escape the baffling sense of contradiction which is experienced when the attempt is made, as it must be made by educational theory, to take the portrayal of man in the various strata of his being into a total view. It is important to bear in mind that it is the same man who is the subject of each enquiry; and only a false view of science, of philosophy, or of faith can insist on their final contradiction. If the fundamental perspectives of these respective approaches to the understanding of man are valid, i.e. in harmony with a true interpretation of ultimate reality, they should all contribute to a homogeneous portrait; since the subject of

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Allport's definition of personality as "the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustment to his environment". "Personality", p. 55.

the portrait is the same in each instance, and since truth is one.<sup>1</sup>

The foregoing discussion has, up to this point, begged the question of the extent to which man, in the actual conditions of human existence and apart from any "special revelation", can through reason secure a true knowledge of himself. The debate is many-sided; it is not only one of the main points of divergence between Roman Catholic and Protestant dogma, the former, through the infusion of Greek philosophical ideas, inclining to a more optimistic view of human reason,<sup>2</sup> and the latter, particularly in its traditional forms, to a more pessimistic conclusion; but it is also a major source of controversy within Protestantism itself. It is not possible, in a chapter devoted to Christian anthropology in relation to nurture, to give an elaborate treatment of this subject, basic though it is to a theory of Christian nurture. But some aspects of the question must be mentioned, and others will receive incidental reference in later parts of the discussion.<sup>3</sup>

Exponents of Christian Education whose anthropological

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Tillich: "The Conception of Man in Existential Philosophy"; Article in "Journal of Religion", July, 1939, Vol. XIX, No. 3, p. 201.

<sup>2</sup>See Burtt, "Types of Religious Philosophy", chapter on the Roman Catholic philosophy of religion.

<sup>3</sup>Tillich's more recent writings have contributed substantially to the general point of view contained in this section.

point of view has been influenced noticeably by Karl Barth sometimes create in their writings the impression that the place of psychological insight in the educational ministry of the Church presents no major problem, since the relation of Christian faith to psychology is simply one of "over-againstness"; and that the knowledge of the self derived from within the resources of the Biblical revelation itself supplies the Christian teacher with all the data he requires. This is true to a certain extent of James D. Smart,<sup>1</sup> who makes no serious effort to come to grips with the problem created by the association of "education" (with its connotations derived from the day-school) with "Christian"; and particularly to point out the positive relation which must be established between the two. The decision to by-pass the question of ontology as an "abyss",<sup>2</sup> or the refusal to bring faith, philosophy, and science into one comprehensive purview, does not diminish the acuteness of the educational problem. It will, perhaps, be sufficient for the moment to state that awareness of the existential predicament of man experienced in the encounter of Christian faith, does not cancel out the need for a knowledge about the behaviour of man derived from the human sciences, nor for a knowledge of the structure of essen-

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<sup>1</sup>"The Teaching Ministry of the Church".

<sup>2</sup>"Natural Theology", p. 75. Cf. Tillich's comment in "Biblical Religion etc.", p. 8.

tial being which is given by philosophy.<sup>1</sup> It is not the province of Biblical religion to dispense philosophical or scientific knowledge. It may be affirmed, moreover, that a theological point of view that provides no real continuity between the unredeemed person, and the "new man" in Christ, and that interprets the Pauline statement<sup>2</sup> with the utmost literalness,<sup>3</sup> a point of view, that is, which virtually "annihilates the created person in order to recreate him",<sup>4</sup> cannot provide a satisfactory anthropological basis for a theory of Christian nurture. It is not legitimate for the Christian educator simply to adopt an attitude of negation to philosophy, science or general culture in his theory, when in fact he is forced to come to terms with them in his practice as a teacher; nor is it possible for him, in missionary education, to deny a positive relation between the experience of faith in the Christian, and the experience of faith in other religions. Tillich's statement that "it is not possible to elaborate a Christian doctrine of man, and especially a Christian doctrine of the Christian man, without using the immense

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<sup>1</sup>Biblical religion, with its symbolic affirmation concerning man's creation in the divine image, has also, of course, something to say about essential being.

<sup>2</sup>Col. 3:10.

<sup>3</sup>II Cor. 5:17. Cf. "The new birth is a new birth." Barth, in "Natural Theology", p. 93.

<sup>4</sup>Berdyayev: "Destiny of Man", Chapter 3, (b).

material brought forth by depth psychology",<sup>1</sup> might be extended in its reference to cover the psychological sciences in general; and it represents a point of view which sees the relevance of scientific knowledge about man to revelatory experience, without ignoring the existence of a profound dialectical tension between the two. By denying the tension, by saying "No" without seeing that an affirmation must also be made, Barth conveniently restricts his own field of concern, but the full dimensions of the problem, or rather mystery, of man, are obscured.<sup>2</sup> Emil Brunner may be said to provide a better anthropological foundation for a theory of Christian nurture, in his doctrine of a "point of contact"<sup>3</sup> in the formal as distinct from the material imago Dei.

While not repudiating the Reformed principle of sola gratia, Brunner makes a constructive attempt to resolve the unbridgeable Barthian antithesis between revelation and reason, and between "general" and "special" (or "Biblical") revelation. This does not lead him to accede to any claim on the part of psychological science that man can be known "from himself", but it does acknowledge an intimate positive revelation between theology and psychology, especially when psychology "is

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<sup>1</sup>Tillich, in the autobiographical introduction, in "The Theology of Paul Tillich", p. 19.

<sup>2</sup>See Barth's reply to Brunner, in "Natural Theology".

<sup>3</sup>"Natural Theology", p. 32.



understood as including the doctrine of the human soul as the bearer of personal life."<sup>1</sup>

But the real heart of the problem for nurtural theory has not yet been reached. Granted that philosophical enquiry and Biblical religion are each distinct in the character of their concern, the one having to do with essential structures of being, and the other with the situation created by the "estrangement"<sup>2</sup> and ambiguous character of actual human existence, and the experience of their being overcome, the real question is not whether God does or does not convey a revelation of Himself in other ways than through the Scriptures, in those areas of truth that are accessible to the methods of cognitive enquiry, but whether reason itself is not so distorted by man's existential estrangement from true being, that it becomes ineffectual, powerless to contribute to his self knowledge, and powerless to contribute to his salvation. By way of indicating the outlines of the answer that may be given to that question, the following considerations may be mentioned:

(a) The Biblical claim is not that the source of all authentic revelatory experience is confined to the Scriptures, but that the Word of revelation contained in the Scriptures is the

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<sup>1</sup>"Man in Revolt", p. 64.

<sup>2</sup>A concept used both in Christian and non-Christian forms of existentialism, in Hegel and Marx, as well as in Tillich. Cf. "Systematic Theology", Vol. II., p. 45, f.

criterion of all authentic revelation, and that in the unique revelatory event culminating in Jesus Christ is found the indispensable means of man's salvation, i.e., his restoration to his true nature and destiny. This is not, as Tillich has pointed out, equivalent to a denial that "revelatory events occur anywhere besides the appearance of Jesus as the Christ. ----- There is a history of revelation, the centre of which is the event: Jesus the Christ; but the centre is not without a line which leads to it (preparatory revelation) and a line which leads from it (receiving revelation)."<sup>1</sup> It does not in the least destroy the uniqueness of the divine revelation in Christ, on the Biblical truth concerning man's helplessness to effect his own salvation, to point out, as indeed Paul does in more than one place, that God has communicated something of Himself in other aspects of man's experience, and indeed in other faiths.<sup>2</sup> Farmer mentions that the latter may be a genuinely "personal" revelation, in the sense that it may be a genuine self-disclosure of God's nature, communicated through personal being and personal relationships.<sup>3</sup> Unless one affirms an unbiblical doctrine of total corruption, it is

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<sup>1</sup>"Systematic Theology", Vol. II, p. 166. Cf. Farmer: "Revelation and Religion", p. 30ff., who disagrees with Brunner on this point.

<sup>2</sup>Rom. 1:19-21.

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 35.

not inappropriate to assert that philosophical activity may become the locus of revelatory experience, inasmuch as an authentic awareness of the true nature of being may occur through it, even having the ecstatic character of a conversion experience and the sense of having been laid hold of by God.<sup>1</sup>

(b) The distinction must be maintained between the fact of a "general revelation" through nature and in history, and the capacity to make an effective and saving response. Dr. John Baillie has shown that it is because of the ambiguity of the meaning of the term "capacity for revelation", which can be used (i) in the sense of "addressability" or "capacity for being addressed by the Word; or (ii) in the sense of "capacity to respond to the Word of Revelation, that the opposition between Barth and Brunner seemed at one time to be irreconcilable.<sup>2</sup> It should, however, be made clear that it is Barth's fidelity to the Biblical claim that man is utterly powerless to achieve his own salvation, and his fear lest acknowledgment of any "point of contact" between human knowledge and divine revelation might jeopardize that position, that makes his attitude so uncompromising. Cairns<sup>3</sup>, and also

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Pratt: "The Religious Consciousness", pp. 122-136.

<sup>2</sup>Introduction to "Natural Theology".

<sup>3</sup>"Image of God in Man", pp. 164-179.

Hirschwald,<sup>1</sup> have since pointed out the development that has taken place in Barth's thought on the subject, not only since the writing of his early work on "Romans", but since the first publication, in German, of his controversial reply to Brunner. Hirschwald has traced this development up to the publication of the later volumes of the "Dogmatics".

(c) Two other related considerations remain to be brought forward which would lead one to question certain aspects of Barth's dogmatic position in which he appears to go further than the Reformers themselves.<sup>2</sup> The first centres in the fact that revelation has a divine-human polarity. That is to say, it has not only the character of divine self-disclosure, but also that of human response or receptivity, deriving from the freedom in which man was created. Without the human end of this polar relation, the complete revelatory event could not occur. The failure to give due emphasis to the aspect of receptivity in revelation has led to theological distortion, as in fundamentalism. Just as in science there is no such thing as a "pure" experiment, the faith attitude and the metaphysical point of view of the scientist, who is also a human being, preventing complete objectivity, so also in the

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<sup>1</sup>Article in: "Presbyter", Vol. 5, No. 4, 1947.

<sup>2</sup>Barth's departure from the position held by all the Reformers on Baptism is discussed in Part III of the thesis. His anthropological views, and his doctrine of Baptism, are not unrelated.

faith-dimension of human experience "there is no pure revelation".<sup>1</sup> Divine self-manifestation is always limited by the concrete realities of the actual human situation. This is seen not only in the diverse character of the interpretation of the divine movement in history in different parts of the Old Testament; it is implied also in the "kenotic"<sup>2</sup> aspects of a revelation "in the flesh" of the Logos-Son.<sup>3</sup> Does Barth pay sufficient attention to the limiting factor of the human element involved in revelation forcing one always to make the distinction between what is truly ultimate, and what is only interpreted as ultimate?<sup>4</sup> It is the failure to make this distinction, and the presence of "hidden" or "repressed" elements, in religious thought, which is the psychological source of religious fanaticism, of which there are traces in Barth's earlier disputes with Brunner, and of idolatry. Does Barth remember that faith in Jesus Christ as the bearer of salvation, and as Him in whom the "new man" is realised, does not release man completely from the ambiguities of his actual, historical existence, and that consequently redemption

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<sup>1</sup>Tillich: "Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality", p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Phil. 2:5-10.

<sup>3</sup>A term used by Wm. Manson in his chapter on "The Theology of Worship", in the "Minister's Manual", p. 18.

<sup>4</sup>Tillich points out the need for this distinction, in "Dynamics of Faith", p. 10 f.

is not an event completed "in principle" through the Person and work of Christ, but is also only in process of fulfillment in the life of each individual believer? A consequence of this situation is that the reason of the Christian man, while illumined and liberated because his life is centred upon that which is truly the ground of being (i.e. he is laid hold on by a true faith), is still not unaffected by his continuing character as a sinful being, and by the fact that he is still being "made perfect",<sup>1</sup> and still has to "work out his own salvation".<sup>2</sup> There is thus no complete or absolute distinction between the reason of the unredeemed man and that of the man of Christian faith. Both are affected to some degree by the ambiguities of life "between the two comings". Rationality and conceptual thought are a part of religious experience and theological reflection. Thus not even the work of the Christian theologian is immune from that error inseparably bound up with man's continuing sinfulness even within the experience of salvation in Christ.

If all this is so, i.e., if it has to be admitted that not only philosophy and the other products of man's rationality, but also theology, are adversely affected in their operations by the human factor in even the revelational situa-

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<sup>1</sup>Te elos.

<sup>2</sup>Phil. 2:12.

tion, there appears to be no valid reason, unless one adheres to a doctrine of total depravity, why the fruits of scientific and philosophical activity should not be employed in Christian nurture as offering insight into certain aspects of the nature of personal being not accessible to faith or secured in revelation. It must, moreover, be asserted, that theological formulation does not occur without the employment of a conceptual terminology which has a long philosophical, and pre-philosophical, history. In other words, theology functions within a continual association with, and indebtedness to, philosophy,<sup>1</sup> even where the desire for dissociation is most pronounced. This situation, then, offers an additional reason for not repudiating that part of the quest for truth which raises the question of the nature of essential being. Tillich has maintained that "the discovery of the ontological question by the Greek mind is universally relevant," and is "an expression of the human mind as such".<sup>2</sup> This acknowledgment is not equivalent to making "a rational principle the real 'locale' of revelation."<sup>3</sup> It is merely a recognition of the undoubted fact that the faith dimension of personal

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<sup>1</sup>Barth's own mastery of this field, and his constant reference to it, are an illustration of the truth of the statement.

<sup>2</sup>"Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality", p. 60.

<sup>3</sup>Camfield: "Revelation and the Holy Spirit", preface, p. ix.

existence brings into operation the total resources of personality, and that the report on, and kerygmatic witness to revelation, as well as theological reflection on its meaning and relevance, employ the categories of conceptual, as well as of symbolic, communication. This means that the realm of faith is not to be allowed an artificial dissociation from the realm of rationality. It does not mean the acceptance of a Roman Catholic philosophy of religion of a "two storey" type.<sup>1</sup> It means that man's exploration of the structures of personal being, and of "Being-itself", or essential reality, are relevant to the experience of faith. Ontology cannot, and need not, be disclaimed by revelation (or by theology). The employment of the philosophical concepts of  $\gamma\upsilon\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$  and  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  by Paul and by the writer of the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel does not open either to the charge of Hellenizing the Gospel, or destroying the uniqueness of the Christian answer to man's existential predicament. It simply means that man's rational life and the life of faith (man as a thinking being and man as responsive to the Word of the Biblical revelation) are not separable. They "lie within" each other, in Tillich's phrase. Existential being is grounded in essential being, as the Biblical idea of man created in the divine image affirms.

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<sup>1</sup>A term used by Brunner with reference to the thought of Irenaeus, and discussed by Cairns: "Image of God in Man", p. 117.



Some reference should, perhaps, be made at this point to the presumption in the term "Christian education" of the appropriateness of the educational process to the reception of revelation and the response of faith; and also to the general question of the relation of the Christian understanding of man to the field of Christian nurture. The question is a large one, and really concerns the doctrine of revelation, the interpretation of the nature of the divine self-disclosure; i.e. it is concerned with whether it is right to assume that revelation may actually be imparted through the medium of the teaching process, or whether the work of education in the Church is merely preparatory to, and consequent on, the reception of revelation. An answer to this problem will emerge in the body of the argument. At the moment, the following points may briefly be noted:-

(a) The validity of teaching as the quickener of faith and as the handmaid of revelation is an assumption that pervades the Old Testament. This is seen with particular clearness in Deuteronomy "the book of religious education", as it was called by James Denney;<sup>1</sup> and also an expression of the prophetic movement in Hebrew religion. The whole conception of divine Torah, in which God is the Teacher or Counsellor of His people, may be said to support the idea of revelation

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<sup>1</sup>In a phrase quoted by John Baillie in "A Devotional Lctionary".

through teaching.<sup>1</sup>

(b) The idea is presumed in Jewish synagogue worship, which has all the characteristics of a teaching-service, and out of which the "liturgy of the catechumens", having, as the name indicates, a specific reference to those under Christian instruction, developed. This means that the teaching element, associated with the exposition of the Word, is an integral part of the Christian service of corporate worship.<sup>2</sup>

(c) The practice of Jesus Himself may be said to provide a further justification of the idea of revelation through teaching. His work, while at its commencement it continued the kerygmatic emphasis of John the Baptist, gradually assumed more and more the character of a teaching ministry particularly after the Confession of Peter, when the initiation of the Twelve into the inner meaning of a suffering Messiahship had to be undertaken.<sup>3</sup> The Old Testament idea of divine Torah has its counterpart in the New Testament thought of the Holy Spirit, and particularly the Johannine conception of the Counsellor.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sherrill: "The Rise of Christian Education", pp. 31-37; and Phillips: "Transmission of the Faith", chap. III, both develop this thought.

<sup>2</sup>Sherrill: "Gift of Power", p. 52.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. James S. Stewart: "Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ"; chapter on "The Teaching Method of Jesus". Also Hight: "Art of Teaching", on Jesus as Teacher. Also Sherrill: "Rise of Christian Education", pp. 85-89.

<sup>4</sup>John 14:16-17, etc.

(d) The idea is presumed in the educational character of much of the New Testament material; and also in the distinctive kind of teaching engaged in by the Apostolic Christian community, particularly in dealing with catechumens, a teaching which was closely associated with preaching, with worship, and with the sacraments. Christian teaching in the context of the Kerygma and of the adoration of God revealed in Christ thus became incorporated into the life and practice of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

This bald summary of facts may be put forward in justification of the interpretation of Christian nurture which occupies the rest of the thesis, as integral to the worship of the Church, and from which, indeed, its basic determinants are derived. The kind of evidence outlined above cannot, however, be used to justify the belief in the redemption of society through education which has been one of the assumptions of American liberal Protestant nurture.<sup>2</sup>

Because of the associations which have been formed around the term "religious education" through its identification with an inadequate theological foundation, and by analogy with general education, the term "Christian nurture" is preferred in this study. The teaching ministry of the Church

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<sup>1</sup>Phillips: "Transmission of the Faith", Chap. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. H. Shelton Smith: "Faith and Nurture", chapter II.

is thus quite deliberately linked with the Sacrament of Baptism<sup>1</sup>, and supplied with rich Biblical associated meanings. It is also freed from certain connotations of the word "education" as presently used in Canada and the U.S.A. which may be found incompatible with the insights and ends of Christian faith. The point of view represented in what follows is that Christian nurture, the sharing with others (not exclusively within the Church, since Christian education has its missionary or evangelistic aspect) of the life in Christ, and particularly with the less mature, is one of the forms assumed by the ministry of the Word, distinct indeed from preaching, but identical in its end.<sup>2</sup> Christian nurture is an activity of the whole Christian Koinonia, an expression of its nature, its faith, and its life. It has, therefore, a unique character of its own, deriving from the uniqueness of the Christian revelation itself, and is not to be understood simply by analogy with other forms of education. It follows that one cannot employ the terminology or the assumptions of general education for the distinctive purposes of Christian nurture, without first enquiring to what extent these are consistent

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<sup>1</sup>Eph. 6:4.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Dodd: "Apostolic Preaching and its Derivatives". The writer would dissociate himself with the use made of the distinction between Didache and Kerygma by J. D. Smart, op. cit., p. 19, f. R. G. M.

with the nature of the faith itself, and particularly with its understanding of the person.<sup>1</sup> It has already been noted that the empiriological study of human nature may contain hidden metaphysical assumptions differing more or less radically from those of Christian anthropology.<sup>2</sup>

We are thus brought back to the Christian understanding of the person as the normative centre for a theory of Christian nurture. In what follows it will not be the intention to offer a recapitulation of anthropological doctrine, but rather to set forth certain essential features of its Biblical basis, particularly as they bear on the problem of formulating a theory of Christian nurture; and to indicate the effect of some of the significant developments of the Christian doctrine of man upon the nuptural ministry of the Church. And we shall be interested in the differentiation of Christian anthropology, i.e., in what constitutes Christian man as over against alternative interpretations of human nature.

### C The Biblical Basis of Christian Anthropology.

The Bible is not primarily concerned with man at all. Hebrew thought, and particularly prophetic thought, is occu-

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Article: "Teaching and Faith", by James R. Guthrie, in "World Christian Education", Third Quarterly, 1953, p. 55 ff.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. the examination of this whole problem in an educational connection by H. Blamires: "Repair the Ruins", chapter on "Christian Dogma and Educational Psychology".

pied with God rather than man; and especially what God has done, is doing, or is about to do.<sup>1</sup> It is, therefore, not at all interested in man as an autonomous being, but only in his relation to God. It does not occur to any Old Testament writer to elaborate an interpretation of man apart from, or independent of, God. The Greek and modern idea of man as capable of being understood from within is foreign to the pages of the Old Testament, and of the New. The Biblical understanding of the person is thus a direct consequence of the Biblical understanding of God.<sup>2</sup>

The God of the Bible is, however, as Brunner describes Him, an anthropotropos theos, a God whose face is turned toward man.<sup>3</sup> Man is the being who can only understand himself in the light of what God has done in relation to him; i.e. in the light of that "knowledge" which is given him in the encounter of faith. Brunner represents the Hebraic truth by saying that "Man is not a fixed star, that shines in its

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<sup>1</sup>Eichrodt: "Man in the Old Testament", p. 83 f. "God is known by what He has done".

<sup>2</sup>What Stacey: "Pauline View of Man" says about Paul's anthropology (p. 238) is applicable to Hebraic thought generally: "The apostle was not primarily interested in anthropology. ... the revelation granted him dealt primarily with God's ways with men, and it is only as the object of God's activity that Paul is concerned to discuss man at all. Just as man, to the Jew, was nothing more than the being with whom God willed to have fellowship, so to Paul, man was the being whom God sought and saved in Jesus Christ". This is in harmony with Pedersen's interpretation: "Israel", Vol. I. Part I.

<sup>3</sup>Chapter in "Christian understanding of Man", p. 159.

own light; man is a planet, that shines only in the light of God".<sup>1</sup>

One may refer to the "existential" character of Biblical thought about man, as distinguished from scientific thought, or detached philosophical speculation about him. George Pidoux writes, for example: "Une autre difficulté est le fait que l'Ancien Testament ne répond pas à des questions d'idées, mais de vie. Son intérêt se concentre moins sur l'homme, considéré en lui-même, que sur l'homme en situation, sur l'homme intégré à sa nation, incarné dans sa vie. Pour les auteurs bibliques, la nation israélite demeure le partenaire de Dieu dans l'histoire du salut."<sup>2</sup>

What we have in the Bible, therefore, is no formulated doctrine of man. We look in vain for a Biblical "ideology" to set over against alternative formulations about man.<sup>3</sup> We have, instead, certain highly symbolic statements which set forth, in short-hand, as it were, a report of the encounter of a people with God, and which, by a process of conceptualization, become the basis of the developed doctrine.

An enquiry into the Christian doctrine of man must

<sup>1</sup>Brunner: "Word and the World", p. 122.

<sup>2</sup>"L'Homme dans l'Ancien Testament" (1953) p. 6. Cf. also Tillich: "Courage to Be", pp. 123-4, for a discussion of the existential attitude.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Farrer: "Christian Understanding of Man", in the Symposium under that name.

start with the Old Testament, as the "necessary substratum" of Christianity.<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to understand any aspect of the Biblical view of man without seeing it thus in depth. But, immediately, two problems are encountered (1) "Whether it is possible to speak at all of an Old Testament view of man, without doing violence to the rich variety of the Old Testament witness";<sup>2</sup> and (2) to what extent is there continuity or consistency as between the thought of the Old Testament and that of the New on the subject of man.<sup>3</sup> Both questions are to some extent answered affirmatively by the statement that we have in Biblical thought, underlying all its undoubted variety, the impression of a fundamental unity of theme, the gracious self-disclosure of God in human history, culminating in the coming of the Christ and the birth of the Church. It is God, the subject of Biblical concern, who gives to the Biblical representation of man its unitary character. Eichrodt argues that "the Old Testament gives the impression of religious unity",<sup>4</sup> and says that even in regard to the deep cleavage which runs through all Hebrew

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<sup>1</sup>Butterfield: "Christianity and History", p. 87.

<sup>2</sup>The problem raised by Wright: "God Who Acts", Ch. I.

<sup>3</sup>Discussed by Cairns, op. cit., chapters I and II.

<sup>4</sup>Op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 23.



literature between the priestly and the prophetic point of view, the two views are "not essentially different". "It is no mere chance that it is the priestly recorder who emphasises the thought of the divine image in the creation of man, thus providing a definition which can never be lost for all who wear the human face."<sup>1</sup> Köhler, Johnson, Pedersen and others have emphasised the pervasive assumptions regarding human nature which are stamped upon the whole literature, and constitute a commentary upon the affirmation of the priestly writer in Genesis.<sup>2</sup>

The nearest approach to anthropological formulation, indeed, in the Old Testament, is this statement,<sup>3</sup> where man is described as being made "in the image and likeness" of God. The explicit references to this thought throughout the rest of the Old Testament are so few that the amount of attention given to it in theological thought becomes a matter for surprise. The fact cannot be explained by reference to the incorporation of the idea in the New Testament, where the idea of the "image", though present is of infrequent occurrence.<sup>4</sup> It is undoubtedly a symbolic statement rich in theological suggestion, but

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>2</sup>Köhler: "Hebrew Man". Johnson: "Vitality of the Individual etc." Pedersen: "Israel."

<sup>3</sup>Gen. 1:26-27.

<sup>4</sup>Christ "the image (εἰκών) of the Invisible God": Col. 1:13-18. Christ "the express image (Χαρακτήρ) of God's Glory": Heb. 1:3. Man whom "He did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son". Rom. 8:28 f.

one which, it would appear, has occupied too exclusive a place in the attention of the theologians. It may be claimed that it is, in itself of too static a character to do justice to the dynamic force and vitality of the whole Old Testament understanding of human nature. In fact, Wright declares that Christian discussion of this symbolic phrase has led to a concentration of theological attention on the inner being of man as an object of analysis, dealing with his reason, faculties, and psychological attributes in ways that are foreign to Biblical thought.<sup>1</sup> The possibility of elaborating, as Wright tried to do, a purely "Biblical" type of theology, in detachment from the influence of Greek philosophy, for example, is a highly controversial subject beyond the scope of our discussion.<sup>2</sup> Here one may only pause to point out how this particular symbol has proved a fruitful starting-point for the incorporation of non-Biblical tendencies into Christian theology.

A further general statement falls to be made. In spite of the attention given to the subject of Creation in Genesis, and in certain other portions of the Old Testament,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"God Who Acts", p. 92.

<sup>2</sup>It has been dealt with by E.L. Allen, in an Article: "The Limits of Biblical Theology", in "Journal of Bible and Religion", Vol. 25, No. 1, Jan., 1957, and by E. Fairweather in "Canadian Journal of Theology, and by Muilenburg: "Union Seminary Quarterly Review", Vol. XII, No. 4, May 1957; and by Tillich: "Systematic Theology", Vol. I., pp. 34-40.

<sup>3</sup>Notably Psalms, Job, and II Isaiah.

it is probably inaccurate to think of the Hebrew mind as greatly interested in the subject of a Creator God. While it is no doubt true to affirm that "the monism of the Biblical view (of man) is ultimately derived from the Biblical view of God as Creator, and from the Biblical faith in the goodness of Creation"<sup>1</sup> this may entail a misunderstanding if it is made to imply that the centre of Hebrew interest revolves round the notion of a first Cause. Thus Bultmann says that unlike Greek philosophy the Old Testament never indulges in a speculation about the *ἀρχή*, the origin of the world which is inherent in it so long as it endures. --- The doctrine of Creation is not a speculative cosmogony but a confession of faith in God as Lord."<sup>2</sup> It may, perhaps, be claimed that the idea of creation is not primary in Hebrew thought, but is a subsidiary one, and that the thought of a God active in history, and with whom the life of man is concerned, takes precedence over it in the Hebrew mind. The Hebraic view of man may thus be said to be a consequence of the idea of a God experienced as concerned with man's life in time, and to whom man is therefore related in terms of election and responsibility. It may even be argued that the Exodus experience, and the interpretation subsequently put upon it, is a far more crucial determinant than the concept

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<sup>1</sup>Niebuhr: "Nature and Destiny of Man", Vol. I, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup>"Primitive Christianity", p. 15; and cf. p. 16-17.

of creation, in shaping the characteristic attitudes towards man's life, in Old Testament thought. It can hardly be denied that the subject of a theocentric interpretation of history is the paramount interest of the great Old Testament prophets.<sup>1</sup> It is in the context of an implied philosophy of history, and of God's mind as revealed therein, that the characteristic Biblical picture of human personality emerges. It is possible that, under pressure of the need to relate philosophical to Biblical thought, attention to the more static or "substantive" concepts has led to insufficient emphasis being laid upon the dynamic prophetic understanding of history as the expression of the will and judgments of God, and the theatre for the exercise of His moral demands, as a determinant of the Biblical understanding of man.<sup>2</sup>

Since reference has been made to the mutual relation of psychology and theological anthropology, it is proper to mention briefly the fact that Hebrew and Greek thought both have their own underlying psychological interpretations of human function, and that this influences profoundly the anthropological interpretations of the Biblical writers. This was

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Bultmann, op. cit., p. 21: "History is the major theme of the Old Testament literature". Cf. also Wright, op. cit., p. 89: "Biblical man does not attempt to understand himself by means of the world of nature, but solely in his relationship to God".

<sup>2</sup>Cullmann: "Christ and Time", and Butterfield: "Christianity and History", have focussed attention on this aspect of Biblical thought.

recognized by H. W. Robinson,<sup>1</sup> and it has more recently been a subject of interest on the part of a number of Old Testament and New Testament scholars.<sup>2</sup> The relation of Hebrew psychological concepts and terminology to those of the New Testament is a question of quite fundamental importance, particularly for Pauline anthropology. Only certain aspects of it can concern us here. The most striking feature of Hebrew psychology, distinguishing it from that of the Greeks, is what may be termed its "holistic"<sup>3</sup> character, the awareness of a totality, and the response of man as a whole, which Aubrey Johnson has described as the "open sesame which unlocks the secrets of the Hebrew language and reveals the riches of the Israelite mind".<sup>4</sup> Aspects of this distinctive characteristic of Hebrew psychology have been developed by Johs. Pedersen.<sup>5</sup> The interesting query is pertinent, from an educational point of view, as to whether certain emphases in recent technical psychology<sup>6</sup>, as well as the parallel movement in psychosomatic

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<sup>1</sup>H. W. Robinson: "Christian Doctrine of Man", Chaps I and II.

<sup>2</sup>Köhler; Hebrew Man"; Aubrey R. Johnson: "The Vitality of the Individual in the Thought of Ancient Israel"; "The One and the Many etc."; Stacey: "Pauline View of Man".

<sup>3</sup>The word is borrowed from Smuts, who used the term to denote his philosophical point of view.

<sup>4</sup>Op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>5</sup>"Israel", Vol. I., pp. 99-181, esp. 99-109. <sup>6</sup>E.g. in Angyall: "Foundations for a Science of Personality", as well as in the Gestalt Psychology of Köhler, Koffka, and others.

medicine, are not reaffirmations and developments of insights coming into human thought from Hebrew sources.

This holistic tendency of Biblical psychology helps to explain the absence from Old Testament thought of a fundamental dichotomy in the structure of personality such as can be attributed to the Greeks. And it is a natural consequence of the Hebrew awareness of the self, not as autonomously constituted, or as a development from nature ( $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ ), but as constituted by its relation to God. "The fundamental datum of Israel's view of life is that the individual is summoned to a responsibility which demands to be taken as absolute. The man to whom God's demand comes is recognized as a person, an 'I', who cannot be represented or replaced by any other. Here a view of personality is more and more clearly established which has nothing to do with an animistic theory of an indestructible soul-substance, giving man a share in the divine life in virtue of his nature, and thus ensuring meaning to his existence. Nor is it possible here, as in Greek thought, to establish the structure of the human 'I' as a regulated spiritual unity, by analysing and co-ordinating the individual's spiritual forces, which are intended to be harmoniously bound together. The human person possesses its --- unity and independence only by God's act of election".<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Eichrodt: "Man in the Old Testament" p. 23-24.

The various psychological terms, therefore, which are used by the Old Testament writers,<sup>1</sup> are not to be regarded as descriptive of distinct parts or elements of the self, but rather as expressions of the total personality seen under various aspects. The Hebrew word נפש is a particularly good illustration, it being used with a variety of meanings, some of which can best be suggested by the word "personality". Robinson gives a full account of these psychological terms.<sup>2</sup> What has been said applies not only to psychological functions but to physical organs also. The Hebrew regarded himself as a psycho-somatic whole; not as an aggregate of analysable parts. This psychological attitude springs partly, no doubt, from a pre-philosophical orientation shared with the whole Semitic world, but more especially from that unique sense of relatedness and responsibility which is later crystallised in the Hebrew thought of Election. It would be quite wrong, for example, to trace the absence of any dualism in the interpretation of the person merely to psychological antecedents. To erect the substantial structure of the Old Testament understanding of the nature of man on the somewhat narrow foundation of an undeveloped psychology not altogether

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<sup>1</sup>They are discussed in detail in Johnson's monograph: "Vitality of the Individual etc."

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., Chapter I. Also in his chapter on "Hebrew Psychology", in "The People and the Book."

exclusive to the Hebrew people, is to invite an initial distortion of the theological picture. Those elements in the Hebrew interpretation that are most distinctive and unique are derivable from the Hebrew experience of God, active in history and in the individual life, rather than from a primitive psychology.

When we turn to the psychological terminology of the New Testament,<sup>1</sup> we are confronted with a very intricate problem. We have, in brief, a situation in which Christian thought, acknowledging Old Testament antecedents, confronted with the task of presenting the Gospel to the Hellenistic world, uses Greek psychological terms with distinctively Hebrew connotations; terms which have, moreover, experienced a complex history through their use in the Septuagint, and their evolution in inter-Testamental Judaism. Other terms are also employed, especially by Paul, which have no Old Testament psychological equivalents, e.g.  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$  and  $\sigma\upsilon\nu\epsilon\acute{\iota}\delta\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$ . The problem that confronts the student of Biblical psychology, therefore, is, recognising the radically different attitude to nature and to human nature as between the Hebrew and the Greek mind, -- in the former case, "holistic", and in the latter, analytical and with a dualistic understanding of the structure of the self, -- to determine to what extent Hebraic con-

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<sup>1</sup>See Robinson: op. cit., chapter two. Also Stacey: "Pauline View of Man".



cepts have been influenced by translation into the language of Hellenism, and by the effort to communicate the Kerygma to the world of the Greeks.

Biblical anthropology thus has to reckon with a curiously complex psychological phenomenon, the interrelation in the New Testament of two psychological attitudes that are mutually antithetic. How was the problem resolved? Does the New Testament simply use Greek terms in the sense of the Hebrew words which they translate? Or are Old Testament words and ideas subtly influenced and modified by the process of transmission in the language of a different culture? These questions are really part of the far larger one of the relation of λόγος to ἀποκάλυψις and to πίστις, the relation of knowledge concerning the structure of being to existential knowledge, truth which is disclosed to man in the dynamic encounter of faith.<sup>1</sup> For it has been shown that Hebrew psychology cannot be dissociated from the faith relationship which is the "primary datum" for interpreting the Old Testament view of personality.

The sharp reaction against theological liberalism has prompted many Biblical scholars to seek to minimise the influence of Hellenism upon the New Testament writings, in the interests of affirming the pure, Hebraic character of

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<sup>1</sup>This is, perhaps, the major concern in all Tillich's more recent works, reference to which is made in the argument.

primitive Christianity. Stacey, for example, concedes that "the Greek world may have provided a means of expression to Paul",<sup>1</sup> but in seeking to answer the questions: What was the determining factor in Paul's anthropology? and: Was Paul's Gospel a synthesis of two religious traditions? he concludes that the conversion of Paul, and not the influence of Judaism or the Greek mysteries, determined Paul's view of man.<sup>2</sup>

Original features in Paul's thought are adduced in support: e.g. (a) the relative infrequency of ψυχῆ, "an unimportant word in Paul"; (b) his characteristic use of πνεῦμα as the key term in his anthropology; (c) the distinctive, ethical use of ἀρετή; (d) the employment of terms without any Hebrew equivalents; as νοῦς, λόγος, and συνέδησις, and the phrase ὁ ἕως ἄνθρωπος signifying the true self.

These terms are stated to be used by Paul in a sense deriving from the new, Christian character of his thought, and independent of Greek connotations.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, in Stacey's opinion, Paul's mode of expression, his vocabulary, and so on, must be carefully distinguished from the "content and direction" of his thought, which, he affirms, were so radically changed by his conversion that while

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<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 228.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 223 ff.

<sup>3</sup>The terms are discussed in the text, and the conclusions summarized on pp. 224-228.

his terminology still retained a Judaic or Greek flavour, the strong originality of the thought of which it was the vehicle were unaffected.<sup>1</sup> One may recall a similar statement by the Roman Catholic writer, Jean Daniélou, to the effect that "the sacramental theology of the Fathers is a Biblical theology", but "refracted through a Greek mentality", which, however, "affects only the method of presentation."<sup>2</sup>

The originality of Paul's thought, and the determinative influence of the Damascus Road experience, may be conceded at once. But this does not at all dispose of the crucial problem, pertinent to our enquiry, of the extent to which dependence on the Greek language, and Greek psychological terminology, has influenced the substance as well as the externals of Paul's thought. In spite of the careful scholarship which distinguishes his work, one cannot escape from the impression that Stacey's conclusions are influenced by certain theological a priori, i.e. that he brings to his critical examination a strongly marked theological biblicism.

It must be acknowledged that a problem has been raised of such proportions that only an indication of a point of view can be attempted. In the first place, it may be

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<sup>1</sup>"In his own mind, Jewish and Greek anthropological terms were mixed together in carefree confusion". Cf. "The thought forms differ, but the subject is Christ, p. 239. "His conception of man depended on his thought of God". p. 240.

<sup>2</sup>"The Bible and the Liturgy", p. 8.

stated that the issue is not whether Paul, in transplanting the Gospel from Palestinian soil, in fact transformed it. One would agree with Dr. James S. Stewart<sup>1</sup> and with George Caird<sup>2</sup> that that issue has more or less been settled by New Testament scholarship. But the problem of the "amalgamation" of Hebraic and Greek elements in Christian thought is not one that meets us for the first time in the Patristic writers. It must be recognised as presumed by the New Testament documents themselves. It is obvious that Paul and the writer of "Hebrews", and the author of the Johannine Gospel and Epistles, were anxious to preserve the Gospel from Gnostic contamination. Nevertheless it is possible to recognise the controversial motive in certain New Testament writings, and still to insist that since the composers of these documents spoke and wrote the Greek *κοινή*, referred to the Hebrew Scriptures through the medium of a Greek translation, and lived in intimate contact with a Hellenistic environment, to which the Christian message had to be related, the point of view of Hebraic purism is one hard to maintain. The argument is not one that can be settled on exegetical or theological grounds alone. It presents a problem in semantics as well, regarding what happens to verbal symbols and to psychological

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<sup>1</sup>"A Man in Christ".

<sup>2</sup>"The Apostolic Age", Chapter IX.

concepts, when they are translated from one language to another, and from one culture to another. Philosophical terminology, also, when employed in the interests of interpreting and mediating faith or of theological formulation, cannot be completely stripped of its conceptual history or removed from its metaphysical field of reference. It comes trailing clouds of pre-philosophical association and cognitive history which cannot be sloughed off, even in the interests of communicating a radically new spiritual experience. The statement that "grace does not create a being who is unconnected with the one who receives grace",<sup>1</sup> may be applied to a redeemed culture as well as to the redeemed individual. It may be asked, therefore, whether it is, in fact, possible to set forth Christianity in terms of pure Hebraism. Even Karl Barth speaks of the "witch-hunt" against the Greeks as something to be deprecated. It is, perhaps, better to admit, then, that the Hebraic doctrine of creation in the divine image has elements in common with the philosophical conception of essential being, and not to assume that God has confined the vehicle of His self-disclosure to the culture of Israel, nor to imagine that the theologian must "absolutize" a particular culture, thus contradicting the Christian principle enunciated by Paul himself that in Christ there is "neither

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<sup>1</sup>Tillich: "Systematic Theology", Vol. II, p. 79.

Greek nor Jew."<sup>1</sup>

The crucial significance of what is involved in this issue is underlined when it is seen to be the principal source of divergence in the thought of Niebuhr and of Tillich. As they themselves recognise.<sup>2</sup> Tillich criticizes Niebuhr's theology on two main counts, (a), that it lacks an epistemological foundation;<sup>3</sup> and he therefore takes issue with Niebuhr's doctrine of reason; and (b), that in the interests of a biblical "supernaturalism" it contrasts Jewish and Greek elements in developed Christian thought in order to affirm the former and reject the latter, on the ground that the Greek mind is "rationalistic" and opposed to the Hebrew temper. Tillich insists, on the other hand, that in the Hellenistic period the Greek mind was neither 'intellectualistic', nor rationalistic (in the sense of being founded on 'technical reason' or 'calculating reason'),<sup>4</sup> but "mystical, and longing for a way of salvation". Niebuhr had himself given some

<sup>1</sup>Col. 3:11.

<sup>2</sup>In Tillich's criticism of Niebuhr's doctrine of knowledge in Vol. II; "The Theology of Reinhold Niebuhr", pp.36-43; and Niebuhr's reply, pp.432-433; and in Niebuhr's criticism of Tillich, Vol. I: "The Theology of Paul Tillich", Chap.9: "Biblical Thought and Ontology"; and Tillich's reply, pp.342-346; of which this paragraph is a brief digest. The Editors are Kegley and Bretall; references are to "K. and B." Vols. I and II.

<sup>3</sup>"Niebuhr does not ask: 'How can I know?' He starts knowing"!

<sup>4</sup>Cf. A.N. Whitehead's distinction between "speculative reason" and "pragmatic reason", to which Niebuhr refers: "Human Nature", p.120; and criticises, p.121, by saying: "The purer rationalist splits the human spirit into a speculative and a pragmatic intelligence; and he assumes that the former has a vantage point of pure disinterestedness which no type of human intelligence ever possesses".

recognition to this in his references to Greek Tragedy and "the Apollonian-Dionysian spirit".<sup>1</sup> "Gnosis", says Tillich, "is not detached knowledge, but insight on the basis of union". Christian preaching and Christian theology did more than adapt the Christian message to the minds of those it wanted to reach. "Christian theology amalgamated Greek concepts with its message. --- The reason for this was that in Greek thought something universally valid had appeared, which Christianity could not disregard and without which it would not have been able to express itself in a universal fashion." It was, therefore, "not an accidental adaptation but a substantial necessity when the early Church related the Greek quest for ultimate reality to the Christian quest for salvation".<sup>2</sup> These sentences virtually summarize the whole argument in Tillich's "Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality", and they have profound anthropological implications. He urges that the distinction be preserved between "forms of expression which are generally Semitic and especially Israelitic", and "what has been done to these forms by the revelatory experiences of the religious leaders of Judaism". "When Christianity broke through the shell of Judaism, Christianity was liberated from bondage to the Israelitic type of

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<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>2</sup>"K. and B." Vol. II, p. 42.

Semitic culture and religion --- Therefore Christianity cannot give a preference to the Jewish in contrast to the Greek encounter with reality. It transcends this contrast".

Ontology, having to do with essential being, and revelation, having to do with existential estrangement from true being, are therefore both necessary to a total apprehension of reality. The new wine of the Biblical revelation has to find in the categories of Greek thought, wineskins which make its universal application apparent. It is inconsistent in Niebuhr, Tillich therefore maintains, to claim that Christianity transcends every culture and every religion, and yet to adhere to an absolute claim on behalf of Jewish culture.<sup>1</sup>

Niebuhr's reply is to affirm that both Hebraic and Hellenic modes of thought are necessary. The Hellenic component of human thought "generated our sciences and philosophies". But "when we deal with aspects of reality which exhibit a freedom above and beyond structures, we must resort to the Hebraic dramatic and historical way of apprehending reality."<sup>2</sup> Niebuhr accuses Tillich of having "subtly falsified the picture of man as the Bible portrays it and as we

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<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 43. Cf. "Biblical Religion etc". Chap. I. Tillich affirms that "the question of being is as necessary for human nature as the question of God, and the Logos in which the structure of being appears in reality as a whole, as well as in the human mind, is valid for every human being.

<sup>2</sup>"K. and B." Vol. II, p. 433.



actually experience it,"<sup>1</sup> and says that in his theology "the ontological overpowers the historical."<sup>2</sup>

This debate, as theologically creative on this side of the Atlantic as that between Barth and Brunner on the continent,<sup>3</sup> is referred to because of its bearing on the interpretation of the Christian doctrine of man. It is not surprising that Niebuhr characterizes Tillich as "the Origen of our period", contrasting him with Karl Barth, to whose Biblical emphasis Niebuhr owes some indebtedness, as "the Tertullian of our day", who "abjures ontological speculations for fear that they may obscure or blunt the Kerygma of the Gospel". There are elements in Tillich's thought, particularly in his Christology as he has given it to us in the second volume of the "Systematic Theology", which supply some ground for Niebuhr's charge that the historical is depreciated. But a theology which offers merely a "radical discontinuity" between revelation and human thought, or rests on an uncompromising negation of philosophy, does not provide a workable framework for educational theory; and Tillich's discussion of the symbolic nature of revelatory communication, and his en-

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<sup>1</sup>K. and B." Vol. II, p. 218.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 222.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. the criticism of "Man in Revolt" by Barth in his "Dogmatics" III, 2; and the reply by Brunner: "The New Barth", in "Scottish Journal of Theology", 1952, No. 2.

deavour to work out a positive relation between the philosophical doctrine of man's essential being and the theological affirmations concerning his existential situation, for example, are areas where his thought can contribute to a theory of Christian nurture.

C. Some Aspects of the Christian Doctrine of Man, with Reference to their Bearing on a Theory of Christian Nurture.

The purpose in what follows is to offer the broad outlines of a Christian interpretation of human nature which can become a basis for a theory of Christian nurture. The source must be Scriptural inasmuch as the Biblical revelation supplies the true norm of all revelation, though the position is adopted that all authentic revelation of God is not restricted to the Bible. The fact that Christian faith has been in continuous contact with philosophical thought and human culture ever since the birth of the Church renders the presentation of a systematic statement an intricate task, some aspects of which have already been suggested. The chief concern will be contemporary rather than historical, history being referred to principally as it throws light on the immediate theological picture.

The task is not simply that of outlining the Biblical

interpretation of human nature, assuming that there is a single "Biblical anthropology". (Cairns maintains that the Imago Dei is not the same in the Old Testament and in the New, but that in the former it refers to our "universal humanity", and in the latter usually to man as restored in Christ).<sup>1</sup> Scholars writing under the stimulus of "Neo-Orthodox" theology sometimes tend to over-simplify the theological task by assuming the virtual identity of Biblical Theology with Systematic theology, i.e., they write as though the only question were: "What does the Bible say?"<sup>2</sup> Barth must be held largely responsible for this tendency, through his assumption that exegesis is the essential task of the theologian;<sup>3</sup> theology merely tracing the subsequent divergence from the Biblical position. Tillich<sup>4</sup> has shown how much more intricate the theological task really is.

What, then, is the distinctively Christian understanding of the nature of the person?

The foregoing discussion has already disclosed the fact that theological anthropology must have at least a two-fold character, due to the fact that the experience of being

<sup>1</sup>"Image of God in Man", Chapter I.

<sup>2</sup>E.g. Wright: "God Who Acts, or Theology as Recital".

<sup>3</sup>"Natural Theology", p. 71.

<sup>4</sup>"Systematic Theology", Vol. I. pp. 34-40.

human is marked by ambiguity. Man feels that he was intended for freedom, but that he is actually alienated from it. The experience of alienation or "estrangement" is not an insight derived solely from Biblical religion. It is a matter of universal experience, and expresses itself in the literature of all cultures. The contrast between essential freedom, for which man was intended, and actual, "existential" bondage finds articulation in Greek tragedy, and in the Platonic Dialogues, where the Myth of the Cave gives it classical expression.<sup>1</sup> It is seen, also, in the "crypto-metaphysical" naturalism which underlies Freud's scientific account of man. The concept of "estrangement" is a familiar one in Marxist anthropology.<sup>2</sup> Both this fact of human self-awareness, and a distinctive interpretation of its significance, are given symbolic expression in the Biblical myths of Creation and Fall, which are part of the Biblical foundation for the Christian doctrine of man.

But the awareness of alienation from true being not only presupposes a condition from which man has "fallen"; it also points to the possibility of a restoration of man to his true nature or destiny. A complete account of man must

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<sup>1</sup>"The Republic", Book VII.

<sup>2</sup>See Chapter by Alexeiev: in "Christian Understanding of Man"; "The Marxist Anthropology and the Christian Conception of Man"; p. 93.

therefore have reference to these three aspects of his situation; and over-emphasis on one without taking due account of the others will produce a distortion. Tillich has pointed out, for example, that the undue emphasis in Freud upon the existential predicament of man has led to a destructive pessimism; while the preoccupation of scientific humanism with man's essential goodness produces a superficial optimism.<sup>1</sup> A doctrine of the restoration of man must be able to see "the height from which he is fallen", and the tragic character of his actual existence.<sup>2</sup> Brunner's statement, therefore, that "In the double qualification: 'Created in God's image', and 'fallen and corrupted through sin', is included the whole anthropological and psychological knowledge of Christian faith,"<sup>3</sup> has to be qualified or supplemented by his own statement in another place that "Christian anthropology is essentially Christology",<sup>4</sup> to include "the Christian doctrine of the Christian man".<sup>5</sup> The doctrine of

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<sup>1</sup>"Man in Existential Philosophy", p. 215, "Journal of Religion", July, 1939, Vol. XIX, No. 3, pp. 201-215.

<sup>2</sup>"Destiny of Man", p. 16: "Man is the bearer of meaning, although he is a fallen creature in whom meaning is distorted. But fall can only be from a height! - the very fall of man is a token of his greatness. Even in his fallen state he retains the mark of his high origin, and remains capable of a higher life and of knowledge which rises above the meaningless world of things."

<sup>3</sup>"God and Man", p. 153.

<sup>4</sup>"Christian Understanding of Man", p. 178.

<sup>5</sup>"K. and B." Vol. I., p. 19.

the Christ contains within it the doctrine of "the new man", and of the new humanity, about which Christian nurture must have something to say.

(a) Man's essential stature:- The Christian view of man's stature is summed up in the doctrine of the Imago Dei, based on the symbolic statement in Genesis.<sup>1</sup> With this, however, must be associated the whole dynamic conception of man's life which emerges from the prophetic philosophy of history; and we must ask: What view of man's essential nature is presumed in this prophetic interpretation? rather than confine our attention to this one expression of it. The isolation of the image symbol has led to the intellectualization of the whole theological problem of man, and to answers to the false question, "In what part of man's nature does the image reside?" in terms of one function or another, such as his rationality. The problem is thus raised in a manner essentially unbiblical. Wright is therefore right in criticising the over-emphasis of the image notion in the development of the Christian doctrine.<sup>2</sup> Even in a psychological sense, it is, as we have seen, foreign to the Biblical understanding of human nature to isolate one element in man, and to say that existence in the divine image must be predicated of that alone. Rational

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<sup>1</sup>Gen. 1:26 and 27.

<sup>2</sup>"God Who Acts", chapter II, where he criticises "Propositional dogmatics", (p. 35).

man as actually or potentially divine derives from classical sources rather than from Hebraic faith, and supplies one of the differentiae between Roman Catholic and Reformed theology.<sup>1</sup>

The symbol of the Imago Dei may, however, be taken as saying in shorthand, as it were, what is presumed in the rest of the Biblical revelation.

(1) Its first fundamental affirmation is the "infinite qualitative distinction" between time and eternity presumed in the idea of God's creation of man.<sup>2</sup> The Biblical view of man as part of the created order witnesses to the infinite distance at which man stands from God, and asserts man's affinity with the whole created realm, involving his dependence, his finitude, and his mortality. The Biblical sense of the "ontological otherness"<sup>3</sup> of God from man, lost in the Renaissance,<sup>4</sup> proclaimed by Kierkegaard,<sup>5</sup> and recovered again for theology by Karl Barth,<sup>6</sup> is again lost

<sup>1</sup>Niebuhr: "Human Nature", p. 32; cf. 51 ff.

<sup>2</sup>A phrase from Kierkegaard, used in Allen's "Guide to the Thought of Karl Barth", p. 15.

<sup>3</sup>Farmer: "Revelation and Religion", p. 51, f.

<sup>4</sup>Niebuhr: Op. cit., p. 60, on the loss of "the idea of the creatureliness of man"; and p. 63.

<sup>5</sup>In his revolt against Hegelianism. See Mackintosh: "Types of Modern Theology", p. 228.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Allen's comment on Barth: "Is the divine the antithesis of the human, or its fulfilment? (Barth's) vote is given unhesitatingly for the former alternative." Op. cit., p. 14.



sight of in the optimistic theological liberalism which underlies the "religious education" movement in North America.<sup>1</sup> Identity with the divine is never predicated of Biblical man. He is not divine; he never becomes divine; he never ceases to be man: he is always creature. There is implied here, in the Biblical view of man, a limit set to human aspiration, and a restriction of human freedom, as well as an indication of the partially determined character of human existence. The occasional statement in the Patristic writings, in Irenaeus, for example, about man becoming divine, must therefore be attributed to a Hellenistic strain of mysticism, and to the Greek idea of rationality, in which, in so far as man is rational he partakes of the divine nature, rather than to Biblical revelation.<sup>2</sup>

(ii) The second affirmation implied in the thought of creation in the divine image is that man cannot be explained in terms of his affinity with nature; nor is he to be explained, as a self-regulative, autonomous being, from within himself; but only in the light of the relationship in which he stands to God. Included within this is the idea of man as a self-

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Smart's "Teaching Ministry of the Church", Chapter on "How came we here?" pp. 54-61.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. "The word of God became man, in order that thou mayest become a god". Clement, "Protrepticus" i, 8. Quoted Niebuhr, op. cit., p. 155.



transcendent creature, which is part of his human self-consciousness, not confined to the Biblical revelation; man's awareness of himself as standing within nature, but also over against nature; partaking of φύσις, but also of spirit, πνεῦμα, reason. What gives the Biblical revelation its distinctiveness is the insight that man is constituted as a person by the fact of standing in relationship with infinite, Personal Being. This is the distinctive source of the Christian understanding of personality, the prophetic, or revelatory awareness of encounter with One who is experienced as personal, who addresses His Word to man. The Christian sequence of events, therefore is not that man first discovers the nature of personality from self-analysis, or through the study of human interaction in society, and is thus led to attribute personality to God. It is rather that man only knows himself a personal being, and only knows what "person" is, through contact with the Ground of personal being. It is in this sense that Tillich is right in saying, cryptically, that "personality is not possible without faith".<sup>1</sup> What has been said is equivalent to the assertion that the knowledge which is given in the encounter of Christian faith is indispensable to man's

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<sup>1</sup>"Dynamics of Faith", p. 20; cf. p. 27-28.

true understanding of himself as a person. The core meaning of personality is disclosed in faith as "addressability by the Word", creation not only by God, but for communion with God. If this is so, if the essential truth about man's being is only discoverable in the bi-polar relationship of faith, then to attempt to explain man autonomously, apart from God, is to introduce a fundamental distortion into the human picture. The basic explanatory principle is that man is a "theonomous" being.<sup>1</sup> His humanitas consists in the fact that God addresses him, and that he is called to response. It is not possible to construct a self-contained picture of man. Certain aspects of human nature, perhaps, can be usefully studied on the provisional assumption that man is self-regulative and self-explanatory. Barth refers to this in the section of his "Dogmatics" on the "phenomena of humanity".<sup>2</sup> But such enquiry has to rest on the assumption that a conscious abstraction is being made, and the further it is conducted from the peripheral areas of man's life, which he shares with the rest of creation, and the nearer it comes to "man as the bearer of personal life", the more liable is it to error.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Brunner in "Christian Understanding of Man", p. 154.

<sup>2</sup>Dogmatics III, 2: pp. 83-157; discussed by Cairns, op. cit., chapter XIV.

Human personality, thus, in Christian perspective, is a consequence of the faith-affirmation of God's nature as partaking in personal being.<sup>1</sup> It is possible to put this in the form that man is constituted man by the Word of God. This is Brunner's characteristic way, in all his writings, of describing the Christian source of personality. Cairns points out that Brunner thus has to maintain two senses of "forms" of the divine Word, i.e. the pre-existent Logos, and Jesus as the Christ "The work of God, in which the being of real man is created and maintained is the word and work of creation and preservation; but the source of our knowledge of the first work is a second work, the work and word of reconciliation and redemption, the historical word of revelation which discloses eternity. In God's second work we acknowledge His first work as His first, as that in which we possessed our life from the beginning. It is this first relation which makes man man."<sup>2</sup> Thus for Brunner the common element in all humanity consists in man's universal confrontation by Personal Being; but the full meaning of human nature only discloses itself to Christian faith, i.e. faith in the Incarnate Word in whom the image of our authentic

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<sup>1</sup>Farmer: "Revelation and Religion", argues that Trinitarian faith "is a vigorous assertion that personal relationship and personality are constitutive of the divine being"; p. 59.

<sup>2</sup>Brunner, quoted by Cairns: "Image of God in Man", p. 148.

humanity was uniquely expressed, and through whom man is himself restored to true personal being. Brunner's thought is valuable in showing that only in Christianity is personality seen at its true dimension. And it may be noted in passing that his doctrine of a point of contact<sup>1</sup> for the Word, in the formal Imago Dei, not lost by sin, provides a better foundation for a theory of Christian nurture than the anthropology of Barth. For the earlier Barth, at all events, there was no point of contact; and therefore the religious nurture of the child who does not yet believe is meaningless. In the later portions of the "Dogmatics", however, Barth shows signs of modifying his former position, in the direction of Brunner's thought.<sup>2</sup> But what is the situation for Brunner? If it is true for him that "no act of the sinner can in any way prepare him for the justification which God gives him by grace",<sup>3</sup> what is the significance of the religious nurture of the child who has not yet made the response of faith? Is it in breaking down the resistance to the Word? Or in clarifying the understanding? The point of view which will

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<sup>1</sup>Brunner: "Man in Revolt", p. 549. The whole section pp. 499-518, on what happens when a man passes from unbelief to faith, is of interest to Christian nurture.

<sup>2</sup>See Arts. by Hirschwald on "Barth's Thought on the Imago Dei", on "The New Barth", already referred to.

<sup>3</sup>Cairns: op. cit., p. 161.

later be maintained is that God uses the situation of nurture as a mode of confrontation by His Word.

It is Brunner's view that it is the fact of being addressed by the Word that makes man human. D. M. Baillie has pointed out that Brunner's radical view of man's corruption is not altogether consistent with this aspect of his anthropology. And he has drawn attention, also, to the danger of so defining personality as to make it consist in a relationship, the danger, that is, of making it appear that the "substance" of man is "not really substance at all", but that man's nature is simply "to be an animal acted upon by God".<sup>1</sup> The positive merit of Brunner's anthropology, however, is that he has exposed the error in the notion of an independent human nature, showing that no man exists wholly apart from God, that even in unregenerate man, the good is derived from that relationship, and that only in the relationship of the restoration in the divine image through Christ is the fulfilment of personality realised.<sup>2</sup>

The fundamental feature, then of the view of man which we find in the Hebrew-Christian revelation, which the Reformer sought to recover and which has been reaffirmed by

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<sup>1</sup>D. M. Baillie: Unpublished lectures on: "The Christian Doctrine of Man", p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. "God and Man", p. 165, where Brunner speaks of human selfhood as "man's answer to God"; and "the act of turning which is the response to divine grace".

such theologians as Barth, Brunner, and Niebuhr, is that his nature is not to be explained in terms of a dualism, but that in his "body-soul compoundness"<sup>1</sup> he is part of a good creation. Man is what he is not in virtue of a natural endowment, but in virtue of the relationship in which he stands to God. He is a unique creation, not in terms of a rationality which confers on him likeness to divinity, but because of the uniqueness of his relation to God. This is the profound monistic principle by which Christian faith seeks to interpret the human person. It is a dynamic, - not a static concept. Man's nature is not explained ontologically, in terms of being, but rather in terms of a spiritual relation to the divine will. Man's nature fulfils itself in obedience to the Word and will of God, in the life of faith, which is "man's intelligent life-answer to God's grace".<sup>2</sup> It is one of the positive contributions of Calvin to have reasserted the dynamic character of the Biblical understanding of man. Self-knowledge, i.e. knowledge of what it means to be a person is "reflexive of knowledge of God";<sup>3</sup> it is not got from an examination of "man as he is" in himself. Kierkegaard, whom Niebuhr declares to have "inter-

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<sup>1</sup>A phrase from Von Hügel, quoted by Underhill; "Worship", p. 31.

<sup>2</sup>Torrance: "Calvin's Doctrine of Man"; chap. V. Quotation is from p. 80.

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., Chapter I, commenting on Calvin's "Institutes", I, 1 and 2.

preted the true meaning of human selfhood more accurately than any modern, and possibly than any previous Christian theologian", claimed the task of becoming a self to be one "which can be realized only in relation to God",<sup>1</sup> and this accent is constantly reiterated in the writings of Brunner, and in the work of Niebuhr also.<sup>2</sup> We may note also Cairn's statement that "the characteristically human thing is man's presence with God in responsible being".<sup>3</sup>

We find here, also, the basic element which distinguishes Roman Catholic from Reformed anthropology, in that in the former we have an original human nature interpreted in terms of a dualistic, an inherent rationality to which there has been added the capacity for communion with God (the donum superadditum of Aquinas).<sup>4</sup> Whatever may be thought of Brunner's accusation that Irenaeus is the source of the scholastic distinction between the natural and the supernatural,<sup>5</sup> and it is certainly inaccurate to attribute the origin of the mediaeval

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted by Niebuhr: op. cit., p. 182-3.

<sup>2</sup>E.g. op. cit., p. 140: "Man does not know himself truly, except as he knows himself confronted by God." One way of saying this is to affirm that man can only see himself rightly as "reflected" in God, i.e. as in a mirror. The metaphor is used in Paul, Calvin, and Kierkegaard. Cf. Torrance, op. cit., p. 37.

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 112.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Niebuhr: op. cit., p. 263.

<sup>5</sup>See Cairns's criticism, op. cit., p. 83.

doctrine to the mistaken exegesis of Gen. 1:26), to his controversial writings against Gnosticism<sup>1</sup> can be traced the idea, derived from Platonism, that the image consists in man's power of reason, and that man's relation to God (the "likeness") is something added to his nature and lost at the Fall. This idea is present in Augustine's doctrine of man, though in his thought reason is not simply a faculty of the mind but rather "the capacity for self-transcendence",<sup>2</sup> and is taken up by Aquinas, whose thought is largely a combination of Aristotelian philosophy and Biblical elements coming through Augustine.<sup>3</sup> In this way Greek dualism becomes a permanent element in Roman Catholic thought, giving to its doctrine of man its semi-Pelagian character. To the complementary but paradoxical truths of God's otherness and His nearness, summed up in the doctrine of creation in the divine image, which does justice to the fact that "man can find his true norm only in the character of God, but is nevertheless a creature who cannot and must not aspire to be God,"<sup>4</sup> may be traced the Christian

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<sup>1</sup>Adv. Haer." IV, 4, 3.

<sup>2</sup>Niebuhr: op. cit., p. 166.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Cairns; op. cit., p. 117: Aquinas takes over Aristotelian metaphysics, and adds a second storey of Christian ethics to it". Also Niebuhr: p. 164 (note): "In Thomas Aquinas, intellectualistic and Biblical conceptions of the 'image of God' are compounded, with the Aristotelian elements achieving predominance". The entire note, pp. 164-165, is valuable.

<sup>4</sup>Niebuhr: op. cit., p. 175.



source of the moral life. From the "indicative" of man's nature as responsive being the Christian faith derives the character of moral obligation, in the "imperative" of human responsibility.<sup>1</sup> The moral imperative: "Thou shalt" finds its source in the Biblical idea of creation. The essence of man's created being is responsible existence before God. The character of the Christian moral life is thus bound up with the question of human freedom. Tillich declares that the doctrine of human nature has its centre in the doctrine of human freedom; i.e. of man's essential nature as a free person.<sup>2</sup> It is necessary to be clear, however, in what precise sense freedom is predicated of man. In as much as man is a child of nature, his life is partly determined. "As 'body', as a piece of this world, man is as exactly determined as every other real thing. (But) through his being addressed by God, and his obligation to answer, his responsibility, man is free. - - - This is his creation in God's image, that he can answer God -- or not answer".<sup>3</sup> To ascribe to man an absolute freedom only possible to divinity, was the mistake made by Jean-Paul Sartre, though none has insisted more strongly on the character

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Brunner: "Man in Revolt", p. 97:- "The Primary Word is not an imperative, but the indicative of Divine Love: 'Thou are Mine!' Responsibility is "not a task but a gift; not law, but grace."

<sup>2</sup>Article: "Man in Existential Philosophy", p. 202.

<sup>3</sup>Brunner: "Man and God", p. 155.

of human life as responsible existence than he.<sup>1</sup> But finite or creaturely freedom is an essential condition of being a person. Man, being created capable of communion with God, is able to choose, to say "yes", or "no", to his essential nature. He is thus "answerable" for his actions, a responsible, moral person. This view of human nature is not merely implicit in the Biblical idea of creation in the divine image, but, as Eichrodt has shown, it pervades the whole of the Old Testament writings and is accentuated in Old Testament prophecy, which forms the real basis of the Christian understanding of man.<sup>2</sup> Tillich reminds us that "human freedom includes freedom to receive unconditional demands, freedom to be creative, to realise something new, to produce meaningful symbols; freedom to participate in community".<sup>3</sup> This sentence recalls the ethical theory of Berdyaev, who repudiates the "normative ethics" of Kant and of Tolstoi, in favour of an "ethics of creativity" founded on his characteristically Eastern doctrine of meonic freedom. (Freedom is not created by God. It is rooted in the uncreated Nothing, the Ungrund, from all eternity. Meonic freedom consented to God's act

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<sup>1</sup>"Existentialism from Within", pp. 59-62: "Sartre has transferred to man the freedom Christianity ascribes to God."  
"Man is freedom."

<sup>2</sup>This is substantially the argument of "Man in the Old Testament"; e.g. p. 23.

<sup>3</sup>Article cit., p. 207.

of creation: non-being freely a accepted being. Man is the child of God, and the child of freedom, of non-being, τὸ μὴ εἶναι<sup>1</sup> In spite of this, to the Western mind, unsatisfactory foundation of freedom on a theory of an apparently limited God, there is a profound Christian truth in the ethical theory which he builds upon it, namely that man is not merely a sinful being, but first and foremost a creative being, a fact recognised, however crudely in the description of man in the Marxist form of existentialism as homo faber.<sup>2</sup> "As the image and likeness of the Creator, man is a creator too";<sup>3</sup> and the redemption of man through the work of Christ is not merely a redemption from sin, but redemption also for creativity, and there is implied in man's restoration the release of creative energies. "The goal of man is a creative ascent: the event of redemption is religiously subordinated to the event of creativity."<sup>4</sup> Berdyaev points out that "man's moral recovery cannot be attained through moral consciousness (law) - - -. It can only be effected through superconsciousness, which belongs to the spiritual world. ( grace). This presupposes a new ethics, based not upon the norms and laws of consciousness, but upon a

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<sup>1</sup>"Destiny of Man", p. 34.

<sup>2</sup>Alexeiev: "The Marxist Anthropology", in "Christian Understanding of Man", p. 101.

<sup>3</sup>Berdyaev: op. cit., p. 70.

<sup>4</sup>Spinka: "Berdyaev, Captive of Freedom", p. 146.

gracious spiritual power."<sup>1</sup> His ethical theory is thus founded on the Biblical idea of creation in the divine image (associated with his own interpretation of the nature of human freedom), and the Christian doctrine of grace. It is an ethics of grace. The work of redemption is only created in human creativeness, not only in the achievement of the "theanthropic" personality, but shares in the divine work of Creation (cf. the idea of the Eighth Day of Creation) in the transformation of society. This is by no means a reaffirmation of utopianism, which he criticises, nor a new edition of the social Gospel. His thought is saved from that by its eschatological emphasis. It has more affinity with the ethical point of view represented in Camfield (from whose Barthian foundation Berdyaev would dissociate himself<sup>2</sup>) who, expounding what are the ethical implications of the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit, maintains that ethics is crisis, that in the moral situation Christian man feels himself in confrontation, and his life under judgment. Thus, because the Holy Spirit brings our whole life under crisis, "He opens up the way to an unending moral development" and "a higher kind of ethic becomes a possibility", not "the keeping of law", but "obedience unto sanctification," "close to concrete situations".<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 100.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. his criticism of Barth for "belittling man"; p. 69.

<sup>3</sup>"Revelation and the Holy Spirit", p. 121.

It is a morality, not of "moral values", which tends to put man at the centre of things, but of love, which takes its rise in the Christian experience of forgiveness. Thus both writers are critical of traditional forms of Christian teaching, and fundamentally for the same reason, that the Holy Spirit, who is the source of creativity within the Christian Society, has been dissociated from the moral life of man.

It is instructive to contrast the ethical consequences of a Christian doctrine of freedom as they are represented in Berdyaev, with a doctrine of freedom as it emerges in non-Christian existentialism, and the conception of morality which follows from it. Sartre is a particularly good illustration, for, as E. L. Allen has pointed out, "freedom has never before been so emphasised in philosophy".<sup>1</sup> Sartre speaks, indeed, of man as "condemned to be free".<sup>2</sup> His understanding of human freedom is the source of his atheism, for the idea of one in whose being are combined the two attributes of absolute freedom and absolute necessity is inconsistent with itself. Therefore God, he argues, cannot exist; and man brings himself into being. His being is an activity of freedom. Thus there is, for Sartre, no "universal image", no human nature common to all men<sup>3</sup>. There are only different patterns of

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<sup>1</sup>"Existentialism from Within", p. 58.

<sup>2</sup>Sartre: "Existentialism and Humanism", p. 34.

<sup>3</sup>Allen: op. cit., p. 55, and p. 59 f.

freedom. He criticises Freudianism as one form of the desire to escape from freedom and responsibility. "We are not divided into an unconscious that writes the script of a drama and a consciousness that perforce acts it, without understanding the lines it repeats. We are whole selves, and our life is as we choose it to be."<sup>1</sup> Allen denies that Sartre is nihilistic or solipsistic - though he fails to establish a true basis for community -. His thought is interpreted as "a real effort to afford moral guidance for an age in which values are threatened, and men have lost the traditional authorities".<sup>2</sup> His conception of freedom provides a basis for individual morality. It might almost be said of him, as Buber affirmed of Kierkegaard the Christian, that "faith is responsibility"; and that "he affirms responsibility -- but denies himself the appropriate theatre for its exercise, i.e. in the mutual relation".<sup>3</sup> Allen's criticism of the morality issuing from Sartre's doctrine of freedom is that it is "restricted to what arises out of a deliberate choice", whereas "there should be a radiance as well as a resolution about the good life". "The New Testament ethic of love --- introduces a dimension of morality that is lacking in Sartre, since

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<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., pp. 61-62.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 89.

<sup>3</sup>Buber: "Between Man and Man", pp. 45-46.

man is his own saviour".<sup>1</sup> The defect here is that Sartre, (unlike Jaspers), does not realise that the religious relationship is not destructive of freedom, but that man is constituted a free person through his response to the divine. He forgets that the good life is something received (cf. Berdyaev's ethics of grace) as well as achieved, and therefore he has no sound basis for his criticism of authoritarian or conformative ethics.

The bearing of this aspect of anthropology on a theory of Christian worship centred in worship will be apparent, and the question will be resumed in the section on the education of the worshipping life.

A further topic remaining to be dealt with in connection with the Christian understanding of man's essential stature, may be described as the relation of the One to the Many in Christian anthropology.<sup>2</sup> The question of the two polarities of individuality and "corporeity" cannot be ignored in a theory of Christian nurture, since it enables us to understand the relation of the Christian life to life "in the

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<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., pp. 93, and 94

<sup>2</sup>Cf. A. R. Johnson's: "The One and the Many in the Israelite Conception of God." The title is, perhaps, not altogether a happy one, since J. A. T. Robinson, in: "The Body", p. 13, points out that the contrast between the one and the many is typically Greek.

Body", and the Christian interpretation of the relation of the individual to society.

The significant thing about man is not the particularity which makes him an individuum, but that he is also spirit, capable therefore of exercising the (partly determined and creaturely) freedom of the spirit; or, as Tillich says, "dynamically creating a world of his own."<sup>1</sup> One of the questions to which an answer must be sought is whether the pronounced sense of individuality which has, on the whole, been characteristic of Protestantism, and is represented, for example, in Reinhold Niebuhr,<sup>2</sup> is simply a legacy from the Renaissance view of man; or is part of the genius of Biblical religion? Does individuality emerge from community? Is social solidarity the primary fact, and individuality derivative from it? On the surface, this would appear to be the Biblical order. Robinson speaks of "the defective sense of individuality<sup>3</sup>," in early Semitic life. The sociological assumption is that "mind presupposes and is the product of the social process".<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, Niebuhr himself argues

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<sup>1</sup>Article cit., p. 206.

<sup>2</sup>"Human Nature", Chapter III. Cf. Kierkegaard's intense individualism, which appears to be a recovery of prophetic insights.

<sup>3</sup>"Christian Doctrine of Man", pp. 9-11; but he says: "We may speak of moral and spiritual individualism, in close dependence on God, as the specific contribution of the Old Testament. p. 11.

<sup>4</sup>Geo. H. Mead, quoted by Niebuhr, op. cit., p. 60.



that "what emerges from the primitive group is an original endowment, present from the beginning";<sup>1</sup> and it may be noted how, even in early Old Testament religion, Abraham, Moses, and the great prophets appear to stand out from the community as individuals, related organically to the life of the group, but by no means submerged in it. There appears to be that, even in primitive Hebraism, which fosters individuality.

Belief in the primacy of an inner core of personal being would seem to be an immediate implicate of the Biblical affirmation of creation in the divine image, and a presupposition of prophetic religion generally. In support of this statement it may be pointed out that we respond to revelation as individuals, even although the revelation is inseparable from, and made possible by, the believing community. Revelation operates, through personal channels. McDougall's concept of the "group mind" is of limited usefulness, though it does draw attention to the fact that a human group is more than the sum of the units composing it. The question, however, may legitimately be asked, what is the subject of this group mind? In the case of the Church, the answer might be given that it is the Spirit, the individual members being related to each other, and to the Head, in Agape. There may thus be said to be a supra-individual life of the Christian

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<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 59.

Community, but not a supra-personal existence of the individual, since the relation of the "members" to the "Head" is always personal in character. The fundamental difference between the genius of Buddhism, and even certain types of Christian mysticism, and that of Biblical Christianity, becomes apparent at this point. The end of Buddhism is achieved in the absorption of the individual within the Whole; and mysticism in some of its expressions seeks to lose itself utterly in the divine.

Reference may appropriately be made also, to the experience of corporate worship. The amen of Christian faith, which occurs in the context of worship, is always an individual and personal response; and even the self-identification of the Christian with the worshipping community is an identification of inward assent, and free responsible agape, not an enslavement to the spirit of the group. Otherwise the indispensable value of the freedom of the Christian man is lost.

While it is important to emphasise this aspect of Christian anthropology, because of the danger of so expressing the nature of the Church, and of the Christian sacramental truth of "incorporation into the Body of Christ" as to make it sub-personal, and reduce the Church to a form of collectivism, the Christian answer to the problem of the relation of the individual to the corporate cannot be stated as an alter-

native, but only in the form of a paradox. The Christian conceptions of individuality and of community have to be seen as correlative. Martin Buber's criticism of Kierkegaard's anthropology points the way to a solution, and shows the deep penetration of Buber's thought with Christian elements. His point of view is that in seeking the meaning of personal existence, the starting place is not the individual, (as in Renaissance thought), not the collectivity (as in Marxism), but the mutual relation between man and man<sup>1</sup>. He shows that Kierkegaard's thought is an "over-protest" against Hegelianism in which he loses man in an extreme individualism. The Marxist form of the protest, pushed to an extreme, loses man in the mass. Buber, through the rootage of his philosophical anthropology in Biblical thought, manages to preserve the two polarities of the individual and the community through his idea of relatedness to God and to the Other-Self.<sup>2</sup> His thought lends itself to a theory of Christian nurture, because of its profound understanding of Biblical faith; though it naturally falls short at the point of the Christian solution to the human predicament, and makes upon the Christian mind the impression of leaving man alone at the place where he stands most in need of succour. Buber's criticism of the

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<sup>1</sup>"Between Man and Man", p. vii.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Tillich's Article on "The Contribution of Buber to (Protestant) Christian Thought."

absence of a true understanding of community in Kierkegaard is of the utmost moment for Christian anthropology. He rejects Kirkegaard's asceticism with the reflection that "to teach an a-cosmic relation to God is not to know the Creator".<sup>1</sup> His unusual translation of the two-fold commandment as, "Love God and love your neighbour as one like yourself";<sup>2</sup> leads him to remark that "God and man are not rivals": exclusive love to God is inclusive love of God's creation. Kierkegaard perceives that "the only means by which God communicates with man is the ethical"; but for Buber, the ethical means "to help God by loving His Creation in His creatures, by loving it towards Him".<sup>3</sup> In his protest against the loss of the individual in the crowd, Kierkegaard has lost the true nature of community. Buber rightly points out that "false formations" should not lead to the repudiation of the divinely constituted social order.

There is a genuine affinity between Buber's understanding of the source and character of community, and that of Emil Brunner. In both, the character of God as personal is at once the ground of personal being in man, and the true ground of the social order. In both, the love of the

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<sup>1</sup>"Address to the Single One", p. 52.

<sup>2</sup>See Note by R.G. Smith, op. cit., p. 208.

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 57.

"other-self", given to man by God, is at once the symbol and the expression of the love toward God. Brunner's Christology gives him a profounder understanding of the meaning of this truth. "It is the message of God's personality which makes man personal. It is the message of God's love which creates communion".<sup>1</sup> In both, collectivism and individualism are seen to be resultants of a false view of man which in turn stems from a distorted view of what is ultimate: man is seen to be out of relation with the true Source of his being.<sup>2</sup> For Brunner, it is through the social relationship that man exercises the responsibility which is the answer of faith to God's address.<sup>3</sup>

In Christian faith, both individual personality and community are founded on the belief that God is personal.

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<sup>1</sup>"The Word and the World", p. 123 f.

<sup>2</sup>Note also "God and Man", p. 159 ff., where Brunner criticises the view of "non-Christian psychologies" that man can be understood in isolation; and he concludes: Belief in a Christian view of creation brings a different interpretation of the bond of union. Since the humanity of man rests in nothing less than the divine Word addressed to him, - - - every man is immediately related to God by the divine call - - - But (p. 160) this immediate call is a call to fellowship, to the Kingdom of God. The same call which makes the individual wholly an individual, - - -brings him wholly into fellowship, through responsibility. The God who calls man to Himself, calls him to Himself as the God who loves, who wills fellowship - - -". (It is this aspect of Christian truth which is so conspicuously lacking in Kierkegaard).

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 162.

Brunner declares that the Word of God is the ground of the Church as also the Ground of personality. It is a superficial way of describing the interrelation between individual and society to affirm, on an empirical basis, that personality is socially determined, and it has led to a superficial conception of the Church, in some forms of religious education. The conviction that the principle of community is inherent in ultimate reality is expressed symbolically in the Christian doctrine of the Trinity,<sup>1</sup> and in the Biblical affirmation that "God is love"; a statement which is meaningless except in relation to the life of communion.

(b) Man in Estrangement.

The concept of "estrangement" is used to indicate the second fundamental assertion made in the Biblical revelation, symbolically in Gen. 3, in the myth of the Fall, but presumed throughout the whole extent of the literature, that actual human existence contradicts man's essential being. The term is chosen because it is a familiar one in the literature of existentialism both in its philosophical and in its theological forms. Tillich also refers to man's "bondage" or "enslavement", as contrasted with the created freedom of man's

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Tillich: "Systematic Theology", Vol. II. pp. 143-4.  
And Farmer: op. cit., p. 59.

essential nature on the one hand, and the "liberation" of man through "the New Being" on the other. Brunner speaks of "man in contradiction".<sup>1</sup> "Man in Revolt", chap. VI. This verdict upon the human situation is not confined to Biblical, nor indeed to non-Biblical religion. All the terms seek to do justice to a fact of human experience, that man is not what he ought to be. It is expressed in classical literature, in Plato and the Greek tragedians, for example. Tillich has shown that existential elements enter into philosophical systems, which have to do with essential structures; in Kant's doctrine of the perversion of man's rationality by "radical evil", for example; and even in the "essentialism of Hegel ("Hegel knows of the mystery and anxiety of non-being").<sup>2</sup> Even non-Christian and atheistic forms of existentialism testify to the condition of "estrangement", though their analysis of its cause differs profoundly from the Christian one.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Man in Revolt", Chap. VI.

<sup>2</sup>"Courage to Be", p. 133-134. Cf. pp. 125-6. "When Kierkegaard broke away from Hegel's system of essences he did two things: he proclaimed an existential attitude, and he instigated a philosophy of existence. He realised that the knowledge of that which concerns us infinitely is possible only in an attitude of infinite concern, in an existential attitude. At the same time, he developed a doctrine of man which describes the estrangement of man from his essential nature in terms of anxiety and despair. Man in the existential situation of finitude and estrangement can reach truth only in an existential attitude. 'Man does not sit on the throne of God', participating in his essential knowledge of everything that is. Man has no place of pure objectivity above finitude and estrangement. His cognitive function is as existentially conditioned as his whole being". (Tillich: "Courage to Be" pp. 125-6).

<sup>3</sup>Article by Alexeiev "The Marxist Anthropology"; p. 93 ff. Also Cairns: op. cit., Chap. XV. The "estrangement" is here attributed to the inequalities of history.

In non-Christian thought, the tragic character of the human situation is not fully realised, because of the failure to take seriously the concept of sin, which can be fully understood only "in the vertical dimension of the soul's relation to God."<sup>1</sup>

The theological truth implicit in the Biblical myth of the Fall only becomes fully apparent when this is considered in the light of the idea of creation in the divine image, which has been discussed. The Fall is an attempt to do justice to the fact that man, created essentially good, is nevertheless a sinner. The Biblical doctrine preserves the "lofty stature" of man as part of a good creation and also attests the "low virtue" of actual human nature.<sup>2</sup> In its more radical treatment of the problem of the presence of moral evil in man, the Biblical revelation provides us with a more profound explanation of the tension between actual man, and essential man, than is found in other anthropologies. The affirmation concerning human nature made in the symbolic statement of a Fall of man only has meaning in the context of the primary affirmation concerning the nature of personal being and the character of human freedom declared in the symbol of the Imago Dei. "Fall", writes Berdyaev, "can only be from a

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<sup>1</sup>Niebuhr: op. cit., Vol. I, p. 272.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 16



height! The very fall of man is a token of his greatness. Even in his fallen state he retains the mark of his high origin, and remains capable of a higher life and of knowledge which rises above the meaningless world of things".<sup>1</sup> (We have here an indication that Orthodox theology, does not adhere to the idea of the destruction of the image through the Fall. Man "remains a spiritual being though sick and broken". Berdyaev's thought is here consistent with his doctrine of freedom. "There is liberty in man which precedes the action of revelation and grace". "Grace acts upon liberty for it can act solely upon it."<sup>2</sup> This is in conflict with the Barthian point of view, which denies that man is capable of responding to God's grace.)<sup>3</sup> Similarly, Tillich declares that "symbolically speaking, it is the image of God in man which gives the possibility of the Fall. Only one who is the image of God has the power of separating himself from God".<sup>4</sup> The Biblical statement concerning man's actual condition carries with it a testimony to his essential dignity.

It is important to notice that the Imago Dei of the Bible cannot be simply equated with the "essential man" of

<sup>1</sup>"Destiny of Man", p. 16.

<sup>2</sup>Spinka: "Berdyaev", pp. 131-132.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Cairns: op. cit., p. . Also Hirschwald.

<sup>4</sup>"Systematic Theology", Vol. II, p. 33.

philosophy as Tillich appears to imply. In his designation of the meaning of the Fall as "the transition from essence to existence".<sup>1</sup> This is apparent from Genesis 9:6, which refers to actual, historical man as made in God's image. The difficulty is resolved by affirming that man's original structure is not destroyed by his sin. The character of man, his humanitas, remains, though impaired or distorted by his sinful<sup>2</sup> condition. Barth's anthropology, though his position, as expressed in the third volume of the Dogmatics, modifies some of his earlier statements, is therefore not true to the Old Testament idea of the image. As Cairns says, "he starts from the New Testament, and fails to face the problem which the image in sinful humanity poses to theology".<sup>3</sup> The comment of Farrer is relevant: to say that (the creature) has no correspondence with the nature intended by its Creator does not make sense. So long as a creature continues to exist, its existence cannot fall wholly outside the nature intended by its Creator: that is the charter of its being, and by passing outside its terms, it would either cease to exist, or become something else."<sup>4</sup>

The Biblical idea of the Fall, and the Christian

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<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 29.

<sup>2</sup>Niebuhr: op. cit., Vol. I., p. 281: "Nothing can change the structure of the diseased eye".

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 182, f.

<sup>4</sup>Chapter in "Christian Understanding of Man", p. 192.

doctrine of original sin which developed from it, are an attempt to represent a paradoxical aspect of human experience, namely, the universal presence of moral evil in man, and man's sense or responsibility for it. The uniqueness of the Christian attitude towards sin is that it "places evil at the very centre of human personality".<sup>1</sup> It does not attribute moral "evil, as in Marxist materialism, to contingent factors in history; nor does it say that sin is only a stage in human progress towards goodness, as in Hegelianism, and in evolutionary types of moral theory; nor does it attribute the evil in man to one particular part of his nature, as in Greek thought. The characteristic feature of the Biblical view of sin is that actual human existence is existence in repudiation of the conditions of true personal being; i.e. the attempt, made in the exercise of man's freedom of choice, to live autonomously, instead of in relation to the Divine source of being; the refusal to make the life-answer of faith to the divine *κλῆσις*. In the Biblical interpretation of the presence of sin in man, the denial of the relationship in which man becomes a person is what constitutes sin. The two Biblical symbols of the Imago Dei and of the Fall are thus seen to be closely interrelated.

The historical development of the doctrine of original

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<sup>1</sup>Niebuhr: op. cit., p. 17.

sin, which Tillich says has raised violent objection because it "seemed to imply a negative evaluation of man",<sup>1</sup> has attempted to reduce the paradoxical tension in either of two ways:-

(i) The Scholastic interpretation of human nature affirmed that the Fall consisted in the loss of the donum superadditum, and enabled sin to be accounted for negatively, in terms of that which does not belong to man's essential being. This interpretation destroys the Biblical character of sin as something which affects the core of the human personality. It has the further objection of implying that the structure of man was altered by the Fall. "He has become an essentially Aristotelian man".<sup>2</sup> His reason remains virtually unimpaired; his "supernatural virtue" is destroyed, until it is restored by sacramental grace. This not only implies, as Niebuhr says in another connection<sup>3</sup>, that human reason "has a vantage-point of pure disinterestedness which no type of human intelligence ever possesses", i.e. that a part of human nature remains unaffected by sin, but it also forgets that, if man has in truth lost his "capacity for the eternal", "he would lack also the capacity for the sinful glorification of himself."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Systematic Theology", Vol. II, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 165; cf. p. 263.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>4</sup>Op. cit., p. 165, note.

Thus in Roman Catholic doctrine sin is not regarded with the seriousness which the Biblical revelation attaches to it.

It does not have its seat at the centre of personality.

(ii) In certain expressions of Reformed teaching, on the other hand, particularly in Luther, and in the earlier writings of Barth, the paradoxical relation of the symbol of the Image to that of the Fall is lost in an un-Biblical theory of depravity. In Luther, for example, who is anxious to assert the Biblical character of sin as that which affects the total person, the image of God in man is completely destroyed, except "as hanging over him as a divine destiny."<sup>1</sup> Luther's thought on this subject is largely a revival of Augustine's teaching on original sin, in reaction against the Roman position.<sup>2</sup> But his anxiety to insist on the principle of salvation by faith alone causes him to lose the Old Testament truth of the universal image still persisting in fallen humanity, and he finds himself compelled to introduce the doubtful concept of the "relic". For Calvin, too, the New Testament idea of the image (man's original righteousness as restored in Christ) is predominant, but while he, too, uses the "relic" idea, his Biblical sense of the wholeness of man's nature, seen in "Institutes", Book I, prevents him from saying that

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<sup>1</sup>Cairns: op. cit., p. 127.

<sup>2</sup>Niebuhr: op. cit., p. 171.

the image of God in fallen man is completely lost.<sup>1</sup> Brunner's distinction between the "formal" and the "material" image, while it is not without its difficulty, is an attempt to preserve the image in fallen man, without endangering the Reformed principles.<sup>2</sup>

It is, however, necessary to point out that the total Biblical understanding of man's sinfulness is obscured, not only by the Scholastic and Roman distinction between nature and supernature on the one hand, and by an exaggerated doctrine of depravity in the more radical forms of Protestant teaching on the other; but in liberal Protestantism too, the paradoxical tension is lost between the two Biblical truths that "all have sinned"<sup>3</sup> but that all are "without excuse",<sup>4</sup> and the attempt is made to reduce the mystery of human sin to rational proportions. Emphasis is thus placed on the improvable of human nature, and the Christ of Biblical faith becomes reduced to the Jesus of history, whose teaching and Person embody eternal values. This theological emphasis is of particular interest in the present connection, since it was influential in the shaping of the modern "religious education"

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<sup>1</sup>Cairns: op. cit., p. 130 ff. Cf. p. 139 ff.

<sup>2</sup>"Natural Theology", p. 31 f.

<sup>3</sup>Rom. 1:20.

<sup>4</sup>Rom. 5:12.

movement on this continent.<sup>1</sup>

The important consideration in outlining the aspect of the Christian doctrine of man which deals with human sinfulness is to preserve the truth that while sin means the loss of truly personal existence, the sinner does not lose his relation to God, and therefore does not cease to be a person. Berdyaev's criticism of Barth is serious in this regard. He sees in his thought the working out of a "dehumanizing process, which is the paradoxical result of Renaissance humanism; a faith in God so absolutely transcendent that no trace of the divine can be discovered in the created world. The image of God in man is effaced; only sin and powerlessness are left; so that in effect the Barthian affirmation of God involves the denial of man -- becomes indeed anti-human and makes for the dehumanization of Christianity".<sup>2</sup> If this is an exaggeration, it is also a warning. The Biblical concept of Law, which occupies a prominent place in the anthropology of Paul, is a reminder that existence "in the wrath of "God", or in contradiction to his origin, does not destroy the essential structure of human life, which survives in the sense of responsibility and of obligation even in fallen man. Even Luther, whose thought is so uncompromising at this point, speaks of a ius<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Faith and Nurture", Chaps. III and IV.

<sup>2</sup>Griffith: "Interpreters of Man", p. 225.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Niebuhr: op. cit., p. 283.

peccatoris. God's will is still known, but it is experienced not as love, but as demand. We have here an indication that the image is preserved in spite of man's sin. Sin affects the whole of man's nature; it does not destroy that nature.<sup>1</sup> Responsibility now becomes bondage; "life under the law." Barth states this by saying that "to be man now means to be an enemy of God".<sup>2</sup> The principle of community is broken. It disintegrates into individualism and collectivism.

We may conclude this part of the discussion by saying that while the Christian doctrines of the Fall and of original sin are not to be interpreted as attempts to explain the ultimate origin of evil, they offer the most profound interpretation of the character of moral evil in human life, and an explanation of the presence of that "existential anxiety" which is, as Kierkegaard recognised, an unmistakable symptom of man's estrangement.

(c) Man in Restoration.

While even a brief statement of Christology is outside the scope of this study, it is nevertheless true that a Christian doctrine of man includes a Christian doctrine of the

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. "The persistence of man's moral nature even under corruption means the persistence of actual aspiration towards the divinely appointed end, and that implies a certain vision of that end however confused". Farrer, chap. in "Christian Understanding of Man", p. 193.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. "Knowledge of God and Service of God", pp. 40-51.



Christian man, and that a discussion of the human predicament points to its Christian solution in the work of Christ.

Torrance, in his examination of Calvin's doctrine of man, made the observation that "we can only make headway in a doctrine of man by viewing the whole from the point of view of our restoration or renovation in Christ".<sup>1</sup> This, indeed, was what both Luther and Calvin attempted to do, and it was the endeavour of Karl Barth also to approach the human problem from the standpoint of a "Christian monism";<sup>2</sup> removing his attention from the light shed by philosophy on man's life, to let God's Word in Christ speak to man. His doctrine of man, then, so far as he has a "doctrine of man", is thoroughly Christological. He virtually says that only in Christ do we have any true knowledge of man, Christ's human nature being "held directly from God"; while ours is constituted by our relationship to God in Christ. He has no ontological structure of man's being, as is provided in the Old Testament idea of the universal image of God in man. For Barth the Image of God in man is the Incarnate Christ.<sup>3</sup>

It is, indeed, true that Christian man is forgiven man, and that a doctrine of justification is part of the full Christian statement about man, i.e. the recognition that in

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<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>2</sup>Griffith: "Interpreters of Man", p. 214.

<sup>3</sup>Cairns: op. cit., chap. XIII, p. 170.

Christ God has acted to overcome man's "estrangement", and that he is, in Tillich's epigrammatic phrase, accepted in spite of being unacceptable, i.e., in spite of his guilt. (Tillich's emphasis on the true evangelical doctrine as "justification by grace through faith" is valuable: "The cause is God alone (by grace'), but the faith that one is accepted is the channel through which grace is mediated to man ('through faith').")

"The notion of meritorious faith is thus avoided".<sup>1</sup>

The profoundly unique element in the full Christian understanding of man is the affirmation that the One who reveals to us the nature of Ultimate Reality is also the One who expresses in His own Person the true nature of man. The Incarnation is at once the perfect expression of the truth of creation in the divine image, for had man not been so created, Incarnation would not have been possible; and it is also the perfect exposure of man's estrangement. As Farrer says: "It was in the act of God's recovering man that man saw how low he had fallen."<sup>2</sup> The Pauline metaphor of the Second Adam<sup>3</sup>, and the description of Christ as "the express image of His Person",<sup>4</sup> both indicate the close dependence of Christian anthropology upon Christology. Here we have the Christian

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<sup>1</sup>"Systematic Theology", pp. 178-9.

<sup>2</sup>Article cit., p. 188.

<sup>3</sup>I Cor. 15:22.

<sup>4</sup>Heb. 1:3.

mystery of a Life of essential manhood expressed in terms of our human existence; what Tillich calls the Christian paradox<sup>1</sup>, -- "Christ who was not the effulgence of human nature, but the breathing of eternity into time".<sup>2</sup>

The restoration of the "new man" in Christ means further the establishment of the truly personal life, i.e., the life of love. For God, who is revealed as love, in Christ reveals the essence of human nature to be also love. The individual is, as Brunner says, "given to his neighbour "by God, as the not-self through whom love of God is to be expressed. Thus the ground of true individuality is also the basis of true community, for "life in Christ is a social concept; to be in Christ is to have established the true community."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 92.

<sup>2</sup>Mackintosh on Kierkegaard's Christology: "Types of Modern Theology", p. 243. and cf. this comment, important for Christian nurture, on Christ as Teacher. "The Teacher who is to lead men (in a state of falsehood) must not only give the truth, but also empower man for its appropriation by effecting an inward transformation of the soul. - - - He who teaches redemptively must Himself be God." p. 247.

<sup>3</sup>CAIRNS, op.cit. p. 44.

PART II

THE CHARACTER OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

THE CHARACTER OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

I. Revelation and Worship

Christian nurture is one of the forms taken by the ministry of the Word.<sup>(1)</sup> It is an activity that takes place within the Church. A doctrine of the Church, therefore, is presumed in any theory of Christian nurture, particularly a theory for which the experience of worship is found to be normative. The full meaning of the Church is too many-sided for satisfactory definition to be possible. It is significant that the New Testament does not attempt to define its nature, but offers only suggestive symbol and metaphor; and early theology was apparently not interested in precise definition of the meaning of the Church.<sup>(2)</sup> But, on any view, the Church derives its distinctive character from the fact of revelation. It is the fellowship called into being not by the action of man but by the initiative of God in self-disclosure and in redemption. In the Church "the fact of revelation faces us."<sup>(3)</sup>

It is this fundamental character of the Church as the community created by the Word of revelation which enables us to appreciate the full Christian significance of worship. Christian worship is not, as it has become for many American liberal Protestant educators,<sup>(4)</sup> an expression of man's quest for God or

(1) Cf. Smart: "Teaching Ministry of the Church", pp. 19-23.

(2) Geo. Florovsky, in "The Universal Church in God's Design", p.40 ff. mentions that no formal definition of the Church is found in the Fathers, nor in Thomas Aquinas.

(3) Sherrill: "The Gift of Power", p.65.

(4) E.g. Chave, in "A Functional Approach to Religious Education", p.25, etc.

of the religious aspirations of the human soul. It is that corporate activity of the Christian community in which the fact of the redemptive action of God in Christ is experienced, attested, and responded to. It is in this sense that the characteristic expression of the Church's life is worship. "Venite adoremus" presumes the Christian Fact. It is in this sense that H. H. Farmer can discover the "normative concept of religion" to be defined by Christian worship,<sup>(1)</sup> since it is the Word of revelation that creates and sustains the Church, and is the occasion of its worship.

It follows that any attempt at complete definition of Christian worship in terms of man's action and man's response must be inadequate. Etymological definition in terms of "giving God His due or His worth" does not touch its primary meaning, which is that in Christian worship God is encountered; revelation is communicated and experienced. To fail to do justice to the "descending movement"<sup>(2)</sup> in worship is to encourage preoccupation with the ethical and the subjective. Thus Evelyn Underhill's description in terms of "the total adoring response of man to the one Eternal God self-revealed in time" is capable of a one-sided interpretation.<sup>(3)</sup> Christian worship is more than a response. It attests the divine priority and initiative. It is the scene where revelation meets us. Its primary accent is that the Word is "heard anew".<sup>(4)</sup>

(1) Farmer: "Revelation and Religion", Chs. III and IV.

(2) Hislop: "Our Heritage in Public Worship", p.15.

(3) "Christian Worship", p.61.

(4) Cf. Camfield: "Revelation and the Holy Spirit", p.126.

It is necessary to give some prominence to the idea of the priority of God, expressed in the worship of His Church, since important nurtural conclusions will later be drawn from it. There is a valuable truth preserved in the Eastern Orthodox conception of "the Divine Liturgy", since the liturgical action of the Church is not fundamentally man's creation; it is the gift of God, expressive of His initiative in redemption. It is the vehicle of God's contemporary approach to man.<sup>(1)</sup> Even in the Reformed worship of the Presbyterian Churches, with its emphasis upon the prophetic and the oracular, the "something spoken"<sup>(2)</sup> refers primarily not to human speech, but to the Word of God mediated through the words of men. Christian worship is first and foremost the context in which God speaks to man. If our thought about worship, and our participation in it, are to be true to the nature of the Gospel, we must keep central the idea of "the radical necessity of an approach of reality to man".<sup>(3)</sup> The Church is created by the divine  $\kappa\lambda\eta\rho\iota\sigma\iota\varsigma$  in Christ, and in the worship which is its life, that call is renewed and continually responded to.

The complementary truth underlying the experience of Christian worship is that revelation is not revelation until it is experienced as such. Historical fact must become spiritual

- (1) Cf. Hislop, op. cit., p.107, where Eastern worship is described as "the representation of the drama of salvation". There is no contradiction in the fact that Hislop finds the mood of aspiration, which he terms the "ascending movement" of worship, prominent here, since this is the response to the setting forth of the salvation-events. p.93.
- (2) Hislop, op. cit., p.11; cf. p.38. Heiler, in "Prayer", p.131 and 142 f., describes Lutheran worship as "prophetic"; and Will, in "Le Culte", p. 80-233, develops Heiler's classification, under "Les types religieux du culte", Le Sacrifice; Le Mystère; La Prière.
- (3) Camfield, op. cit., p.33

fact for the individual, must become part of that higher consciousness which is called faith. (1) The full meaning of Christian worship therefore includes responsive action, the engagement of the faith of the participant. Worship is a responsive act which unites the whole of man's nature, (2) and God becomes, in worship, "the whole object of the whole man". (3) Christian worship is seen in this way to be the supreme expression of faith, "the totality act of human personality". (4)

Two deductions may be made from the two-fold understanding of Christian worship as the scene of the communication, of the Word of revelation, and of the response to revelation. These bear intimately on the question of the relation of nurture to worship:-

1. Revelation must be experienced as relevant. That is, it must be seen to bear on the need and predicament of the individual man. Before the individual can respond in faith, the reference of the eternal Word in Christ must be apprehended in its relation to the present moment and to the sitz im leben of the individual. The educational import of this statement, and the complexity of its implications, are suggested by C. H. Dodd, when he says that "Nothing is more certain than that an intelligent reading of the Bible does bring effective guidance in the most urgent and actual present problems; but to get it we must submit ourselves to the

- (1) Cf. Camfield, op. cit., p.117, where he affirms that "nothing can be of revelation which does not enter faith."
- (2) Cf. Underhill, op. cit., p.73.
- (3) Farmer, op. cit., p.46.
- (4) Brunner, "The Word and the World", p.73.



discipline of listening to words that were not intended for us at all". (1)

The point one is anxious to establish here should be capable of being so stated as to avoid the charge of anthropocentrism or of a utilitarian interest in regard to worship. (2) Revelation itself is not subject to human control. "The wind bloweth where it listeth". (3) But revelation is seen to involve a complex pattern of inter-personal relationships in which God, the individual, and other persons are all participants. It is in the understanding of the "dynamics" of this interrelation, in which the spiritual life of the individual is involved in and dependent on the corporate life of the Christian community, that the distinctive character, as well as the limits, of Christian nurture, become apparent. (4) And it is when the true nature of the faith-relationship, and the dependent character of the Christian life, are obscured, that Christian nurture itself becomes distorted into an over-emphasis upon the ethical or a process of self-salvation, (5) and worship itself degraded by being manipulated to serve human interest. (6) The true bearing of educational processes

(1) "The Bible Today", p.32.

(2) Cf. Evelyn Underhill's reference to "the tendency of all worship to decline from adoration to demand, and from the supernatural to the ethical", and to the need to "neutralize the anthropocentric trend of the human mind"; op. cit., p.17.

(3) John 3:8.

(4) Martin Buber's profound discussion of the relation of the "Ego" to the "Thou", and of the "Life of Dialogue", is therefore relevant to the subject of Christian nurture. Some of the implications have been drawn out by J. H. Oldham, Marjory Reeves, and others, e.g. in "What is Christian Education?" and "Real Life is Meeting".

(5) As it is in Ligon: "A Greater Generation", passim.

(6) A tendency in Elliott: "Can Religious Education be Christian?" pp.283-306.

upon the awakening of faith is provided by the recognition of the mutuality of revelation, involving both communication and response. And it is in this latter area of response, involving as it does the recognition of the dependent and mediated character of the religious life, that the help provided by Christian nurture is seen to have a bearing upon the awakening and the maturing of Christian faith.

2. The principle of the accommodation of revelation to the individual requires to be recognized. The implications of this statement are apparent when the nature of the corporate experience of Christian worship is examined. "On the corporate side, the Catholic character of Christianity demands that souls of every sort and at every stage of growth -- the most naïve and unenlightened, no less than the spiritually alert, -- shall have their place within its borders; and each one find there the means of a full personal life of worship suited to his state". (1) Christian worship is adapted to every level of understanding, and every dimension of spiritual capacity. What is affirmed about worship must be predicated also of revelation. Revelation is multi-dimensional in its reference. It speaks to every level of human nature, to the simple as well as to the intellectually sophisticated. The sacramental element in Christianity, as one of the modes in which the Word is communicated, has this end in view. No one within the Christian Koinonia is beyond reach of the revelation which is conveyed in worship. In other words, Christian worship as communication of, and response to, revelation, takes account of the psychological facts of human limitation and immaturity. We are faced in the Church then, with

(1) Underhill, op. cit., p.172.

the principle of the accomodation of revelation. This itself will be readily acknowledged. The question that arises, which is of interest for Christian nurture, is, what is the range of application of the principle? The discussion of the answer to this question will be reserved for the concluding chapter.

## II. The Anthropological Setting of Christian Worship

Christian Worship is revelatory in character, not only in that the content of the revelation in Christ, which composes the Kerygma, is presumed, but also that the very structure or "shape of the liturgy" is a representation of the salvation events themselves. The "drama" of the Christian revelation, which declares its full meaning in movement, has its counterpart in Christian worship, (1) which is not static but dramatic in character. This statement is most conspicuously applicable to worship of the "Mystery" type; but all Christian worship may be said to derive its form or pattern from the character of the revelation itself, unfolding its meaning in time. This contention is supported by examination of the earliest forms of Christian worship, and by the account given by Dix of its early development, where he declares that "the apostolic and primitive Church regarded the Eucharist as primarily an action, something 'done', not something 'said'". (2) The fact that Christian worship is fundamentally sacramental in character, i.e. that the distinctively new element in Christian worship is derived from the sacramental experience of the Upper Room, may be said to point in the same direction.

(1) The conception of the "dramatic" character of the Biblical revelation is developed throughout C. H. Dodd's "The Bible Today". See esp. Chap. I.

(2) "Shape of the Liturgy", p.15.

The thought to which attention is directed is that the profound awareness of God which is conveyed in Christian worship is at the same time a revelation about man, a profound self-knowledge. This is what is intended by the term: the anthropological setting of Christian worship. "The mystery of yourselves", says Augustine, (1) "is placed upon the Lord's Table". The Christian pattern of human life, including the symbolic truth of the Imago Dei, and the declaration of the truths that "man is the being who is not what he ought to be", (2) and that in Christ man is restored to "authentic existence", (3) lies at the heart of the liturgy. The total Christian interpretation of man, his original creation in the divine image, his tragedy, and the remedial action of God, are implicit in the worship of the Church. "The Eucharist --- is the representative act of a fully redeemed human life. --- Over against the dissatisfied 'Acquisitive Man' and his no less avid successor the dehumanized 'Mass-Man' of our economically focussed societies insecurely organized for time, Christianity sets the type of 'Eucharistic Man', -- man giving thanks with the product of his labours upon the gifts of God, and daily rejoicing with his fellows in the worshipping society which is grounded in eternity. --- It is the divine and only authentic conception of all human life, and its realization is in the Eucharist." (4) The anthropological pattern

(1) Augustine, quoted by Hislop, op. cit., p.6.

(2) E. L. Allen: "Existentialism from Within", p.31.

(3) The term: "inauthentic existence" occurs in Allen's exposition of the thought of Heidegger, p.35.

(4) Dix, op. cit., pp. XVIII - XIX.

implicit in Christian worship is here finely suggested, within the context of a particular theological and liturgical perspective. The experience of worship, the vehicle of God's approach to man in Christ, brings to man a true knowledge of himself. (1)

Evelyn Underhill has drawn attention to the fact that the specific forms which liturgy assumes are determined by varying theological interpretations, i.e. ritual expression always has a theological basis. (2) Now a satisfactory theory of Christian nurture must presume an anthropological foundation in which this world, the material world, including the bodily life of man, are seen to be meaningful, both for God and for man. This being so, it becomes doubtful whether there is to be found either in Roman Catholic or in Eastern Orthodox worship a satisfactory basis for an interpretation of Christian nurture. For, as has been suggested earlier, the anthropological presuppositions, both of Roman Catholic and of Orthodox worship, contain elements which are world-rejecting rather than world-affirming, and which therefore are uncongenial to a truly evangelical view of Christian nurture. (3) This is a very

- (1) Cf. Brunner: "God and Man", where he points out that this is not the self-knowledge of man, but the knowledge of himself given to man by the Word of God; the knowledge that comes from faith, which is of a different dimension from man's knowledge of himself given in psychology. p.151.
- (2) Op. cit., Chapter IV.
- (3) The words of Buber may be quoted as relevant:- "--It cannot be that the Single One finds God's Hands when he stretches his hands out and away beyond creation. He must put his arms round the vexatious world, whose true name is creation; only then do his fingers reach the realm of lightening and of grace." "Between Man and Man", p.62.

broad generalization, and more space would be required in order to justify it, and to work out its pedagogical implications. (1) But the theological evidence touched on in Part I is in this direction, and the evidence to be found in Roman Catholic literature on Christian nurture tends to support it. (2) In Roman Catholic worship, the predominant interest is in the "supernatural life", which is also the object of Roman Catholic religious education. The theological point of view that this world is either evil or unimportant prevails in worship, along with the view that the ascetic attitude is superior. Similarly the liturgy of Orthodoxy is transcendental in character. (3) This world is ultimately unimportant; the soul is being prepared for heaven. It may almost be said that the end of worship is to make man "divine". (4)

It is a curious circumstance, commented on by Reinhold Niebuhr, that much of Augustine's profound insight into the nature of man did not find its way into Roman thought, and that it was left for Luther and for Calvin to recover the thought of Augustine in this area, (5) and to give liturgical expression to Augustinian

- (1) The point of view here suggested has been influenced by conversations, on the basis of the present anthropological and liturgical study, with Professor Trinterud of McCormick Theological Seminary.
- (2) Papal Encyclical on "Christian Education"; Edward Leen: "What is Education?"; O'Leary: "The Catholic Church and Education"; and articles in the Journal: "Religious Education" (1953).
- (3) See Underhill, op. cit., Chap. XII; and Hislop, op.cit. Chap.IV.
- (4) This thought is present in the Orthodox "mysticism" of Berdyaev; Cf. his conception of "God-manhood". "The goal (of the work of redemption) is the transformation of the human into the divine-human, theanthropic personality". Spinka: "Nicolas Berdyaev", p.135-136.
- (5) "Nature and Destiny of Man", Vol. I, pp.165 ff. See esp. p.171.

anthropology. The world view reflected in Roman Catholic and Eastern worship includes elements tinged with an attitude of world negation rather than the acceptance of God's creation as good.<sup>(1)</sup> An anthropology which is partly Hellenistic and semi-Pelagian does not provide a suitable basis for a theory of Christian nurture which seeks its norms in the Hebrew-Christian revelation.

When the characteristic differences in the anthropological emphasis of Roman and Orthodox worship have been recognized, it remains to be said that Reformed or Protestant worship, both in its Presbyterian and its Anglican forms, is predominantly a revision of Western worship of the Roman type,<sup>(2)</sup> though undoubtedly affected by liturgical influences from the Eastern Church, and containing traces also of a Celtic and "Gallican" ancestry.<sup>(3)</sup> The immediate liturgical fruits of the continental Reformation were substantially confined to the drastic excision from the Roman Mass of elements that were in conflict with Reformed theology,<sup>(4)</sup> that is, it was a

- (1) Cf. Hislop, op. cit., p.95: "(This is) certainly not the temper of Hebrew Christianity", -- referring to the Eastern Liturgy.
- (2) See Maxwell: "Outline of Christian Worship", Chap. IV.
- (3) The complexities of this interrelation is indicated in Duchesne: "Christian Worship", Chapters II and III, and in the more cautious account of Srawley: "Early History of the Liturgy". See esp. Chap. VIII, p.212.
- (4) Cf. Maxwell, op. cit., p.72-73: "The most serious defect lay in the fact that the continental Reformers were without any profound historical knowledge of the origins and principles of worship. Their acquaintance with liturgical forms appears to have been largely restricted to the contemporary Roman forms; of Gallican and Eastern worship they appear to have known almost nothing; and their knowledge of even the primitive worship that they wished to restore was rudimentary and incomplete. The liturgical achievements of the Reformers, the Strasbourgers, and Cranmer excepted, were largely negative. Both in the Eucharist and in the offices they simply omitted what they considered superfluous, or incompatible with the new teaching."

liturgical revision substantially within the framework of the Mediaeval West, a derivation rather than a new creation, and showing clearly its liturgical roots. Moreover, it is important to remember that Christian worship, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant, is derived from a common fundamental liturgical structure, and springs from common Biblical sources in the Old Testament and in the New. It is therefore necessary to look, not to any one quarter, as to the particular liturgical tradition of Protestantism, for normative principles in regard to Christian nurture, but in a fourfold direction, to the Jewish antecedents of Christian worship, and to its earliest expression in the New Testament and in the primitive "paradosis of practice", to the subsequent development in the Churches of the East and West, and to the Protestant liturgical tradition that was one fruit of the Reformation. It is possible to make certain valid generalizations about Christian worship which apply to all its types, in view of their common sources. What is shared by all is instructive for Christian nurture, as well as what is divergent. We must look, therefore, to this fundamental common ground of Christian worship, emphasizing what is shared as more important than that which divides, and paying heed to Hislop's reminder that in an adequate expression of Christian worship the mood of "sacrifice", of "mystery", and of "oracle", characteristic of the three great divisions of Christendom, will all be found to have a due place. (1)

There are several distinct aspects of what has been

(1) Op. cit., Chap. II.



described above as the anthropological setting of Christian worship which may be noted:-

(a) There is first what has been described as the "radical personalism" of the Christian religion which finds expression in Christian worship. This is referred to by Farmer, (1) treated at some length by Tillich, (2) and is of course a constant feature of the theology of Brunner. (3) Farmer's position is that the Trinitarian faith which is the presupposition of living Christian worship is an assertion that "personal relationship and personality are constitutive of the Divine Being", (4) and that if the personal character of God is denied, worship ceases. His thought is at this point in conflict with that of Brunner, in that Farmer believes that there is in other religions "a personal approach of God to men, and encounter with them". (5) Brunner concedes a "general revelation" in which all men share in principle, but that in other religions "the medium of revelation is impersonal". (6) Farmer's point is well taken that if the medium of the general revelation

- (1) "Revelation and Religion", p.30 ff. cf. p.46 ff.; and p.62 for the phrase quoted. See also Farmer: "God and Men", p.90, and various references in "The Servant of the Word".
- (2) Esp. in "Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality", where the constant theme is the contrast between the personalism of Biblical religion and the attitude of ontology which appears to "depersonalize reality". Cf. his discussion of "Personalism and Christology:---"God is so personal that we can see what He is only in a personal life. --- When God appears in a person, it becomes manifest what 'person' should be. --- The 'personal centre' rules the whole man, because it is united with the personal centre of the divine life." p.39.
- (3) See refs. to sources in Part I: esp. "The Word and the World", "God and Man", and "The Divine-Human Encounter".
- (4) "Revelation and Religion", p.59.
- (5) Op. cit., p.35.
- (6) "Revelation and Reason", p.97; quoted by Farmer, op. cit., p.37.

is the created order, the latter includes the interrelation of persons in society, and that here also the encountering reality is personal.

The common ground in the thought of these writers is the conviction that only in Biblical faith is the full meaning of personal existence disclosed. Tillich in another connection can make the generalized statement that "personality is impossible without faith".<sup>(1)</sup> He does this on the basis of a very general definition of religious faith as "the state of being ultimately concerned".<sup>(2)</sup> But it is when the distinctively Biblical understanding of the meaning of faith as a mutual relation involving an absolute claim and a total response, that the unique Biblical interpretation of the person is fully realized. The root idea here is that personality arises in the experience of "being with",<sup>(3)</sup> and that the fundamental relation is the experience of "being with" God. It is in this awareness of encounter that the discovery of the self is made. Thus Tillich can say: "It is not that we first know what 'person' is and then apply the concept to God. --- In the encounter with God, we first experience what 'person' should mean and how it is distinguished from --- everything a-personal".<sup>(4)</sup>

(1) "Dynamics of Faith", p.20.

(2) Op. Cit., p.1.

(3) A thought which occurs in the context of Allen's exposition of Heidegger. Cf.: "I only attain to self-consciousness within a network of relations to others". Both quotations on p.27 of "Existentialism from Within".

(4) "Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality", p.27. Cf. "Biblical Religion is the source of the full meaning of person."

Christian worship is the actualization of this faith relationship which is constitutive of human personality. Worship is in this sense the most fully personal act in which we can engage. In it we are conscious of being related to the ground of our being. Worship is "the sacred hearth of personality".<sup>(1)</sup> Man discovers himself as a person in the experience of confrontation with a God revealing Himself as personal. "When ye pray, say, 'Our Father'".<sup>(2)</sup>

The thorough-going personalism of Christian worship is further attested in the fact that the Unique Event, which constitutes the heart of the Christian revelation, is the Word made flesh. The Biblical conception of "the Word", which is uttered in and through worship, is part of this Biblical personalism. For a word is the expression of personality, in Biblical thought.<sup>(3)</sup> The "Word of God", therefore, is communicated within a profoundly personal relationship. The implicit anthropological affirmation underlying the Incarnation is that man is of such a nature that Godhead can express itself in terms of a human life. This truth must not be so stated as to imply identity with the divine nature. But the implication of a Word of revelation not only mediated through personal human speech, but itself becoming a Person, is that there has

(1) Underhill: "Worship", p.19.

(2) "By the use of that term the relationship of the worshipper to God is unequivocally characterized as personal"; Farmer, op. cit., p.56.

(3) The Biblical  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ , <sup>Heb. דָבָר</sup> can be an act, or an event, and is not limited to the word spoken or heard. Cf. Art. "Word" by Campbell in "Theol. Word Book", p.283 f. Thus the "Word of God" is an experience of personal encounter, God's creative self-manifestation; "an event created by the divine Spirit in the human Spirit"; Tillich, op. cit., p.78, f. The "Word" of God is "addressed to the personal centre", and "man is asked to listen" (i.e. a free, personal response). Cf. Tillich, "Dynamics of Faith", p.31 ff.

been conferred on man a kinship with the divine nature, or rather a capacity for communion with divine being, for revelation so mediated to become actual. Farmer expresses this thought by saying that "non-otherness" is bestowed on man, and he is careful to say that creation in the imago Dei, drawing attention to the essential creatureliness and dependence of man's status, does not set aside the thought of the ontological and "axiological" otherness of God. (1) Part of the truth also, that is conveyed or implied in the Christian doctrine of Incarnation is that "selfhood in man is recognized as a clue to selfhood in God". (2) The point of view continually expressed by Brunner is that man's personality is continually held in being through his relation to God, a relationship persisting even in man's fallen condition, which is still a personal relation "in the wrath of God", (3) instead of in the divine love. This anthropological affirmation expresses itself in Christian piety: "Thou hast made us for Thyself (4)"; and in the Christian liturgy: "Make us living men". (5) God is disclosed in Christian worship as the creative ground of personality. He is not experienced as "wholly other"; if this were so the mutuality of relationship of faith which is made articulate in worship could not take place.

(1) Op. cit., p.51 f., and 55 f.

(2) Sherrill: "Gift of Power", p.71.

(3) E.g. "Man in Revolt", p.161 f.

(4) Augustine: "Confessions", Bk. I, Para. I, "---quia fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te."

(5) Cf. Underhill: Op. cit., p.18: "Only in so far as this adoring acknowledgment of Reality more and more penetrates his life, does man himself become real; finding within himself the answer to the great Eucharistic prayer, "Make us living men!" "The reference is to the Eucharistic Prayer of Sarapion, quoted by Maxwell, "Outline of Christian Worship", p.20.

Yet the relationship of man with God in worship must not be thought of as exhausted by the conscious awareness of personal encounter with the divine. Because of the importance of this aspect of our subject in its implications for religious nurture, the point may be briefly developed:-

In worship we are confronted with mystery; and that in two distinct areas: (i) the mystery of the Divine Being, and (ii) the mystery of the person. (1)

(1) Farmer has suggested that the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit conveys the truth that God is not experienced in Christian worship simply as another person standing over against man as does another human being, but that he is experienced also as permeating principle within human life, and also as suprapersonal mystery. He supports this argument with the reminder that the Biblical symbols in which the divine activity is suggested are derived not only from the personal sphere, but that God is also referred to in dynamic and non-personal symbols -- Light, Fire, Wind, etc. -- a God to be experienced, but not comprehended; a reminder that "self-consciousness does not exhaust the religious relationship". (2) It is this element in the Christian experience of God which is present in the literature of Christian mysticism.

(1) The distinction between "problem" and "mystery", dealt with in Allen's discussion of Marcel, is relevant here, especially to religious nurture. Cf. Sherrill's reference to "the region of mystery within the self; op. cit., p.159 f.

(2) Farmer, op. cit., p.66 ff.

(ii) The fact of personality does not present us with a field of clear-cut entities, but with a dimension of mystery in which the subconscious levels of personal life participate.<sup>(1)</sup> It is not possible to restrict the influence of worship to those levels of personality that are accessible to the conscious mind.<sup>(2)</sup> God is related to the total self; and since worship is a total act of the personality, there is no part of man's nature which is not engaged in, and subject to the influence of, worship. This point has reference not only to the fact that unconscious factors, to which depth-psychology has drawn attention, play their part in worship, both creatively and in a demonic manner; it has reference also to the fact of the uniqueness of the human person, and to the truth that therefore no generic description can touch the mysterious depth of his nature. Worship has to do with that unique centre of mystery, the "self that is called into being by the divine Thou",<sup>(3)</sup> and sustained in being by that profound and personal relationship of grace. There is included also the mystery surrounding human personality centering in the fact of his freedom, and therefore of his ultimate unpredictability.

(b) The second anthropological aspect of Christian worship to which attention should be drawn is its deep and radical realism.<sup>(4)</sup>

(1) Cf. Roberts: "Psychotherapy and a Christian View of Man", passim.

(2) Cf. Tillich's reference to the tendency in Protestant worship to "overburden the personal centre", in "The Protestant Era", p.xxiii, noted by Farmer, op. cit., p.66.

(3) Brunner, "Christianity and Civilization," Vol. II, Chapter on "Education".

(4) Cf. Underhill, op. cit. p.72: "A deep realism as regards human imperfection and sin, and also human suffering and struggle, is at the very heart of the Christian response to God".

The "adoring acknowledgment of Reality" includes as a primary element the recognition of man's actual situation of alienation and need, which finds expression in confessional prayer. "Christian knowledge of man", says Brunner, (1) -- the knowledge that occurs not in reflection but in the existential situation of worship -- "means knowledge of man in his contradiction". Implicit in the act of Christian worship there is a *διδάχ*<sup>η</sup> concerning the fundamental problem of man, a teaching about man the sinner, and God's solution of this problem. Both Dominical sacraments make this central, and the Eucharistic character of the Christian liturgy establishes it at the heart of corporate worship; the recognition that "man needs something done to him which only the action of God can do, if he is ever to be capable of eternal life". (2)

(c) God's action in history for man's restoration to "authentic existence" is included in the anthropological reference of Christian Worship. Indeed, it may be said that the action of the liturgy is essentially the bringing into relation of two "images", man created for God but conscious of living in repudiation of his true nature and destiny, man "made in the divine image", and Christ the "express Image", the "Proper Man", through Whom the New Being is restored.

(d) A further aspect of the intimate bearing of the doctrine of man upon worship is that within the experience of Christian worship

(1) "God and Man", p.149

(2) Underhill, op. cit., p.65

the individual and the corporate aspects of human existence are seen in their true light. The relation between the two is resolved existentially in the profound experience of Christian communion, but it can only be stated conceptually in terms of paradox. Martin Buber, through the rootage of his philosophical anthropology in Hebraic religion, provides a good starting point for the discussion. His thought lends itself to a Christian exposition of the meaning of religious nurture, though it "sounds a note above the top note of the piano" and raises questions which look to the fulfilment of Judaism in Christ for their answer; for it is only in the experience of Christian community and of Christian worship that the "Copernican" discovery of the "thou" is fully realized.<sup>(1)</sup> Yet Buber is right in saying that "it is by beginning neither with the individual ("the man of self-being", autonomous man), nor with the collectivity, but only with the reality of the mutual relation between man and man, that this essence (of man's being) can be grasped."<sup>(2)</sup> Here Buber shows himself to be more Christian than Kierkegaard the Christian, and his perfectly valid criticism of Kierkegaard's failure to achieve true community in his own personal life, and to realize its necessity for Christian thought, is one of the ironies of theology.<sup>(3)</sup>

(1) A reference to Buber, "Between Man and Man", p.148. His indebtedness to Feuerbach is acknowledged in this passage. "I myself in my youth was given a decisive impetus by Feuerbach."

(2) Op. cit. p.vii.

(3) Op. cit., p.54.



Buber sets the problem in proper focus when he says:

"I do not consider the individual to be either the starting-point or the goal of the human world. But I consider the human person to be the irremovable central place of the struggle between the world's movement away from God and its movement towards God."<sup>(1)</sup> In Christian worship "autonomous man" finds no place. Man here is aware of himself as living always in relation, and finding his true life as a person through the fundamental relation of the "I" to the "Thou" in Christian faith, and in the relation to the "neighbour" or the "other person", -- which is actually the situation in which the fundamental relation to God is given expression. We can see the thought of Buber worked out to a Christian conclusion in Brunner's theology.

The paradox at the heart of the Christian understanding of man can be appreciated best by reflection on the nature of the experience of Christian worship as the situation in which man is addressed by the Word. For in the situation in which revelation is communicated and received, religion is experienced as "an intensely individual concern".<sup>(2)</sup> Prayer is never an anonymous relation with the divine, but the most highly personal act of the individual, even when engaged in in the context of corporate worship. And truly Christian worship never becomes a merely mass phenomenon in which individual selfhood is submerged in an anonymous group experience. This is the deterioration of Christian worship. Even in the most

(1) Op. cit., p.70.

(2) Op. cit., p.169.

exalted and intense expression of Christian adoration, and in the Christian's most profound experience of community, such as takes place at the Lord's Table, Christian man is always conscious of his personal, individual relation to God, and of his personal identity in relation to other selves. As Farmer points out,<sup>(1)</sup> the actions which take place in sacramental worship, the eating of Bread and the drinking of Wine, as well as the moments of silence, are "highly individual" activities which "check gregariousness". The hearing of the Word is an intensely personal happening, the appropriation of the benefits of Christ by faith, in the Sacrament, is a highly individual action, and the exercise of decision and responsibility, which are the outcome of worship, are fully personal functions of the self, even though they take place in a corporate context, and although they profoundly involve other persons. God is experienced as "my God". The individual person is never lost in Christian worship.

On the other hand, an individualistic anthropology fails to understand the wholeness of man; and it is possible to interpret the meaning of what happens in Christian worship individualistically in such a way as to lose the full meaning of man in Biblical revelation. The difficulty is that of achieving an understanding of the significance of Christian worship as making possible a communion with God which is at once a fully personal and responsible expression of selfhood, and at the same time does justice to the personal order (1) within which the person stands. Buber's thought is sound here in

(1) Op. cit., p. 174 ff.

that it preserves the two foci of the individual and the community in such a way as to show their interaction and interdependence. "Only men who are capable of truly saying 'Thou' to one another can truly say 'We' to one another." (1)

The resolution of the difficulty of the relation between individuality and corporate existence, which is only found satisfactorily in the experience of Christian worship, is suggested in the thought that man's personal life stands in one fundamental relationship, that in which God has placed him, over against Himself, the relationship which is recognized and experienced in worship, and which is described as the relationship of faith. But "solidarity is the divinely ordained structure in which personal life is to be lived". (2) God has placed man within a personal order as the medium within which the relationship to Himself is to be expressed. Love of God, therefore, and love of the neighbour, are the two poles within which the personal life moves. Christian worship is thus seen to be the engagement of the person in his wholeness with God, in the context of an intensely corporate experience of human interaction, in which the experience of communion with God in Christ is seen to be bound up with, and dependent on, the experience of one's fellow worshippers. The personal centre is therefore never lost in Christian worship. And the end of worship is always fulness of personal life. But "Christian worship is never a

(1) Op. cit., p.176.

(2) J.A.T. Robinson, "The Body", p.9.

solitary undertaking". (1) It is through "being-with" the "other person" that the relationship of faith is realized. The Church, moreover, is more than an aggregate of believing individuals, it is the  $\Sigma\omega\mu\alpha$  τοῦ Χριστοῦ within which alone the individual finds fulness of personal life, and in which corporate relations penetrate into the most private acts of devotion and of faith. The Christian worshipper is conscious of being inseparably one with the worshipping community, the Church. The anthropological paradox, not to be resolved by rational reflection, but only in that profound involvement with Ultimate Reality which is experienced through the worship of the Church, consists in the dual truth that here, in the dynamic relationship of faith, there is experienced a higher kind of self-awareness not to be realized otherwise, and that in this situation in which revelation is communicated and responded to, the mediated character of man's life with God is also seen, and the dependent nature of his spiritual life. The individual finds his true life and selfhood only within the life of the worshipping community, fulfilling his uniquely personal Christian vocation and function only in and through his relation to the life of the Body. The life of the Spirit is mediated through membership in the Body. (2)

- (1) Underhill, op. cit., p.81.  
 Cf. Farmer: op. cit., p.171, f. "Christian anthropology declares that man does not, and cannot, exist as a person except in a close-knit continuum of personal relationships, involving always the individual, his fellows, and God." (Cf. "Servant of the Word", ch. 2.)
- (2) A thought which is dominant in Thornton's "The Common Life in the Body of Christ", and cf. Chap. VI of his "Confirmation".

### III. The Didactic Element in Christian Worship

We must now, in the light of the foregoing discussion, examine the question of the fundamental relation between worship and Christian nurture, our concern being to discover normative principles in the exercise of the teaching ministry of the Church, which will be developed in the final chapter. The perspective from which this study is undertaken is the conviction that Christian nurture cannot be understood or defined by analogy with general education, nor in the light of the psychological interpretation of the structure and functioning of the self, but only in the light of the dynamic experience in which Christian faith is awakened and in which the life in Christ matures. That is to say, Christian nurture is to be interpreted with reference to the character of revelation, the worship in which it is received and responded to, and the Church as the medium or environment of that communication.

#### Nurtural Implications of a Revelation Through History

(a) It may be noted in the first place that, historically, teaching and worship were, within the framework of Biblical religion, inseparably joined together from the start. (1) This was an inevitable consequence of the fact that the Biblical revelation was communicated through historical events, interpreted as having revelatory significance. The "Word" of God is not primarily a verbal communication. It is, rather, "an event created by the divine Spirit in the human spirit"; (2) God's creative Self-manifesta-

(1) Sherrill, "Rise of Christian Education", Chap. II.

(2) Tillich: "Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality", p.78 f.

tion, not tied necessarily to the spoken word. The Word of God uttered in the context of worship, and witnessed to and responded to as such, is spoken in and through the "mighty acts" of God, recorded in Scripture, and understood as the vehicle of His Self-disclosure. Thus already within the confines of Hebrew religion, a didactic element entered into worship, which was to exert a profound and permanent influence on the liturgical structure as well as the content of Christian worship. For the essence of Hebrew worship becomes knowing the History of God's mighty acts, and apprehending their true meaning for faith. Ritual becomes a stylized representation of the historical revelation,<sup>(1)</sup> and exposition of the meaning of the history for faith, as the explanation of the existence and life of the covenantal community, finds its place at the heart of the Synagogue service. This element is found to be present even in the sacrificial liturgy of the second Temple, for the liturgical psalms which were used in the Temple worship are found to contain poems which are a summary of the salvation-history, meant to be memorized.<sup>(2)</sup> Through the "Liturgy of the Word" this emphasis on knowing the History and its interpretation, is incorporated into Christian worship, which thus becomes, in its earlier part, essentially a teaching service, though the didactic element is not confined to this alone.

In Christian worship, the historic Person, Jesus the Christ, is apprehended as God Himself acting redemptively in the human

(1) "Ritual was the perpetual reminder of a history".  
Phillips: "Transmission of the Faith", p.27.

(2) Phillips, op. cit., Chapter III.

situation. In the "Liturgy of the Upper Room" which is an integral part of that worship, that supra-historical Event is central. All the historical events and circumstances of the life of Christ are seen to form part of the vehicle of revelation, and thus become the medium through which Christian worship takes place. A necessary element in that worship is the reliving, in faith, of the past, or rather a bringing of the living past into the present; the historic scene needs to be reproduced, so that the "I - Thou" encounter of faith may take place. At the heart of Christian worship, therefore, is an act of remembering: *ΤΟΥΤΟ ΠΟΙΕΙΤΕ ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΕΜΗΝ ΑΝΑΜΝΗΣΙΝ*, (1) which is more than an act of historical recollection, but a recapitulation and reliving of the sacred-events of the past, in order that their meaning for faith may be apprehended, and their transforming power be experienced. This recalling of history, while it involves the intellect, is not to be understood as a mere cognitive exercise. It is rather that the Spirit, active in the corporate worship of the Church, uses the historical "moments" of the revelation to bring home the meaning of the Christ to faith. "No one can say that Jesus Christ is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (2)

Christian worship includes also a genuinely mimetic aspect, which has its basis both in theological and in psychological realities. From a theological point of view, the historical character of the Christian revelation gives to Christian worship

(1) Lk. 22:19

(2) I Cor. 12:3.

an inevitably dramatic quality, and the liturgy becomes in a very real sense the re-enactment (μίμησις : re-presentation) of the Drama of God's Salvation. This is true not only of the Orthodox "Mystery" or of the sacrificial liturgy of the Roman Mass. It is true also of Protestant worship, which remains fundamentally Eucharistic in its essential nature; and this recognition does not commit us to any theological interpretation of sacramental worship in terms of the repetition of the sacrifice of Christ. From a psychological point of view, the James-Lange theory may be recognized as having a genuine bearing on the subjective experience of Christian worship, in-as-much as the repetition of ritual acts associated with an object of faith tend to awaken appropriate religious emotions. Underhill notices this point, and says: "It is an important function of cultus to educate and support the developing spirit of worship, by presenting to the senses of the worshipper objects intimately connected with his faith, or carrying strong devotional suggestion, and leading him out along these paths towards the invisible Reality."<sup>(1)</sup> Thus in the worshipful repetition of the salvation-events, their redemptive significance is conveyed to faith; the inner meaning of the revelation becomes apparent through the mimetic action of sacramental worship. This action is not mere "imitation", but involves a profound self-identification with the saving-events through the repetition of liturgical ritual. There is no necessary thought here of an opus operatum; the self-identification is an act of faith. The only opus operatum is, as Barth

(1) Op. cit., p.26.



and the Reformers remind us, that of Christ Himself. (1)

Thus because Christian worship is founded upon a historical revelation, and is the vehicle of the meaning of that revelation, it follows that to worship is, in the deepest sense, an educative experience. Through it, attitudes are changed; through it, the individual learns, not only in the sense that knowledge is conveyed, but also in the Pauline sense that he "learns Christ"; and through it a profound transformation occurs, not only within the person, but in the relations with other persons. Christian teaching is thus perceived to be the handmaid of revelation, and our study opens the way to a rich and meaningful definition of Christian nurture. For all Christian teaching is seen to bear directly on the characteristic function of the Church, which is the worship of God self-disclosed in Jesus Christ. Nurture viewed in its inseparable relation to worship offers its own criticism of the traditional religious nurture of the Churches, with its divorce between Christian instruction and the corporate worship of the Christian congregation. To a degree, therefore, Harrison Elliott is right, in his insistence that worship be "integrated with the educational process". (2) But he fails to appreciate the full dimension and significance of Christian worship through viewing it in a utilitarian manner as a resource to be used in the solving of life-problems. The matter requires to be stated in precisely the reverse order: Christian education,

(1) "Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism", p.27.

(2) In his discussion of "Religious Education and Prayer and Worship", Chapter XIV of "Can Religious Education be Christian?", p.283 ff.

if it is to be rightly undertaken, must be connected in integral association with Christian worship and viewed in the light of its fundamental character. Christian nurture seen from the perspective of its relation to worship further enables the Person of Christ to take its proper place in Christian teaching. For it is not the "Jesus of History" who is the subject of Christian teaching, in whom the individual is taught to perceive values worthy of his highest devotion, and of whom, therefore, divinity is predicated. "Jesus the very, very, very good man", (1) Jesus the Example, Healer, Hero, Martyr, do not touch the meaning of Christian teaching. Here American liberal Protestant nurture has been shown to have failed, and failed at the very centre, in having offered "a reduced Christology" (2) as the substance of its teaching. Christian teaching springs out of the need to know the full meaning of a revelation occurring in History and in a Person. It therefore springs out of the heart of Christian worship; is both a part of worship and a consequence of worship. For the object of the Church's adoration is the Christ of faith. Didache is the necessary counterpart of the Kerygma. And Christian proclamation necessarily shades off into Christian teaching (exposition of the meaning of the Christ, and his significance for life). Eucharistic Worship, in which there is a meaning to be learned, a Christian  $\pi\alpha\rho\acute{\alpha}\delta\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$  to be received and transmitted, thus provides Christian nurture with its perspective and its content:

(1) Cf. Niebuhr's criticism, "Nature and Destiny of Man", Vol. I, p.157.

(2) Cf. Smith: "Faith and Nurture", p.105 ff.

the total meaning of the Christ of faith, not a Jesus about whom we simply make a rational judgment. We have here a teaching about a Jesus who died, and whom God affirmed by raising him, not the Jesus who is continuous with our human nature (superlative), but who dealt radically with the "radical discontinuity" in the relation between God and man.<sup>(1)</sup> It is thus a teaching that concerns, not simply man's moral improvement, but the fundamental human problem -- Man the Sinner -- and God's action. Ameliorative ethics, and the ethics of moralism and of self-salvation, are ruled out when Christian nurture is examined from the perspective of Christian worship. The content of Christian nurture is the same as the content of Christian Baptism -- the total meaning of Christ applied to the individual -- and it is the content of Eucharistic worship. From this perspective, Christian nurture is seen to be fundamentally an activity of the Holy Spirit, bearing the Christ to persons at every level of maturity. It is teaching in the context of encounter, in which the Word in Christ is conveyed, mediated through the witness of human personality in terms appropriate to the psychological nature and capacity of the subject.

(b) The intimate connection between nurture and worship becomes still more apparent when the implications of the fact are examined that the content of the original revelation is mediated to the worshipper through its record in Scripture. In order that revelation may be experienced as revelation by the individual, the

(1) Camfield: "Revelation and the Holy Spirit", p.33.

original events must be known, as they are witnessed to and reported in Scripture. Thus the reading of the Scripture is set securely at the heart of Christian worship, inseparably linked with the exposition by which the meaning and relevance of the revelation is made plain, through proclamation which is also a profound teaching, addressed not only to the intellect of the hearer, but a witness from faith to faith, "an assault upon the inmost selves of men".<sup>(1)</sup> Christian teaching, through its connection with the Scriptures, is thus seen to have a dual bearing on worship, since it serves the double function not only of preparation for the subsequent reception of revelation, but also is the medium through which revelation is actually experienced. "The reading of Scripture in public worship originated", says Sherrill, "as an act of teaching both in Jewish synagogue worship and in the Christian service. The teaching was in this instance first of all a confrontation of the community by the Word of God. Thus it is of the genius of both the Jewish and the Christian community to embed teaching in the corporate worship of the community."<sup>(2)</sup>

The understanding of Christian worship as a teaching service is an expression of the very genius of Biblical religion.<sup>(3)</sup> Central to this is the conception of Torah, or divine instruction

(1) "Christian Faith and Life": Pamphlet on Curriculum, p.5.

(2) Sherrill: "Gift of Power", p.52.

(3) Reformed worship may, along with primitive Christian worship, be more accurately described as a combination of teaching and sacramental emphases. See the footnote, Maxwell, op. cit., p.: -116: "The oft-repeated statement that the Reformers sought to replace the mass by the sermon is a misrepresentation: they sought to replace the mass by a celebration of the Lord's Supper with sermon (i.e. instruction and exhortation) and communion." Orthodox worship, on the other hand, in the displacement of preaching from the place it had occupied both in the synagogue and in early Christian worship, almost completely lost the didactic note. Cf. Hislop, op. cit., p.105: "the teaching ministry has been sacrificed to the dramatic presentation of the Christ Mystery."

and guidance, which may be variously mediated, but in which God is the Educator of His people, the moreh. We have here the idea of revelation through teaching, as well as the thought of revelation personified in the Teacher. "The history of Israel", writes Phillips, may well be described as the education by God of His people. Education is not, in the Old Testament, an ingenious process of bringing to light and explaining the mysterious powers of human personality. God is doing the educating, and is communicating something, His Torah, which makes this group of Semitic tribes into His people".<sup>(1)</sup> Thus through the examination of the distinctive character of Biblical Worship as having to do with God's Self-communication, the fundamental distinction between Biblical and what may be termed "Socratic" nurture is uncovered; in the one case consisting in a teaching which is a "paradōsis", and in the other a teaching by "eduction". The nature of this distinction has been developed briefly by Brunner in the chapter on education in his Gifford Lectures.<sup>(2)</sup> The inseparableness of ethics and religion is apparent in this idea of nurture founded upon revelation, and here again the important distinction between moral training springing out of the character of the worshipping life, and an "autonomous" system of character-building, becomes clear, and will be found to be regulative when we come to deal with this aspect of Christian nurture.<sup>(3)</sup>

(1) Phillips, "Transmission of the Faith", p.26.

(2) "Christianity and Civilization", Vol. II, Chapter IV.

(3) In Part IV.

The distinctive interpretation of nurture which springs out of the Old Testament conception of Torah is not superseded in the New Testament, for here we have the idea of God's Torah embodied in the Person of Christ. (1) Matthew's Gospel, indeed, casts the teaching of Jesus in the form of "Christian Torah"; the structure of the Pauline epistles bears evidence of the two-fold consequence of the revelation of divine "Torah": (a) the will of God, revealed in Christ, must be made known, and (b) His "teaching" must be obeyed, carried out in the life-situation of each individual. Here too, ethics springs out of the encounter of faith. The earliest surviving Christian liturgical document, the Didache, shows clearly the continuation in Christian instruction of this fundamental Biblical conception. (2)

We may conclude this topic by saying that since the "primary declaration of Christianity" (3) is "This happened!" prompting the question, in the context of participation in Christian worship: "What mean ye by this service?", (4) the answer to which involves a knowledge of the history, not approached objectively but "sub specie aeternitatis" and as the vehicle of revelation, and a study of the Life of Jesus, not as "a quest for the historical Jesus", but as the "Bearer of the Christ", and also an understanding of the inner relation between liturgy and theology, the meaning of which

(1) Cf. Phillips, op. cit., p.51.

(2) Cf. Sherrill: "Rise of Christian Education", p.67 and p.149.

(3) Underhill, op. cit., p.68.

(4) Exod. 12:26.

does not appear on the surface, it follows that worship based on a historical revelation, and on Scriptures which witness to it, is educational in the deepest sense; and an understanding of all that is involved when the words "Let us worship God" are said in a Christian congregation, provides a true foundation for a discussion of the meaning of Christian nurture.

### Christian Nurture and the Language of Faith

It appears from the foregoing discussion that the bearing of Christian nurture on Worship has two distinct aspects: (a) training for worship; and (b) teaching which is itself the vehicle of revelation, which occurs in the context of participation in the liturgy. The distinction is a convenient and necessary one; though it cannot be made absolute, since it must be maintained that all Christian teaching as a sharing with others of the life in Christ may become the vehicle of revelation, even to the very young.

It may be said that, in the early Christian Church, Christian nurture does not occur except in the closest association with the liturgical life of the Church. This statement bears in mind the fact that, as in the Jewish home, instruction in the faith undoubtedly was carried on in the Christian family. But early Christian worship was so thoroughly "domestic" in character, (1) and the life of the Jewish-Christian home so involved in ritual observance and prayer, in which all participated, that the close connection between

(1) Dix: "Shape of the Liturgy", p.15: "Their specifically Christian worship is from the first a domestic and private thing."

worship and nurture is preserved here also. (1) A substantial part of the instruction of the young took place in the context of the preparation of catechumens for Baptism, and for admission to the Eucharist. (2) This preparation was prolonged; in the Church at Rome it lasted three years. (3) Its content concerned the Christian interpretation of the Old Testament Scriptures; the facts concerning the Life and Passion of Jesus Christ; and their meaning for faith; the Christian's confession of his faith; and the Christian way; as well as the meaning of the sacraments. (4) Thus, historically, the connection between Christian nurture and Christian worship is clearly established. It exists primarily to make meaningful what Christians do in worship, and to facilitate effective participation in it.

But as has been noted, the missa catechumenorum, originating in the worship of the synagogue, had itself a definitely didactic intention. And the specifically Christian contribution to the liturgy, what became known as the "missa fidelium" included a teaching element also. "The rites of the Church, and the greater feasts of her liturgical year, were intended to be an un failing means, not only for transmitting the grace of the Sacraments, but also for instructing the faithful in their meaning, and in the mean-

- (1) Sherrill, op. cit., p.157 ff.
- (2) Cf. Daniélou, "The Bible and the Liturgy", p.3. "The explanation of the sacramental rites held an important place in the very formation of the faithful."
- (3) Richardson, Chapter on "The Foundations of Christian Symbolism" in "Religious Symbolism", p.11.
- (4) Phillips, op. cit., pp. 46-63. And Sherrill, op. cit., p.143 - 153.



ing of the whole Christian life."<sup>(1)</sup> This quotation no doubt reflects something of the Roman Catholic doctrine of sacramental regeneration,<sup>(2)</sup> but it draws attention to the undoubtedly educational effect of participation in the Christian liturgy. It also serves to introduce a profoundly significant question for religious nurture, that concerning symbolism and its place in Christian worship.

(a) The Nature of Religious Symbolism

The forms of corporate worship are created by considerations that are both theological and psychological in character. The source of the use of symbolism in Christian worship is found not only in the content of Christian belief, but in the complex psychological nature of the worshipper, and is an expression of his imaginative and emotional as well as his cognitive life. The study of religious symbolism helps to make apparent the relation of the cognitive and conceptual to the total experience of Christian faith. It also serves to point out what is the true order of procedure in Christian nurture, and the place of intellectual instruction within it. For the primary events in the awakening of faith is the "immediacy" of encounter;<sup>(3)</sup> a total awareness of spiritual reality. This may be described as a pre-theological experience involving the whole man, reflecting the fact that the sense of God is a primary and "given" element in life, not the product of intellectual reflec-

(1) Preface to Daniélou, "The Bible and the Liturgy", p. vii.

(2) Cf. Dillistone's comments in "Christianity and Symbolism", p. 308.

(3) Cf. W. Manson, Chapter on "The Theology of Worship", in "Ministers' Manual", p. 4: "the ἔγὼ εἰμι of the Divine immediacy".

tion or an acquisition in later life. (1) Theology is "a creation of thought" on the basis of spiritual encounter, "a system of concepts concerning divine matters". (2) We may conclude from this that the right order of events in Christian nurture is, first, participation in the religious ritual and observance, and subsequently, explanation of meanings. (3) Intellectual instruction and reflection do not come first, chronologically or experientially, in Christian nurture. This is suggested by a consideration of the experience of immediacy in worship, and supported by the character of religious nurture among the Hebrew people, where participation in the religious ritual, by old and young, come first, the experience prompting the intellectual question: "What mean ye ---?" instruction finding its natural place in nurture in the context of living religion. (4)

We may speak here of the experience of immediacy in worship, but this should not obscure the fact that all experience of revelation is mediated, (5) and is accommodated to the fact that man is creature of sense as well as Spirit. "The direct object of theology is not God, but His manifestation to us. --- The object of theology is found in the symbols of religious experience." (6)

(1) This point is discussed later, in Part IV.

(2) Tillich: Chapter on "Theology and Symbolism" in "Religious Symbolism", p.107.

(3) Some of Whitehead's statements on education, i.e. in "Aims of Education", Chapter I, provide an interesting parallel.

(4) Sherrill, op. cit., p.22 ff.

(5) "There is no pure revelation"; Tillich, "Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality", p.5.

(6) Tillich, "Theology and Symbolism", pp.107-8.

Religious symbols are the expression of the creative encounter of God with man, and as such are the indispensable language of living religion, the mode in which communication with unseen Spirit must take place, and the necessary means of communication with other persons about revelation. The necessity of symbolic expression in matters of faith and in worship is a consequence both of the nature of God, Who "is a Spirit",<sup>(1)</sup> and Whom "no man hath seen at any time,"<sup>(2)</sup> and of the "amphibious" character of human nature. "Since we can only think, will, and feel in and with a physical body, and it is always in close connection with sense-impressions received through that body that our religious consciousness is stirred and sustained, it follows that we can hardly dispense with some ritual act, some sensible image, some material offering, as an element in the total act of worship, if that act of worship is to turn our humanity in its wholeness towards God."<sup>(3)</sup> The function of religious symbolism is to suggest spiritual realities, to open up levels of meaning to the mind, and levels of reality to experience, otherwise inaccessible. They may be drawn from nature, from history, from the realm of personal life. The natural order, as part of God's creation, provides a true analogy with events in the world of the spirit (a fact on which the parabolic teaching of our Lord is based); Biblical history becomes, in worship and for faith, "a sacramental presentation of higher truth";<sup>(4)</sup> "self-hood

(1) John 4:24.

(2) John 1:18.

(3) Underhill, op. cit., p.25.

(4) Ibid., p.28.

in man is experienced as a clue to the nature of Self-hood in God"; (1) and the supreme symbol of the divine is found in Incarnation, the "Word made flesh". The potency of the religious symbol is in its suggestive efficacy, and the richness and power of the Christian religion is in part due to the wealth of the symbolism of the Bible. Psychologically, it calls into play the image-thinking capacity of the mind, (2) and thus appeals to every level of experience and maturity. It engages the total self in its unanalyzable unity" (3) reinforcing thought with emotional power, and adding the support of the unconscious levels of being to those of the conscious mind. The nurtural significance of all this can scarcely be exaggerated. It means that while the older and the less mature are separated at the level of their cognitive capacity, in the area of worship there is, through the medium of the language of religious symbolism, a principle of corporateness which enables "spiritual education" (4) to occur on the basis of a shared experience. It is the strength of sacramental worship that it is of this "polysemous" kind, that it conveys its message and its benefits to all, even to those whose power of "cognitio" is most limited. This is one of the results of what Von Hügel called "the sacramental principle, the waking up of spirit under the stimulus of sense," deriving from "our soul-and-body compoundness". (5) Modern religious nurture has virtually

(1) Sherrill: "Gift of Power", p.71

(2) "The soul in this world passes its life among pictures." Underhill, op. cit., p.30.  
Cf. also Thornton, "Theology of Confirmation", p.7.

(3) Brunner, "The Word and the World", p.72.

(4) A phrase used by Florence Allshorn, emphasizing the need for this, and quoted in "Florence Allshorn", by J. H. Oldham.

(5) Quoted by Underhill, op. cit., p.31.

ignored the operation of this principle, and the "principle of community" which is a consequence of it, and has conducted its Christian training on a basis of the segregation of groups, derived from general education; and, by concentration upon the intellectual elements in congregational worship, it has failed to provide a genuine place for the child in the corporate worship of the Christian community. As Schweitzer noted many years ago, (1) on the basis of recollection of his experience of worship in his own childhood, there are elements in Christian worship, so ordered as to take full account of the "multi-dimensional" reference of religious symbolism, (2) which allow it to become an expression of the true corporateness of the Body of Christ, and therefore to include the child.

The discussion has anticipated recognition of a fundamental aspect of religious symbolism, namely its social character. (3) Evelyn Underhill has spoken of the uniting function of cultus, and of the "marked social quality" of ritual, symbol, sacrament, and sacrifice. It is of the essence of religious symbolism that it provides a pattern of agreed meanings through which the members of the worshipping community can communicate concerning their faith. Tillich declares that "faith is real only in the communion of a language of faith". (4) The rich language of religious symbolism, opening up "the mystery of the holy", and containing meanings that

(1) Referred to in "Jerusalem Report", I.M.C., Vol. II, p.67.

(2) Underhill, Op. Cit., p.22.

(3) Cf. The Creed as the "Σύμβολον" of the Christian Community, i.e. the expression of that which binds the believing society together, providing a common basis for agreement; the words of the Creed suggesting much more than their literal meaning. (Cf. Richardson, Art.) and c.f. Tillich: "Dyn. of Faith, p.24 ff. "No liturgical, doctrinal, or ethical expressions of the faith of the Community are ultimate. Their function is to point to the Ultimate which is beyond all of them". This is what Tillich means, in effect, by "the Protestant Principle". - "The Church stands under the Prophetic judgment, not above it". p.29

(4) "Dynamics of Faith", p.117.

are known and appreciated only by the initiated, contributes powerfully to the strength of the corporate life of the believing community. To identify the symbol with its literal meaning, or to conceptualize it, is to destroy it; and Tillich attributes the decline of Christianity in the west, and the disintegration of its corporate life, partly to the intellectual destruction of the symbol, in the climate of scientific thought, by identification with literal meanings. (1)

(b) The Acceptance and Rejection of the Symbol.

A great deal of light has been thrown by psychology, and particularly by depth-psychology, on the nature of symbolism, the process by which symbols are evolved, and their value as a cohesive force in society, and as the means of social communication. (2) Much of this is of significance for the understanding of the place of the symbol in the life of the Church, and of what happens, psychologically, in the experience of worship. (3) It is necessary to reflect that the symbol is more than an agreed sign, with no necessary connection with that which it signifies. The symbol is not an artificial construct. Indeed, it cannot simply be made, but partakes of the character of an organic growth, an expression of living experience, sharing in the reality to which it points, participating in the

(1) Tillich: Chap. in "Religious Symbolism", p.113: "It is one of the reasons for the disintegration of religion in recent centuries that the symbols (of religion) have been taken literally."

(2) Cf. Fromm: "The Forgotten Language";  
F. G. Jung: "The Psychology of the Unconscious".

(3) Cf. Dillistone: "Christianity and Symbolism", on the relevance of the work of Freud, Jung, and Fromm to the understanding of the symbolic expression of the Church's faith.

power it symbolizes. The religious symbol, similarly is not a creation of the conscious mind, nor a product of theological reflection, but springs out of a profound dimension of religious experience which includes self-conscious awareness and also the whole unconscious psychic life of the believer.<sup>(1)</sup> The imaginative, aesthetic, and emotional capacities are participant in the creation of the religious symbol. Some religious symbols, obviously, are more valuable than others. It is one of the functions of theology to point this out. "Theology is the conceptual interpretation, explanation, and criticism of the symbols in which a special encounter between God and man has found expression."<sup>(2)</sup> Theology is created by the systematic answer to the question: "What mean ye ----?" The criteria of the true symbol are (i) that it should be a genuine expression of the faith-experience of the individual or of the worshipping group; (ii) its adequacy in suggesting ultimate reality; and (iii) the closeness of its identification with the revelatory events of which it is the bearer. The ultimate normative consideration, therefore, is fidelity to the Scriptural revelation. On these grounds, some of the symbolism used in Roman Catholic and in Eastern Orthodox worship, may be rejected as fanciful or suspect. Daniélou,<sup>(3)</sup>

(1) Cf. Tillich: "Dynamics of Faith," p.43:- "(Symbols) grow out of the individual and collective unconscious, and cannot function without being accepted by the unconscious dimension of our being".

(2) Tillich: "Religious Symbolism", p.108.

(3) "The Bible and the Liturgy", p.8. He is on questionable ground where he asserts that the sacramental theology of the Fathers, which was a "Biblical theology", "refracted through a Greek mentality", "affected only the method of presentation" -- See e.g. in the association of Orpheus with "the Good Shepherd". op. cit., p.8; though his general statement that recent study of liturgical origins has "established the fact that we must not look to Hellenistic culture for the origin of the Christian sacraments -- -- but rather to the liturgy of Judaism", is supported by Oesterley, Gavin, and Dix.

for example, admits that, quite early in Christian worship, pagan elements were introduced into the Church, and worked upon by the Christian imagination. The fact has to be recognized that the imagination of Christian man has been ever creatively at work upon the materials of his worship. That which has been handed on is not left untouched. Indeed, it may almost be admitted: Nihil quod tetegit non ornavit -- the result not always being to the true edification of the Church.

The necessity of symbolism to the life of faith has been asserted above. But the previous paragraph suggests that the use of symbolism as the language of religious communication carries its own dangers, which may be summarized as the magical, superstitious, or idolatrous uses of the symbol. Indeed, one of the profound motivating factors prompting the Reformation was the awakening of certain minds to the superstitious or magical abuse of the symbol in the life of the Church, and to the idolatrous substitution of the symbol for the true "ultimate concern" of Christian faith. It may, however, be argued that Protestantism over reacted in its rejection of symbolism, and many Protestant writers, both in the liturgical and theological spheres, have recently been pleading for a recovery of that richness and concreteness of symbolic expression which characterized the worship as well as the thought of the Church in its early and formative periods.<sup>(1)</sup> Tillich is conscious in this regard that he is "speaking as a Protestant against himself as a Protestant";<sup>(2)</sup> but no one has exhibited more clearly the necessary

(1) Notably e.g. Tillich, Dillistone, Hislop, Thornton.

(2) Tillich, in Chapter on "Theology and Symbolism", referred to above.



place of symbolism within the community of faith, nor argued more powerfully against the rejection of the symbol on the one hand, or its idolatrous assertion on the other.

It is a curious fact that Judaism, which has prided itself on the repudiation of the symbol in its worship,<sup>(1)</sup> should nevertheless base its religious observance on Scriptural writings which are and inexhaustible source of symbolic expression. Psychologically, the elaboration of the symbol, in prophetic teaching and in literary expression, may be a result in part of the exclusion of visual representation of the objects of faith in worship. The same principle of compensation is seen at work in the hymnology of those branches of the Church which have repudiated a sacrificial emphasis in their worship, but whose hymns are conspicuous for their use of the language of sacrifice.

Tillich distinguishes three levels of religious symbolism, (i) the transcendent; (ii) the sacramental; and (iii) the liturgical. In connection with the first of these, he warns that "theology must resist idolatrous identification of the ground of our being, ("the True God"), with the God of organized theism". In regard to the second, he notes that the source of the vigorous opposition of the Reformers to the theory of transubstantiation was "the belief that it was a regression into the magical identification of the Divine with the bearer of the Divine". And in relation to the third, he declares that Protestantism "has lost the whole realm of sign-

(1) Cf. e.g. Heschell, in Chapter on "Jewish Symbolism" in "Religious Symbolism".

symbols", formed by the "elevation of all kinds of signs to symbolic power." In its intellectualistic and moralistic emphasis it has been guilty of a "continuous iconoclasm" or breaking of symbols which has produced an impoverishment of worship and a starvation of the religious sense. (1)

At this point a question arises which makes apparent the reference which the discussion of religious symbolism has to the field of Christian nurture. The question concerns the recovery of the symbol for worship and for the whole life of faith. The Christian Church inherited from Old Testament religion a rich symbolism which became the language of the Christian's approach to God. As early Christian art reveals, the use of symbolism, derived mostly, but not exclusively, from Biblical sources, was elaborated in the worship and the sacramental rites of the Church in the following centuries, and became an important means of the "transmission of the faith". Through a complex process, which can only be suggested, involving the interplay of cultural and theological factors, and the growing contamination of the religious life of the Church with alien elements, the language of Christian faith, worship, and sacrament ceased to be a true vehicle of Biblical revelation, and a situation was created that demanded a radical reconsideration of the forms by which the Church's faith was expressed and communicated. Hence arose that dynamic movement for the criticism of the liturgical, sacramental, theological and institutional life of the Church which comprised the Protestant Reformation. The movement

(1) Op. cit., pp.113-115. The phrase: "A continuous iconoclasm" is a reference to Jung's criticism.

as we have noted, embodied a principle that is of permanent worth, but it involved also a partial failure to recognize that the language of living religion is perceptual as well as conceptual in character, and that to accentuate the conceptual and the rational aspects of faith at the expense of other elements in human nature is to fail to do justice to the full richness of the Spiritual life. The question therefore becomes: whether Protestant faith, without surrendering the necessary attitude of criticism of the inadequate symbol, may preserve that attitude within the framework of symbolic experience, and may therefore become more hospitable to the symbolic aspects of Biblical faith. The problem is rendered more acute by the fact of the organic nature of the symbol. The genuine symbol as the bearer of religious experience cannot be consciously invented, since it is not a product of thought; nor can it simply be restored when it has been destroyed or "dissolved". The problem is one of re-education into a sense of the true nature of symbolic speech within the community of faith, and so of the creation of an attitude in which symbols may be accepted as the necessary means of Christian expression. The process is thus the opposite of "demythologisation", in the sense of the reduction of the symbol of religious faith to the conceptual. (1) It is rather that of creating a new awareness of the symbol as symbol, as the carrier of religious reality and power, and as suggesting a realm of experience which is beyond the range of the purely conceptual. The implications of this requirement of

(1) Cf. Henderson's criticism of Bultmann, in "Myth in the New Testament"; and esp. Chapter IV: "Can we Dispense with Myth?" -- "The mythological is a basic form of human thought from which, consequently, we can never free ourselves." p.50.

an adequate life of Spiritual community, and of an adequate liturgical expression, carry the discussion into the realm of Christian nurture, and will be reserved for a later chapter.

There is, however, an aspect of this question which invites reference in the present context, namely, that of the relation of the Bible to the Liturgy.<sup>(1)</sup> The Christian faith rests on the affirmation that a revelation of God's nature and purpose has been communicated in the particular historical events which culminate in the birth, ministry, cross, resurrection and exaltation of the Christ. But in Christian worship, the events recorded in Scripture were not regarded merely as the historical basis of the Christian faith, but were made the subject of a particular kind of symbolic interpretation. The assumption underlying this interpretation is that there is "a theological analogy between the great moments of sacred history",<sup>(2)</sup> and that the action of God in history is consistent, and embraced within a continuous, overruling Purpose. The truth of the statement that the Old Covenant "fulfils" the New requires no argument, and may be said to provide a justification in principle for the finding of typological analogies between the events of the Old Testament and the New. The origins of this type of symbolic exegesis, which is given elaborate liturgical expression particularly in the sacramental rites of the early Church, are to be found within the New Testament itself. "All these things happened to them as types", Paul writes (τὰ ὅσα ἐπὶ πάντων

(1) The work of Thornton and Daniélou is important in this connection.

(2) Daniélou, op. cit., p.5.

ΤΥΠΟΙ ΣΥΝΕΒΑΙΝΟΝ ΕΙΣ ἘΚΓΙΝΟΙΣ ), "and they are written  
 for our admonition" ( ΠΡΟΣ ΡΟΥΘΕΤΙΑΝ ἡμῶν ).(1) It was  
 one of the intentions of the apostolic writers to show that the  
 events of the Old Covenant foreshadowed the New, and thus were  
 prophetic of the Messianic Kingdom. Christ is "the New Adam, with  
 whom the time of the Paradise of the future has begun. In Him is  
 already realized that destruction of the sinful world of which the  
 Flood was the figure. In Him is accomplished the true Exodus which  
 delivers the people of God from the tyranny of the demons."(2) Paul  
 makes full use of this sort of typological interpretation of the Old  
 Testament, in the interests of his Christology. But Daniélou  
 further points out that there is in the New Testament, the basis  
 for a sacramental typology as well, which was elaborated in the  
 later worship of the Church. "The Gospel of St. John shows us  
 that the manna was a figure of the Eucharist; the first Epistle of  
 St. Paul to the Corinthians that the crossing of the Red Sea was  
 a figure of Baptism; the first Epistle of St. Peter that the Flood  
 was also a figure of Baptism. This means that the sacraments carry  
 on in our midst the memorabilia, the great works of God in the Old  
 Testament and the New."(3) The quotation is from a Roman Catholic  
 writer of distinction, but Cullmann, Selwyn, Bultmann and others  
 could be cited in support of the exegetical facts, though not of  
 the use which Daniélou makes of them. The validity of typological  
 exegesis, and the extent of its reference, present intricate

(1) I Cor. 10:11.

(2) Op. Cit., p.5.

(3) Ibid. p.5.

problems in the field of Biblical interpretation: but of the presence of typology within the New Testament there can be no doubt. Moreover, its influence upon the liturgical life and sacramental practice of the Church in the first centuries is beyond dispute. In regard to sacramental rites and liturgical practices, the typological principle is, so to speak, extended. God is at work in the sacraments as He was in the salvation-events of which they are the "configuration", and there is felt to be some sort of spiritual continuity and analogy between the sacramental reality already accomplished in history, and the visible signs by which they are suggested, and their benefits conveyed to faith. The importance of the subject of the liturgical use of the Bible, in its bearing on Christian nurture, and also its particular reference to the sacramental process of Christian initiation, compel a brief statement of point of view in regard to this aspect of Biblical interpretation.

Reference has been made in this chapter to the necessity of religious symbolism as the language of faith. To recognize its presence and its legitimacy is to concede in principle the validity of a typological use of the Bible in liturgy and sacrament. The prominence of typological exegesis in the canonical writings, moreover, means that this mode of interpreting the Scriptures must be seriously considered, not only for the life of devotion, but for theology. The justification for a typological approach to the understanding of the Christian sacraments is provided by recent study of liturgical origins in the liturgical and sacramental practices of Judaism, the intimate bearing of which on Christian worship is

now generally recognized. (1) Daniélou argues that "the mentality of the Jews, and of Christ, was formed by the Old Testament, and that the deeds of Christ are "charged with Biblical memories," (2) which supply us with their true meaning. On this basis he contends that symbolical interpretation of the sacraments should not be limited to the natural significance of the elements used; that the primary "meaning" of water as "cleansing" or "purifying", e.g., "does not seem to be the most important meaning" when applied to Baptism. This is confirmed by Richardson's examination of the range of meaning of the religious symbols used in liturgical and sacramental observance in early Christianity. (3) Once this is conceded, the range of symbolic interpretation is extended indefinitely, (4) and the way is opened up for the kind of exegesis which is extensively used, for example, by Thornton. What are the principles in terms of which its validity and acceptability may be established?

In the first place, while typological interpretation undoubtedly has its roots in the Apostolic literature, and in the "paradōsis of practice" as it is reflected in the earliest surviving liturgical documents, this still leaves open the question: how far Rabbinic principles of interpretation are superseded in

- (1) Thornton: "Theology of Confirmation".  
Gavin: "Jewish Antecedents of the Christian Sacraments".
- (2) Op. Cit., p.6.
- (3) "The Foundations of Christian Symbolism", chapter in "Religious Symbolism".
- (4) Cf. Maxwell's reference to the symbolical interpretation of the Mass in the 9th Century by Amalarius of Metz, and especially the quotation from Brilioth in this connection: op. cit., p.67.

Christianity,<sup>(1)</sup> or else are to be baptized into Christ. It is not enough to argue simply that typology has a Biblical justification or precedent.

It is recognized, secondly, even by those who engage in this mode of exegesis, that much early Christian typological symbolism carried associations with pagan practices and pagan culture, and that this was one potent source of incorporation into Christian life and thought of categories of thought which are alien to the genius of Christianity.

It is apparent, also, that symbolism was introduced into the worship of the Church from a variety of motives, some of which are purely psychological rather than having an integral connection with Biblical faith. There is always a strong temptation towards the introduction of elements into the worship of the Church for reasons that are emotive rather than intrinsically meaningful in terms of their relevance to Biblical revelation. This suggests one general criterion, that typological expression, and interpretation, is only acceptable in Christian worship and sacrament where its use is clearly unambiguous. The criterion is essentially that suggested by Alan Richardson in regard to miracle: "congruity with the total Biblical picture of God's action".<sup>(2)</sup> Symbolism introduced into worship on predominantly psychological grounds is without justification, and a typology which incorporates elements which are at variance with the Biblical revelation must be suspect.

(1) Cf. Tillich's criticisms of Niebuhr's "Biblicism", in the Volume on Niebuhr's Theology, (Vol. II), p.43.

(2) Richardson, Article on "Miracle", in "Theol. Word Book", p.152.



The Reformers made it their aim to make the Scriptures the norm of public worship.<sup>(1)</sup> This was effected in several ways, through the reading of the Scriptures in the vernacular, the exposition of the Word, and the regulation of prayer in accordance with the Word. The benefits secured by this liturgical emphasis were enormous. Along with these, however, must be acknowledged two tendencies, the effects of which led to the impoverishment of Protestant nurture. The first was the predominance of a dogmatic approach to Scripture in teaching,<sup>(2)</sup> and an emphasis on the knowledge of content unrelated to the experience and spiritual capacity of the child. The other tendency closely associated with the former, was that towards the repudiation of the visual symbol in worship, and the reduction of religious symbolism generally to the conceptual and the rational. The liturgical use of symbolism is open to abuse, and the employment of a figurative typology has led, historically, in directions that are remote from Biblical realities.<sup>(3)</sup> But a genuinely "holistic" experience of worship, which will involve the whole personality, must take note of psychological as well as of theological realities; and the symbols of religious faith have the advantage of drawing on the subconscious depths of personal life, being themselves a creation of the total self. In view of this fact, the question of the handling of religious symbolism in Christian nurture will engage our attention in the chapter on the education of the worshipping life.

(1) Cf. Maxwell, *op. cit.*, Chapter 4.

(2) See the criticism of "the mediation of doctrine" in Brunner's "Divine-Human Encounter", p.174-8: "Proclamation which seeks to initiate faith is a form of the Word in human speech which is different from doctrinal presentation". p.178.

(3) See C. H. Dodd, "The Bible Today", Chapter I.

PART III

CHRISTIAN INITIATION

CHRISTIAN INITIATION IN RELATION  
TO CHRISTIAN NURTURE

Introduction

The inclusion, in this study, of a discussion of the theology of Christian initiation is justified, not only by the fact that it appears to be the inevitable starting point for a theory of Christian nurture, but also by the way in which it illustrates the integral relation which exists between the three main aspects of our subject, anthropology, worship, and nurture. Numerous theological and liturgical scholars<sup>(1)</sup> have mentioned how the sacrament of Baptism involves a setting forth, in "sensible signs", of the Christian affirmations concerning human nature and the radical solution afforded in the restoration of the divine image through the work of Christ. Its anthropological reference needs no further emphasis. And on the other hand, the presence of this sacrament at the heart of the liturgical life of the Church, and the attestation it provides of the Christian status of childhood<sup>(2)</sup> and of the divine order of the family, associate worship and nurture together in the most intimate way.

(1) Eg. Barth: "The Teaching of The Church Regarding Baptism", p.9: "--- the representation (Abbild) of a man's renewal through his participation -- in the death and resurrection of Christ ---". c.f. p.15, and p.63.

Daniélou: "Bible et Liturgie", ch.II, p.61: "--- cette destruction de l'homme ancien et cette création de l'homme nouveau, ---- dans le Christ mort et ressuscité;" etc.

Dix: "The Shape of the Liturgy", p.XVIII; and "The Theology of Confirmation in Relation to Baptism", p.6 and passim.

(2) C. of S. "Interim Report on Baptism" (1955) p.19 - 29.

It is, indeed, a matter for astonishment that, considering the close connection between Christian teaching and the baptismal mystery both in the New Testament and in the practice of the Church in the early centuries, so little attention has been paid, in recent works on religious education, to the theology of Baptism as providing the rationale of a theory of Christian nurture. Harrison S. Elliott, in his major formulation of theory, makes no reference to the bearing of the sacraments on nurture, in spite of his insistence<sup>(1)</sup> that worship must be "integrally related to the educational process". Similarly, Wesner Fallaw<sup>(2)</sup> establishes his argument that Christian nurture must be centred in the family on grounds that are sociological rather than theological or sacramental. Randolph C. Miller,<sup>(3)</sup> an Anglican, contents himself with a number of scattered references to Baptism; and James D. Smart,<sup>(4)</sup> the most important Canadian writer on the subject, gives some attention to the "divine order of the home", but nowhere deals seriously with the sacrament of Baptism. In contrast, Horace Bushnell,<sup>(5)</sup> regarded by H. Shelton Smith<sup>(6)</sup> as in some ways the father of American liberal Protestant nurture, found it necessary to base his educational views on a careful examination of the theology of Baptism. And though the present writer would repudiate Bushnell's

(1) "Can Religious Education be Christian?" P.292, ff.

(2) "The Modern Parent and the Teaching Church!"

(3) "The Clue to Christian Education."

(4) "The Teaching Ministry of the Church". ch. IX

(5) "Christian Nurture" (1847).

(6) "Faith and Nurture", p.10

educational utopianism and reject his sacramental theology as containing an insufficiently radical doctrine of sin, and as over-stressing the concept of growth, the permanent influence of Bushnell's thought is partly due to his concern to remain faithful to the New Testament meaning of Baptism. Bushnell's nurtural theory was the product of a theological reaction against the insistence on a "technical" experience of conversion, and against an unethical interpretation of the unregenerate condition of the child before "believer's Baptism", characteristic of the writings of Jonathan Edwards<sup>(1)</sup>. The later liberal tendencies in religious education derived in part from the pioneering concern of such notable theorists as George Albert Coe<sup>(2)</sup> for the application of educational and social psychology to the teaching ministry of the Church, and their forgetfulness of the fact that Bushnell's entire argument is confined to the child born and nurtured within the Christian home, and made his statements to imply an optimistic view of the possibilities of childhood in general. It is axiomatic that a theory of nurture which takes seriously the organic relation between worship and Christian training must incorporate a clear doctrine of Christian initiation<sup>(3)</sup>.

(1) Cf. H. Shelton Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 5 - 6.

(2) Eg. "A Social Theory of Religious Education" (1917); and "What is Christian Education?" (1929). c.f. "Protestant Thought in the Twentieth Century", Ed. by Nash; the final chapter by H. S. Smith.

(3) Sherrill, in his historical study, unfortunately only carried down to the end of the mediaeval period; "The Rise of Christian Education", has the merit of recognising this, esp. in chs. VI, VII and VIII.

Our task at this point is a complicated one. It is not simply that of examining the doctrine of Baptism to which the United Church of Canada adheres, with a view to deriving its nurtural consequences. It is obvious that, whatever status may be granted to the rite of confirmation, it is not to be understood in isolation, but is part of a complex of spiritual events of profound theological and liturgical significance, and that the theology of Baptism is bound up with that of confirmation. Moreover, as Fr. Jean Daniélou<sup>(1)</sup> and others have pointed out, the "once-for-all"<sup>(2)</sup> sacramental experience of Christian initiation was from the first held in the closest possible association with the "sacrament of the continuing fellowship", which means that the sacramental basis for a theory of Christian nurture must be worked out within the framework of a total sacramental theology. Our present task, therefore, is to examine that complex of ceremonies connected with the complete Baptismal event, and to ask what is the full meaning of Christian initiation. The whole subject is highly controversial, and the profound disagreement which exists not only among the Churches, but within individual communions as to the theological basis of the sacrament of Baptism makes the undertaking more difficult as well as more stimulating. Amid so much disagreement among the specialists, all that can be claimed here is that some of the arguments,

- (1) Op. cit., Eng. translation, speaks of "the great unity which the whole process of Christian initiation is seen to possess." -----"From Baptism to Communion, this is all a participation in Christ dead and risen again. There is no other mystery than the Paschal Mystery." p.140.
- (2) Cf. Barth, op. cit., p.64. "The glory of Baptism among all the parts of the Church's proclamation is its 'once-for-all-ness'."

biblical, liturgical and theological, have been critically examined, and certain working-principles arrived at for the purposes of Christian teaching.

The primary sources for determining the essential character of Christian initiation are (1) the Judaic antecedents of the Christian sacrament, -- especially circumcision and proselyte Baptism; (2) Johannine Baptism, and particularly the baptismal experience of our Lord; (3) the evidence of Acts, the Pauline and other epistles, and the Four Gospels; (4) the earliest liturgical evidence, derived from surviving documents indicating actual liturgical practice; and (5) references in the early Patristic literature. In what follows, attention will be directed chiefly to the bearing of the evidence on the sacramental question upon a theory of Christian nurture.

It would be a serious mistake to attempt to explain the essential meaning of Christian Baptism in terms of analogy with Jewish rites antecedent to or contemporaneous with the earliest liturgical practices of the Church. The first principle of Christian sacramental theology must be adherence to a Christological basis of interpretation. Nevertheless the genetic sources, not so much of the earliest teaching about the sacrament of Baptism, as of early liturgical practice, are undoubtedly to be found in Judaism, as recent scholarship has attested<sup>(1)</sup>. Gavin in particular points out the recognisably Jewish elements present in the practice reflected in the "Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus,"

(1) Gavin: "The Jewish Antecedents of the Christian Sacraments".

and Carrington<sup>(1)</sup> in his chapter on "Proselyte Baptism" indicates the close parallel between the instruction and reception of Jewish proselytes and Christian initiates. Indeed it is to be expected that, just as the primitive Christian liturgy represents the fusion of elements derived from Jewish worship, in synagogue and Temple, with others distinctive of the sacramental experience of the Upper Room, so would a Church acknowledging its heritage in Judaism derive its practices in initiation in part at least from that background. Dix, in fact, makes a strong plea in favour of putting the evidence of early liturgical tradition before that of the New Testament Scriptures, on the ground that the "paradosis of practice" antedates the writing of the New Testament documents themselves by some two or three decades, and that this "continued to develop in complete freedom from any control by those documents for a century after they were written".<sup>(2)</sup> He therefore argues that this liturgical tradition was more strongly influenced by its Jewish background than the Christian canonical writings in their references to Baptism would suggest. Dix is anxious to assert the pre-eminence of the "Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus" as reflecting a practice that is earlier than that portrayed in the New Testament, but his argument, which in the historical interpretation put forward in its later stages has been severely questioned<sup>(3)</sup>, has at this point a certain force, particularly

(1) Carrington: "The Primitive Christian Catechism", pp.12-21.  
"Christian Baptism appears to have been assimilated to Jewish proselyte Baptism in the mission field". p.12

(2) "The Theology of Confirmation in Relation to Baptism", p.10.

(3) By Fr. Leeming: "Principles of Sacramental Theology", appendix.



in regard to the strong influence on Christian practice of Judaic antecedents. Cullmann<sup>(1)</sup>, it may also be noted, makes the connection between circumcision and Jewish proselyte Baptism and Christian Baptism, of which it is the "completion" and "fulfilment", one of his strong reasons for favouring infant Baptism as "congruous with the Doctrine of Baptism". The continuous interplay between the changing demands of a missionary and pastoral situation confronting the Church in the early centuries, and the theological reflection on the meaning of Christian initiation, is one of the fascinating features of the historical study of this period. It is an undoubted fact, for example, that the advent of the "peace of the Church" in the 4th Century led to a greatly increased practice of infant Baptism, and that the modification thus produced in the structure of the rite, fostered by historical influences, led in turn to the need for a theological rationale of an already existing practice. Similarly, at an earlier period, the removal of Christianity from a Syrian to a Hellenic environment had notable repercussions on liturgical thought and practice which have often been noticed<sup>(2)</sup>. The important things to observe from our present point of view are (a) that in the missionary situation facing the Church the structure and content of the baptismal rite was influenced by Jewish environmental factors, and (b) that catechetical methods of instructing and receiving converts from other religious backgrounds into Judaism are found to be relevant to a knowledge of

Baptism in the New

(1) Testament, p.70 point (4), and cf. also pp. 56-69.

(2) Eg. by Dix: op. cit., p.9.

Christian initiation as understood and practised in primitive Christianity. These examples of the dynamic interplay of history and theology, and of cultural or geographical factors and liturgical practice, are not without their lessons for Christian nurture in relation to the missionary enterprise of the Church today. Godfrey Phillips, in his "Transmission of the Faith" has drawn attention to some of these implications<sup>(1)</sup>.

THE MEANING OF BAPTISM IN  
RELATION TO CHRISTIAN NURTURE

Research into the theological and biblical foundations for a doctrine of Christian nurture has strengthened the conviction that a doctrine of Baptism is needed which will take into account the theological significance of the whole process of Christian initiation. Much recent writing on the subject of Baptism is deficient in its failure to appreciate the unitary character of Christian sacramental experience, and in its consequent attempt to understand (infant) Baptism as a kind of "detached" sacrament, explicable in itself. Neville Clark, for example, lays down the sound principle<sup>(2)</sup> that a satisfactory theology of Baptism cannot be arrived at except "in conjunction with a reconsideration of eucharistic doctrine". This is a sign that a movement is setting in in a true direction; but the same writer, basing his argument on the New Testament evidence, where adult Baptism is the normal practice, is able to avoid the acute

(1) Esp. pp. 46—63 where he draws heavily on data supplied by Carrington: "The Primitive Christian Catechism".

(2) "An Approach to the Theology of the Sacraments", p. 72.

theological problem created by the fact that, except in certain denominations and on the mission field, initiation into the Christian Church is now usually through Baptism in infancy; and he therefore ignores the challenge to sacramental theology presented by Karl Barth's monograph, and nowhere mentions confirmation as an idea requiring theological consideration. Similarly Flemington's careful study<sup>(1)</sup> is rendered less valuable by the relegation of the problems presented by the personal appropriation of the faith into which the infant has been baptized to an appendix. The ignorance and bewilderment of many in the Church in regard to what Baptism means, which is referred to by Dr. D. M. Baillie<sup>(2)</sup>, stems in part from the fact that the Church has deprived itself of a true perspective for its theological interpretation by regarding infant Baptism as complete in itself, and not part of the total baptismal mystery which itself must be seen within the context of the whole sacramental life of the Christian community.

It is axiomatic that historical factors must inevitably influence theological formulation. What is meant is not simply the constant interplay of Christianity and culture, which has recently been the subject of illuminating study<sup>(3)</sup>; but rather that the unfolding life of the Church produces from time to time a radically new situation which cannot be dealt with in terms

(1) "The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism". pp.148 - 152.

(2) "The Theology of the Sacraments". p. 72.

(3) Eg. Richard Niebuhr: "Christianity and Culture".

of earlier practice, or even on the basis of precedent or "tradition" in the Apostolic Church, but for which a solution must be found in the context of theological creativity under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Such a situation, it is claimed, confronted the Church in regard to Baptism towards the middle of the 4th Century, when infant Baptism began to be realized as a problem almost for the first time, though Tertullian had earlier given it some attention<sup>(1)</sup>. The problem was created by the fact that the integrity of the New Testament "Baptisma", which was closely linked also with the Eucharist, since both involved a "representation" of the Mysterium Christi, was destroyed by the chronological separation of two of its aspects through what became the "normal" practice of infant Baptism in the post-Nicene Church. The question is, is the structure of the baptismal whole materially altered by this change? Certainly a serious theological distortion is introduced by the attempt to interpret a detached sacrament of infant Baptism as though it were all that the New Testament means by "Baptisma". The real point at issue is not infant Baptism versus "believer's Baptism", or whether the former can be vindicated by the New Testament evidence. In regard to these matters it can be shown fairly conclusively that a doctrine of "believer's Baptism", in the sense of the withholding of the sacrament from the child of Christian parents until personal profession of faith at maturity, is without Biblical foundation<sup>(2)</sup>, and that while the positive evidence in favour of the practice of

(1) De Baptismo.

(2) See Cullmann's arguments, esp. in op. cit. chapter 2; and the evidence assembled in "Interim Report" (1955), p.19 f.

infant Baptism in the Apostolic Church is lacking in conclusiveness, it is attested (a) by the argument ex silentio; (b) by analogy with Jewish practice in regard to both circumcision and proselyte Baptism; and (c) by the generally positive tendency of such New Testament evidence as we possess<sup>(1)</sup>. Barth himself admits the general recognition of the practice by Origen and Cyprian<sup>(2)</sup>, its almost universal acceptance by the Church, and its endorsement by all the Reformers<sup>(3)</sup>. The serious discussion of sacramental issues which is going on in many branches of the Church at the present time has been clouded rather than clarified by Barth's statement on Baptism, since it has diverted attention from the total problem of the meaning of Christian initiation to what is after all only one, though a major one, of its aspects. Again, the debate has sometimes been conducted as though the choice were between a sacramentalist conception of the Christian faith and an evangelical one<sup>(4)</sup>. The matter actually before us is rather the incorporation of an adequate and integrated doctrine of Christian initiation into a truly evangelical theology. Barth has suggested<sup>(5)</sup> that the "unmistakable disorder of our baptismal practice" is a sign that there is a "disorder in the sociological

(1) e.g. Ac.16:15; (καὶ ὁ οἶκος αὐτῆς)  
 18:8; (σὺν ὅλῳ τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ).  
 I Cor. 1:16; ἔβαπτισά δὲ καὶ τὸν Στεφάνου οἶκον).  
 Ac.16:33; (ἔβαπτισθῆναι αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ αὐτοῦ).

(2) He refers to the usual passages in Origen: Ep. ad Rom. 5, 9, and Cyprian: Ep. 64, 2f.

(3) Op. cit. P.41.

(4) c.f. G. W. Bromley: "Baptism and the Anglican Reformers", p.222.

(5) Op. cit., p.53.

structure of our Church". Dom Gregory Dix shows a profounder insight when he declares that changes in liturgical structure express themselves in the character of the Christian living of the people who experience those changes, and he argues that it can be shown that "the ritual change can always be historically detected before the social<sup>(1)</sup> one". His examples are convincing: (1) the relation between the non-communicant eucharistic piety in the later 4th Century and the weaknesses of the Christian life of the Dark Ages; and (2) the relation between certain tendencies in religious piety in the later Mediaeval period and the development of post-Renaissance individualism. Has there been a similar process at work in the disintegration of the liturgical and theological structure of the sacrament of Christian initiation which is reflected in corresponding weaknesses in the character of the Church's life? There is prevalent a defective sense of the importance of the sacrament of Baptism in the Christian life on the part of many laymen in the Church, accompanied by certain weaknesses in expression, particularly in a Christian sense of vocation<sup>(2)</sup>. These two matters are not unrelated. Understanding of the full meaning of the sacrament of Christian initiation, and appreciation of the meaning of Christian vocation, belong together. The baptismal experience of our Lord is an attestation of that fact. More has perhaps been made of this connection in Anglican and Roman Catholic than in Presbyterian theology.<sup>(3)</sup> But the

(1) "The Shape of the Liturgy", preface, p.XII.

(2) c.f. Wotherspoon's criticism in "Religious Values in the Sacraments", p.178-9.

(3) Notably by L. S. Thornton: "The Common Life in the Body of Christ", as well as in his "Confirmation; its Place in the Baptismal Mystery".

implications for Christian nurture are important, and need to be recovered<sup>(1)</sup>. It may well be that, just as there has been a real impoverishment of Reformed worship resulting from an extreme reaction against the abuses of the Roman Catholic Church<sup>(2)</sup>, as well as from the liturgical inexpertness of certain of the Reformers, notably, perhaps, Luther and Zwingli<sup>(3)</sup>, so the controversial atmosphere in which much of the Reformation literature on the sacraments was produced,<sup>(4)</sup> has led to a corresponding impoverishment in the sacramental life of the Reformed Churches. The suggestion is not, naturally, that there should be a reversion to a sacramental theology from which Protestantism has revolted. What is urged is that there is needed a renewed attempt to view the sacramental basis of Christian initiation in its organic wholeness, in the light of the Word and the response to it in liturgy, in the interest of promoting a truly Catholic and Reformed doctrine of Christian nurture.

- (1) See below: Section on "The Education of the Worshipping Life".
- (2) c.f. Hislop: "Our Heritage in Public Worship", p.196-7, on the impoverishment of Reformed worship.
- (3) c.f. Maxwell: "Outline of Christian Worship", p.72: "The most serious defect lay in the fact that the Continental Reformers were without any profound historical knowledge of the origins and principles of worship". c.f. p.87.
- (4) c.f. e.g. References in the "Letter to the Reader", in Calvin's "Catechism of the Church of Geneva", tr. J. K. S. Reid, p.88. Also Inst. IV, 19, 8; which would lead one to wish to qualify, though not to question, the statement of the late Professor D. M. Baillie that "the Reformed (Calvinist) view of Baptism makes room excellently for a doctrine of confirmation, whether it is a sacrament or not." "The Theology of the Sacraments", p.90, note.

With this in view, attention may be drawn to a point mentioned earlier, before we proceed to examine one of the principal "motifs" or "moments" of Christian initiation. It is natural that those who belong to a branch of the Church which magnifies the independent authority of ecclesiastical tradition should seek also to emphasize the independent authority of liturgical tradition. And here again one would not wish to call in question the fundamental truth underlying the Reformed principle of Sola Scriptura. But a Reformed theology, too, must have its doctrine of the authority of tradition; and it cannot, I think, be denied that there is one place where the above principle requires qualification, and where the independent witness of liturgical tradition and practice must be allowed full play, namely, the period before the New Testament writings acquired full canonical authority, and also the period before these documents were actually composed. One is far from accepting the line of historical interpretation proposed by Dom Gregory Dix in the elaboration of his sacramental theology. But his statement deserves serious consideration that "the liturgical tradition can be shown to be older in some of its main elements than the New Testament Scriptures, and --- down to the end of the second century, at least, it was regarded as having an 'Apostolic' authority of its own independently of them". (1)

(1) "The Theology of Confirmation in Relation to Baptism", p.10. c.f. "The Shape of the Liturgy", Chap. I, p.3: "It is important for the understanding of the whole future history of the liturgy to grasp the fact that eucharistic worship from the outset was not based on Scripture at all, whether of the Old or New Testament, but solely on tradition" (the "paradosis of practice"). p.3. He argues in a footnote that "this final authority of custom over the liturgy continued down to the sixteenth century ----."



If this argument can be sustained, it has far-reaching implications for sacramental theology. There is certainly a gap, amounting sometimes to several decades, between these events of the "sacred history" and the recording of them. The Form Geschichte school of criticism has shown how doctrinal interpretation and elaboration had become operative during that interval. In the case of liturgical and sacramental practice, there is an unbroken continuity dating right from the momentous sacramental experiences of the Last Supper and of Pentecost. This fact, especially when the conservative tendency of corporate worship is borne in mind, is enough to give the earliest liturgical tradition a distinctive authority. The New Testament documents do not provide more than allusive and incidental references to the liturgical practices of the Apostolic Church. It was taken for granted that these were known. Guidance on these matters was provided by the common "paradosis of practice", which was handed down continuously from the first, and which governed the liturgical practice of the growing Church.

### What is Baptism?

We may begin with the affirmation that Christianity is a sacramental religion. (1) This is attested by the character of many of the New Testament documents, and by the place given to the sacraments in the liturgical life of the primitive Church. It is

(1) c.f. Rawlinson: "Christian Initiation", p.8: "The Christianity of history is a sacramental religion"; and Wotherspoon: "Religious Values in the Sacraments", p.VI: "--- sacramentalism is both scriptural and primitive".

perhaps less evident in the case of Baptism, but the work of Selwyn<sup>(1)</sup>, Carrington<sup>(2)</sup>, and other scholars, has indicated the extent to which baptismal teaching underlies the Pauline and other epistles, and goes far to justify the claim that "--- Baptism belongs to almost every page of the New Testament"<sup>(3)</sup>. Whatever may be thought of the contribution to the total understanding of the Christian faith of those who have emphasized the unmediated gift of the Spirit, the renunciation of sacramental practice in the life of the Church cannot be supported by historical appeal to the Community which produced the New Testament. The tendency, moreover, widespread in the Church, to depreciate the full significance of the sacrament of Baptism, is one that cannot be justified either from Scripture or by reference to the worship of the primitive Church.

When one approaches the New Testament with a view to elucidating the meaning of Baptism, the first impression is its strong Christocentric reference. There are several distinct aspects of this, each of which is fundamental to the theology of Baptism, and to an appreciation of the historical development of the baptismal liturgy:-

(a) The objectivity of the New Testament interpretation of Baptism. Attention has been drawn to this by a number of

- (1) "Commentary on I Peter"; Essay II.
- (2) "The Primitive Christian Catechism".
- (3) "Interim Report" (1955), p.5.

scholars, and the generalization can be sustained that "the New Testament is not interested so much in the outward rite as in what stands behind the rite; not so much in the subjective experience of the baptized as in the death and resurrection of the Christ; and therefore it is not interested in the human minister but in the One into whose Name we are baptized".<sup>(1)</sup> The act of God in Christ is what lies behind the sacrament (i.e. the whole content of the Kerygma), and the primary accent is upon this rather than upon the human response. Indeed, those who argue in favour of the practice of infant Baptism, and insist that it has Scriptural authority, find a strong line of justification in the contrast between the essential passivity of the subject in Baptism (even in adult Baptism), and the activity required in participation in the Lord's Supper.<sup>(2)</sup> It is probably right to maintain, from an examination of the crucial baptismal passages,<sup>(3)</sup> as well as from the general tendency of its teaching regarding Baptism, that this sacrament in the New Testament is represented fundamentally as the

(1) T. F. Torrance: Art. in "Canadian Journal of Theology", July, 1956, Vol. II, No. 3, p.130.

(2) c.f. Cullmann: op. cit., p.31: "an unambiguous passive", with reference to Ac. 2:41.

c.f. also Art. "Baptême", in "Vocabulaire Biblique": "On ne baptise pas soi-même; on est toujours baptise par un autre". (The accuracy of this declaration would be contested by Thornton, who believes that early Christian Baptism, like Jewish proselyte baptism, was self-administered. See Lampe's criticism of his position regarding confirmation, discussed later; and c.f. the argument against infant participation in the Eucharist in "Interim Report", (1955), p.28.

rite through which the individual, once-for-all "is set" by God within the New Israel, the Body of Christ, His Church. This is the burden of Cullmann's argument, in opposition to Barth's insistence on active "cognitio salutis" as the prerequisite of Baptism. (1) It is not easy to deny the force of Cullmann's argument at this point. (2)

(b) The Baptism of Jesus by John was associated in the mind of the Church from the first with the Christian meaning of Baptism. Most, if not all, of the works consulted make much of this fact, whatever the conclusions drawn from it. (It is made almost the foundation stone of the Roman Catholic and the Anglo-Catholic doctrine of confirmation.) The relation of John's Baptism to Jewish proselyte baptism on the one hand, and to Christian Baptism on the other, is a problem by itself; but there is substantial testimony that the Church in the first centuries understood the meaning of the Christian sacrament of initiation in the light of its teaching about our Lord's own Baptism. (3) This was, indeed, inevitable. Johannine Baptism differed, it is true, from the later Christian sacrament in important respects. It was not Baptism "in the Name" of the Messiah; nor was it associated with the gift of the Spirit. (4) Flemington,

- (1) "The Teaching of the Church regarding Baptism", p.27: "In Baptism we have to do not with the causa but with the cognitio salutis;" quoting from Calvin, "Institutes" IV, 15, 2.
- (2) Op. Cit., Chapter 2, on "Baptism as acceptance into the Body of Christ".
- (3) c.f. the statement of J. G. Davies: "The Spirit, The Church, and The Sacraments", p.97, quoted in "Interim Report (1956) p.11: "--- the early Fathers rested the institution of Baptism not so much upon the logion at the end of Matthew as upon the Baptism of Christ Himself".
- (4) c.f. Ac. 8: 18-24.

making use of H. W. Robinson's understanding of Old Testament prophetic symbolism, is of the opinion that "the baptism of John may be understood as an extension of the symbolic actions of the prophets" -- an adaptation of the tebilah rite of purification for proselytes -- where the prophetic act was thought of not only as "expressive of", but also in some way as "effecting", the divine purpose. (1) John himself regarded his rite as anticipatory of the Messianic Baptism "with the Holy Ghost, and with fire". (2)

(1) John's Baptism was a βαπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν. (3) Jesus submitted to it "to fulfil all righteousness". (4)

The fact that Jesus accepted Baptism at the hands of John is of crucial significance for the interpretation of the Christian sacrament, especially when taken in conjunction with the fact that this inaugurated our Lord's ministry and was therefore part of the nexus of salvation-events that led up to the crucifixion and resurrection. Jesus' identification of Himself with a Baptism for forgiveness of sins thus provided a key to the Church's understanding of one aspect of the sacrament by which individuals were initiated into its membership. Christian Baptism thus has, as one of its constituent elements, a reference to the past, to purification or cleansing, to the forgiveness of sins, to identification with Christ in the death of the

(1) Flemington, "New Testament Doctrine of Baptism", p.20 ff.

(2) Mt. 3: 11, and parallels.

(3) Mk. 1: 4.

(4) Mt. 3: 15.

"old man" with his deeds. (1)

(ii) But the Baptism of Jesus by John is associated also with the divine recognition of Him as  $\delta \ \rho \acute{\alpha} \sigma \ \delta \ \acute{\alpha} \gamma \kappa \tau \eta \gamma \tau \acute{\omicron} \varsigma$  and with the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Him. (2) This second aspect or "motif" (3) of our Lord's Baptism has also far-reaching implications for the Christocentric interpretation of Christian Baptism, and for the development of the liturgical "shape" or structure of the later rite. The reference here is to the future. The Baptism of Jesus is intimately linked with His acceptance of His vocation as Messiah, and, as the narrative immediately following clearly shows, with the thought of the Suffering Servant and with the inevitability of His death. When it is recalled that we are dependent for much of the substance of the baptismal narrative and the temptation upon Christ's own disclosure to the twelve, this conviction is strengthened. The effect of the recognition of the two-fold emphasis of our Lord's Baptism (both aspects being, however, inseparably related to each other) upon the sacramental theology and practice of the Church has been profound. It is, perhaps, the fundamental source of the remarkable liturgical elaboration that took place in later centuries in the baptismal rite, in the Western Church. It may be claimed by those who seek to magnify confirmation, that the dual emphasis of of Christian Baptism, based upon the two-fold reference of the

(1) Rom. 6:3: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" c.f. vs. 6: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed ----."

(2) Mk. 1:10.

(3) Separated from the other by Mark's characteristic

Baptism of Jesus, was present in the mind of the Church, in its essentials, from the earliest period.<sup>(1)</sup> The statement of Lampe that "there is no theological duality in the New Testament or sub-Apostolic doctrine of Baptism", therefore, requires some modification;<sup>(2)</sup> though he is right in denying "a dichotomy in the modes of the Spirit's operation"<sup>(3)</sup> in Baptism and confirmation. At all events, it is apparent that the conception of Baptism as the rite of initiation into the Body of Christ, possessing the composite character of forgiveness for past sins and the endowment of the Christian for vocation through the gift of the Holy Spirit, is both "represented" in the baptismal experience of our Lord, and is found in the earliest formulations of baptismal teaching. There are actually many distinct "motifs" in Christian Baptism.

(c) Christian Baptism has reference not only to the Cross and the Resurrection, but to the Incarnation as well. This fact, it has been pointed out,<sup>(4)</sup> is prominent in the thought of

- (1) c.f. Ac. 2:38: "Repent, and be baptized --- and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost", may be so interpreted.
- (2) Lampe: Art. "Theological Issues in the Baptism-Confirmation Controversy", in "The Modern Churchman", July 1957; p.27.
- (3) op. cit., p.22 -- maintained by Mason, and later by Dix, L. S. Thornton, and others.
- (4) cf. Interim Report (1956), p.34-35: "Following Irenaeus and others he (Calvin) laid emphasis upon the whole obedience of Jesus from His birth to His crucifixion as the ground of our reconciliation and sanctification. Hence Christ's life at every stage -- birth, growth and maturity -- has vicarious and redeeming significance for us. 'Christ was sanctified from earliest infancy, that He might sanctify His elect in Himself at any age, without distinction. ----- If in Christ we have a perfect pattern of all the graces which God bestows on all His children, in this instance we have a proof that the age of infancy is not incapable of receiving sanctification'." (Calvin: "Institutes", IV, 16.18. c.f. what is said here, p.35 about Augustine finding the ground of Baptism in the birth of Christ.

Irenaeus and is taken up later by Calvin, and it has, as will be argued, very far-reaching consequences for Christian nurture.

"If the miraculous birth of the infant Jesus is the sign of the wonderful way in which the love of God begins with our humanity, bringing forth out of it a new life born of the Spirit, learning obedience and growing in wisdom and grace, then is it not in sacramental likeness to the birth and growing life of Jesus, as well as to His death and resurrection, that infant Baptism is to be understood as the sign of the way God deals with us? On the ground of what He has already done for us in Christ He quickens us by His Spirit and gives us to learn obedience, growing in wisdom and grace, until we grow up into the full stature of the manhood of Christ."<sup>(1)</sup> The implications of the reference of Baptism to the Incarnation will be developed later,<sup>(2)</sup> and they need not detain us now. The point which should be emphasized is that the Christ into whose Body the individual is incorporated as a member, through the sacrament of Baptism, is the totus Christus of Christian faith.

(d) Underlying the thought of the Baptism of the individual there is in the mind of the early Church the profound conception of the corporate Baptism of the whole Church in the redemptive passion of the Christ. "It is because the Church has been thus baptized that it baptizes others."<sup>(3)</sup> This point can only receive brief mention, but it is one aspect of the Christocentric character of Baptism, and it is involved in the argument in favour of the inclusion of infants in Baptism.<sup>(4)</sup>

(1) Torrance, op. cit. p.131

(2) In the section on "The Education of the Worshipping Life".

(3) "Interim Report" (1956), p.28, referring to the theological background of the "Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus".

(4) Interim Report (1955) p.28.



### Who are eligible for Baptism?

Discussion of this question should, perhaps, be included at this point, since it not only introduces the problem of the relation of faith to the baptismal event, and is therefore part of the answer to the larger question of the meaning of Christian initiation, but it also helps to define the status of childhood within the Church, a matter of some moment for Christian nurture.

One of the most remarkable circumstances in the present theological renaissance is the fact that the two theologians who have done most for the recovery for the Church of the insights of the Reformation, have felt themselves compelled to depart from the position held by the Reformers on the subject of infant Baptism. On this issue Barth and Brunner, holding diverse opinions, as we have seen, on the anthropological question, are in general agreement. Brunner commits himself to the statement that "the contemporary practice of infant Baptism can hardly be regarded as anything short of scandalous," in view of the great number of "correctly baptized persons" who have been completely alienated from the Church. (1) No doubt Brunner forgets that the same situation might occur, and actually does occur, among persons "correctly baptized" in adulthood, though it may be argued that the Church is in a better position, in the case of an adult, to satisfy itself whether it is God's will that a particular person should be baptized. Brunner takes his stand, however, on the position that Baptism is a "bi-frontal happening", that it is "man's yes to God,

(1) "The Divine-Human Encounter", p.183.

and God's yes to man", (1) and that it is an unjustifiable procedure to separate the promise of God and the response of man in faith. He is at pains to adhere to the Reformation principle: "nullum sacramentum sine fide", and is to some extent successful in showing that the Reformers, in insisting on the validity of a pedobaptist position, found themselves in conflict with the principle of "sola fide". Luther took refuge in a doctrine of infantile faith, (2) which is logical enough if the capacity of the infant to receive, efficaciously, the gifts of the Holy Spirit be conceded, though the objection is a serious one that this is not the faith presumed in New Testament Baptism. Calvin, (3) who allowed the validity of this doctrine, strengthened it by his emphasis on the Hebraic idea of the corporate character of the covenantal relationship, and of the "faith of the household". Brunner, however, is quite right in pointing out that Luther's conception of faith at this point is not what the New Testament means by faith, and that the idea of covenantal corporeity, undoubtedly present in the New Testament, was not intended to be a substitute for faith as an individual personal response. He further declares that the sacramental rite of confirmation, "which could not be Biblically grounded", was developed in the Western Church as a device for recovering the "missing factor" of responsible faith, thus splitting New Testament Baptism into two parts, an objective rite of infant Baptism and a subjective rite of personal appropriation (4). His argument at this point fails to

(1) Op. Cit., p.182.

(2) Discussed by Barth: op. cit. p.46

(3) "Institutes", IV, 16, 20. His thought at this point is similar to that of "Interim Report" (1955) p.25: "The capacity for receiving Christ must never be judged in terms of the receiver but in terms of Christ the Giver who gives Himself to us."

(4) Brunner, op. cit. p.181.

carry conviction, since the Reformers, while they insisted strongly on infant Baptism, nevertheless attached Confirmation as a separate rite, maintaining that the benefits of the sacrament were all secured in infant Baptism. (1)

G. W. H. Lampe has drawn attention to the intimate connection which the doctrine of grace has with the meaning of Baptism (2); and it is the merit of Brunner, and of Barth, to have focussed the mind of the Church on the question of the relation of an evangelical doctrine of divine grace to the human factor of personal appropriation in the total meaning of the sacramental action. Brunner's criticism of the Roman doctrine is right in pointing out that here man is made the object of the divine act, and that "grace is applied in a way that takes no account of the baptized as a subject". (3) One must agree with the insistence that Baptism is a two-sided happening, and that "personal correspondence" is involved between the divine and the human factors. It is right to say that "man, too, acts in Baptism", and that "Baptism is not merely a gift to man, but also an active receiving and confession on the part of man". One welcomes this emphasis, all the more since it is possible to detect an occasional over-insistence on the utter passivity of the subject at Baptism, (4) and an over-accentuation of

(1) Calvin, "Institutes", IV, 19, 8.

(2) Art. in "The Modern Churchman", July, 1957.

(3) Op. Cit., p.179.

(4) e.g. Interim Report, (1955) p.18, where the argument is put forward that the sacrament of Baptism is not self-administered in token of the fact that we come to God as "helpless infants". c.f. Neville Clark: "An Approach to the Theology of the Sacraments", p.33: "Baptism means the death of the self as a discrete individual."

the communal character of the Church at the expense of the individuality of the believer. The need for maintaining the paradoxical tension between individuality and incorporation which we have already encountered in the discussion of the doctrine of man, is thus seen to have a direct bearing on the question of Christian initiation, and of the nature of the Church into which the initiate is received.

Similarly, some aspects of Barth's examination of the theological foundations of infant Baptism may be accepted without difficulty. He discusses the question with reference to the doctrine of man which underlies it. The critical baptismal passages in Pauline thought are found to be anthropological statements. (1) What happens in Baptism is "man's rebirth to new life in the age to come". (2) "These things a man becomes because he believes in Christ". This leads to Barth's general definition of the nature of Baptism as "the representation of the sacred history which comes to pass between God and man in Jesus Christ". (3) Barth turns the edge of Mt. 28:19 and Dominical institution by declaring that "the Church did not invent Baptism". (4) Christ instituted (eingesetzt) Baptism by "putting Himself into the representation that prefigured these things". The significance for sacramental theology of the Baptism of Jesus by John is thus made a prominent part of Barth's thought on the subject. Christian Baptism is a repetition ( *μίμνησιν* ) of Christ's own Baptism, and by this is meant the

(1) Rom. 6:1 ff.; II Cor. 5:17; etc.

(2) Op. Cit., p.12.

(3) Op. Cit., p.15.

(4) Op. cit., p.17.

Baptism which Christ "had to be baptized with", (1) namely His death, of which the Baptism in Jordan was a prefiguration. (Gestalt). Christian Baptism thus becomes "the acted parable of His death." (2) Here we have the doctrine of the One Baptism -- "Christ is the Primary and True Baptizer" -- (3) symbolized in the once-for-all (  $\epsilon\phi\lambda\theta\alpha\varsigma$  ) character of Christian Baptism. (4) Barth follows Luther in affirming the efficacy of the opus operatum of Christ Himself, over against the opus operatum of the correctly administered rite, (5) and declares that Baptism does not have the authority of an indispensable means (necessitas medi), but simply that of a Dominical command (necessitas praecepti). The distinction is a necessary one if Baptism is to be seen in the context of a truly evangelical faith. Christ is greater than His sacraments, and "where the Gospel is, there is Baptism". (6) It is possible so to overstate this principle as to repudiate the sacramental element in Christianity altogether. Barth is careful not to do this. "The Protestant Church rightly held that the Church must adhere to the command and promise of the Lord, even though being deprived of Baptism cannot shut a man out of the Kingdom." (7) Barth affirms

(1) Lk. 12:50.

(2) Op. Cit. p.18.

(3) c.f. op. cit., p.17 and p.19.

(4) c.f. op. cit., p.64: "The glory of Baptism among all the parts of the Church's proclamation is its 'once-for-all-ness'. For Jesus Christ died once for our sins and awakened once from the dead for our justification."

(5) Op. cit. p.21.

(6) Luther, quoted by Barth, op. cit., p.25. cf. Calvin, "Institutes", IV, 15, 20. c.f. Flemington, op. cit. p.123: Baptism is the Kerygma in action.

(7) Op. cit. p.25: c.f. Neville Clark, op. cit. on Baptism at the point of death.

that "all the activities of the Church are in their way sacramental", (1) and that while the sacrament is not the cause, but only the symbol, of our redemption, "the Word and Work of Christ have a sacramental dimension and form". (Gestalt)(2) Baptism is, therefore, "a genuine happening", and the sacramental emphasis of Rome and of the Eastern Church -- as well as of the Reformed faith at its best -- is not an anachronistic survival of Judaic priestly religion, but an inseparable part of Biblical Christianity. Barth shows profound insight where he says that "Baptism owes its radiance to the Kabod Yahweh, the  $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$  τοῦ Θεοῦ and should in turn serve this", and speaks of the need of recovering for the Church its meaning as a glorifying of God and as a moment in His Self-revelation(3) (of which the human, cognitive counterpart is  $\alpha\omega\tau\iota\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$  ).(4) His thought has a further anthropological reference where he criticizes the tendency of Reformed teaching (Calvin excepted) to concentrate too much on the significance of Baptism for the individual, a survival into modern Protestantism of the anthropological accents of the Renaissance. Over against this Barth places Baptism in its true liturgical setting at the heart of the corporate worship of the Church.(5)

Where it is necessary to take issue with the Sacramental

(1) Op. cit., p.16.

(2) Op. cit., p.28. c.f. Whale: "Christian Doctrine": "Christ is Himself the Supreme Sacrament".

(3) Op. cit., p.31.

(4) c.f. Heb. 6:4; 10:32.

(5) Op. cit., p.32.

theology of Barth (and of Brunner) is at the point of his understanding of the way in which the faith of the subject is involved in Baptism. It would be our contention that Barth's understanding of the meaning of Christian initiation does not do justice to the full content of the "Baptisma" of the New Testament; that in the interests of a theory of "believer's Baptism" which is contrary to the thought of all the Reformers, he minimizes the weight of the evidence of Scriptural passages which is against it<sup>(1)</sup>; and finally, that if Baptism is "a genuine happening", in which the gift of the Spirit is conferred and the benefit of Christ applied to the candidate, Barth's thought compels us to a conclusion wherein a non-Scriptural cleavage is introduced into the Christian home, the participation of the child of Christian parents in the worship and life of the Church is reduced to that of an interested spectator, and the rich meaning of prayer and communion with God are denied him. The understanding of the nature of early Christian nurture is radically altered, and altered disastrously in a moment for which the New Testament provides no real foundation.

Barth's argument is briefly that faith in the New Testament sense involves cognitio of the salvation events which are set forth in Baptism; that the two sacraments are at one in this requirement; that to Baptism there belongs therefore "the responsible willingness and readiness of the baptized person to receive the promise of the grace directed towards him";<sup>(2)</sup> that

(1) E.g. op. cit., p.42: "Baptism" is in the New Testament in every case the indispensable answer to an unavoidable question by a man who has come to faith"; and: "In the New Testament one is not brought to Baptism, one comes to it". 42. See also his treatment, p.44, of Ac. 16:15; 18:8; I Cor. 1:16, as "a thin thread to which one may perhaps hold ---- for a proof of infant Baptism".

(2) Op. cit., p.40.

the Dominical command to "make disciples ( μαθητεύειν ) --- baptizing them ----" "is certainly no action that can be completed without the responsible decision of the one concerned";<sup>(1)</sup> that the analogy of Christian Baptism with Jewish circumcision performed in infancy breaks down, because, according to Barth, circumcision refers merely to natural birth, and "is the sign of the election of the holy lineage of Israel, which with the birth of the Messiah achieved its goal";<sup>(2)</sup> and that, although he acknowledges that Baptism is called the "spiritual circumcision",<sup>(3)</sup> "from this it nowhere follows that Baptism like circumcision is to be carried out on a babe". The sayings of Jesus which appear favourable to infant Baptism, Barth explains as simply an indication that "His Kingdom is wider than his Church";<sup>(4)</sup> and the Declaration of Peter in Acts 2:39: "The promise is to you and to your children", which would seem to place children within the sphere of the covenanted mercies associated with the "Name" of Christ, is made "to bear witness to the universality in time" of the divine promise, just as Mt. 28:19 is made to bear witness to its "universality in space". Barth contends that "neither by exegesis nor from the nature of the case can it be established that the baptized person can be a merely passive instrument-----"<sup>(5)</sup> The baptized is an active partner;

(1) Op. Cit., p.43

(2) Op. Cit., p.43

(3) Col. 2:11 f.

(4) As he does in the case of similar Pauline statements: e.g. I Cor. 7:14 -- children of Christians are "holy"; op. cit., p.43.

(5) Op. Cit., p.41.



no 'infans' can be such a person. He therefore concludes that "Baptism without the willingness and readiness of the baptized is true, effectual and effective Baptism, but it is not correct"; and he speaks of infant Baptism elsewhere as "arbitrary and despotic" and as "clouded"(1) Baptism.

It is important to make clear that it is the incomplete-ness of infant Baptism that is the real object of Barth's attack, and that when this point is recognized there can be agreement with a substantial part of his argument, which in essence is that an "infans" cannot be made the subject of all that the New Testament means by "Baptisma", which includes confession with the mouth and belief in the heart.(2) One is compelled to admit that infant Baptism, taken by itself, lacks an indispensable constituent of adult Baptism as practised by the primitive Church, namely, the personal articulation of faith, including "understanding" of the sacred events which constitute the Church as the Body of Christ into which he is being received, and the "responsible willingness and readiness of the baptized person to receive the promise of the grace directed towards him and to be a party to the pledge of allegiance concerning the grateful service demanded of him." Barth admits that "the sacrament does not redeem";(3) he acknowledges the element of passivity in Baptism in the statement that it is "no more the cause of our redemption than is our faith",(4) and

(1) Op. cit., p.40.

(2) c.f. Rom. 10:9-10.

(3) Op. Cit., p.28.

(4) Op. cit., p.27.

that the heart of its meaning in relation to the candidate is that there is given to him the divine Promise ---- and "he has received a Lord", (1) His major objection is that the action of becoming a disciple is not one that can be completed without the responsible decision of the one concerned. He therefore argues that infant Baptism cannot be considered to be more than a "half-sacrament"; that it does not conform to the norm of New Testament Baptism; and that by retaining its present practice the Church has been forced to resort to the recognition of a "half-sacrament" of confirmation to make up the deficiency, (2) which has no authorization in Scripture. The Barthian alternative is to insist on the deferment of Baptism until the total event of Christian initiation can occur within a single ceremony. For Barth the equation, instead of reading "(Infant) Baptism + confirmation = Christian initiation", reads: (Adult) Baptism = Christian initiation (with an appended ceremony of formal admission to the Lord's Supper, marking the completion of the instruction given by the Church, (3)

Barth in one place (4) complains that men have in general concentrated too much on the significance of Baptism for the individual. With this opinion one would agree, but would add that Barth, in the trend of some of his arguments, places himself within the scope of its indictment. He deplores the displacement of Baptism from its true position at the heart of the Church's

(1) Op. Cit., p.32 and p.33.

(2) Op. cit., p.48.

(3) c.f. Op. cit., p.48.

(4) Op. cit., p.31.

liturgical life; but it would not be unfair to claim that the legitimization of such practices as private Baptism have received some support from an interpretation of the sacrament as concerned primarily with the individual confession of faith, and with its subjective characteristics. Let it be repeated that the sacrament is fundamentally God's action. It concerns "the Mystery of Christ". The Christocentric reference cannot ultimately be dissociated from the act of personal appropriation through faith, but to over-accentuate the latter at the expense of the divine initiative and priority is to make the meaning and efficacy of the sacrament depend upon man and not upon God. This theological *ὕστερον πρότερον* seems at times to be the logic of Barth's position in regard to infant Baptism, although he admits that the foundation of Christian Baptism is the "General Baptism" of Christ Himself. (1) It may be that, at this point, malgré lui, Barth's theology retains some of the vestiges of mediaeval anthropology from which he sought to free the Church. The emphatic nature of Barth's repudiation of the position on Baptism accepted by the Reformers is partly, no doubt, to be explained by the need to avoid a mechanistic conception of the operation of divine grace in the sacrament; partly, it is a result of the crisis confronting German Protestantism.

It may be claimed that Barth does not preserve the

(1) C.F. Cullmann, op. cit., p.20: "The General Baptism is offered in entire independence of the decision of faith and understanding of those who benefit from it." Neville Clark, Op. cit. p.31, is critical of Cullmann's "unguarded equation of Christ's Baptism with Christ's death."

true Biblical sequence of spiritual events which are the prelude to Christian initiation. In spite of his insistence that sound Scriptural exegesis is the basis of dogmatics, his exegesis<sup>(1)</sup> of some of the crucial New Testament passages, especially those having to do with the relation between Jewish περιτομή ἐν σαρκί<sup>(2)</sup> and the περιτομή τοῦ Χριστοῦ<sup>(3)</sup> in Christian Baptism which superseded it, has been shown by Cullmann's careful examination of these passages to be seriously at fault.<sup>(4)</sup> One of the surprising things in Barth's treatment of Baptism is that, while he recognizes the importance of the conception of Christian Baptism as "spiritual circumcision" in the Pauline epistles, he devotes so little attention to the objection it raises to his whole point of view.<sup>(5)</sup> Moreover, it is not only in terms of the evidence of New Testament practice (some particulars of which are uncertain, that Barth's thought must be judged, but also in the light of the prevailing New Testament doctrine of Baptism. And here he must be declared to have departed from the predominant New Testament emphasis in the all-important role which he assigns to the faith of the candidate

(1) Op. cit., p.43 f.

(2) Rom. 2:28 and 29.

(3) Col. 2:11.

(4) Op. cit., p.56-63.

(5) "It is true that Baptism is in Col. 2:11 f. called the circumcision of Christ which we may enter upon instead of the Israelite circumcision, but from this it noways follows that Baptism like circumcision is to be carried out on a babe. Circumcision refers to natural birth . . . ." Op. cit. p.43. The latter statement is contested by Cullmann, who points out that Jewish circumcision, rightly understood as "of the heart", "leads directly over into Christian Baptism". Op. cit. p.58-59.

at the moment of, and as the universal prerequisite, of Baptism. Barth's position has been influenced by the fact that the specific New Testament instances concern adult Baptism. But it is equally true to evangelical Christianity to say that the Holy Spirit awakens faith through the effective working of the sacrament in the life of the Christian, as to say that faith is the prerequisite of Baptism.

Cullmann's affirmation that the complete Baptismal event is composed of two things: (a) what happens at the moment when the Baptismal rite takes place, and (b) what results from Baptism, "is determined by it, and extends through the whole life of the person baptized", (1) represents a fundamental part of our argument. A sacrament is both event and process. (2) Sacramental action requires time for its completion. The Christian "must become what he is." (3) It is our contention that Barth confuses these two aspects of the sacrament, though he does not deny that the distinction must be made. If infant Baptism be accepted as tenable, the process of *τελείωσις* (4) and *ἁγιασμός*, (5) regarded in the Pauline and other epistles as closely associated with the sacrament of Baptism, must be given full value.

It has been mentioned earlier that the sacrament of

(1) Op. cit., p.47.

(2) c.f. The position adopted in the philosophy of A. N. Whitehead.

(3) c.f. Dix, op. cit. p.6. C.f. p.30.

(4) c.f. Eph. 4:13; Heb. 5:14. (Mt. 5:48; James 3:2).

(5) c.f. Heb. 6:4; 10:32; Eph. 1:18.

Christian initiation has a strong anthropological reference. "Baptism", says Barth, "is a picture in which man, it is true, is not the most important figure, but is certainly the second most important".<sup>(1)</sup> Included in its total meaning is a Gestalt of what the Christian faith affirms about man, (a) that the ~~Xp~~<sup>Xp</sup>~~κτ~~<sup>κτ</sup>~~ύρ~~<sup>ύρ</sup> of his divine origin is upon him, and that he is "stamped as God's property";<sup>(2)</sup> (b) that his actual existence is one of estrangement from his true nature and destiny, and that he is involved in a condition of sinfulness; and (c) that God has acted on his behalf in the redemptive events culminating in the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus the Christ, and in the birth of his Church. It is not accidental, therefore, that there should be traceable in the Baptismal mystery a two-fold aspect, corresponding to the two-fold character of the Christian understanding of man noted by Brunner,<sup>(3)</sup> an indicative and an imperative aspect. The two aspects of Christian Baptism which are declared to the person baptized, are given by Cullmann, as follows:--

- (1) You have been made the object of salvation;
- (2) Prove it now true: i.e. (Rom. 6:1 ff.) believe on the fact of salvation.<sup>(4)</sup>

In a somewhat different context, Dom Gregory Dix refers to the paradoxical character of a "divine salvation given from within time" and "applied to individual souls at Christian initiation".

- (1) Op. cit., p.14
- (2) A phrase recollected from Bultmann in a Baptismal connection.
- (3) "Man in Revolt", P. 97: "the Indicative of Divine Love".
- (4) Op. cit. p.49.
- (5) Op. cit. p.6.

"The man is thereby, here and now, a son of God, who yet has to become so by subsequent human living. Here, from a very different theological angle, we have this same juxtaposition of the indicative and imperative moods which are contained within the full meaning of the sacrament.

Cullmann's point of view is that the primary fact in Baptism is its indicative character, that in this sacrament God makes known His salvation, and (i) on the basis of birth into a Christian home in the case of an infant, and (ii) on the basis of confession of faith in the case of a convert, incorporates the individual through Baptism into the Church which is the scene of His redemptive activity, the locus of the Holy Spirit's operation.<sup>(1)</sup> Thus Cullmann maintains that it is in the secondary reference of Baptism, to "what happens after the event", in the working out of the "incorporation" in the subsequent life of the baptized, that the faith of the initiate is most fundamentally engaged. "Faith essentially belongs to the second and not to the first act of the event of Baptism".<sup>(2)</sup> "The Church into which the baptized person is incorporated is not only the place where the Holy Spirit completes the miracle, but where He awakes faith." In the last analysis, one must make a personal judgment on the basis of the Biblical evidence. We believe that the above statement about the nature of the Church is valid, and if it is, it helps considerably to clarify the precise relation of nurture to Baptism. Christian

(1) Op. cit., p.55. C.f. "What happens in Baptism is -- clearly defined --- as a setting within the Body of Christ. (I Cor. 12: 13; Gal. 3:27-28) p.31. c.f. p.39

(2) Op. cit. p.52. c.f. p.54: "Baptism is the starting-point of faith".

nurture looks to the "perfection", or "improvement",<sup>(1)</sup> or "confirmation" of that Baptism in which the individual was "set", in infancy, "within the Body of Christ", and which has as its end that we "may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ".<sup>(2)</sup>

Baptism and the status of childhood within the Church.

While there is some truth in the assertion that "it is infant Baptism rather than confirmation which needs justification",<sup>(3)</sup> (a) because of the limited amount of New Testament evidence as to practice, and (b) because of the unquestionably dynamic element of personal appropriation present in the New Testament idea of Christian initiation, and while Karl Barth has performed a conspicuous service in forcing the tasks of its justification upon the Church; it must nevertheless be maintained that a doctrine that would confine Baptism to believing adults, and deny it to the children of Christian parents, runs counter both to the express teaching and attitude of our Lord Himself concerning childhood, and to the prevailing tendency of New Testament thought, particularly in its understanding of the corporateness of the household of faith. The relevance of a doctrine of Baptism to a theory of Christian nurture, in supplying a clear definition of the place and status of infancy and childhood within the Church, cannot be gainsaid, and in this connection the evidence assembled by the Interim Report (1955) of

(1) "Westminster Larger Catechism"; (Not the most adequate term).

(2) Eph. 4:15.

(3) "Confirmation Today", p.13; quoted by Dix, op. cit. p.31.



the Church of Scotland Special Commission on Baptism is of special value. (1)

Baptism, on any view, is the initiatory rite through which the individual is received into the membership of the Christian Church. If one were to accept the interpretation of the doctrine of Baptism offered by Barth, and by Brunner, the attitude to be adopted by the Church towards the child before "believer's Baptism" would be substantially different from that to be assumed towards a child baptized in infancy. Barth's attitude to the child before "believer's Baptism" is that he is "of the Kingdom", but not yet a member of the Body of Christ. Brunner, on not quite identical grounds, adopts a similar view. In this case, nurture becomes an evangelistic or missionary activity of the Church directed to the child as an unbeliever, or as not yet capable of faith or of cognitio salutis, a praeparatio evangelica for later conversion. From the point of view represented in the "Interim Report", on the other hand, as well as by such writers as Flemington(2), Marcel(3), Cullmann(4), Lampe(5), and others, the child is "discipled from the start" (i.e. from infant Baptism), a *μεμνημένος* in process of making effective in his own life the divine promise made in Baptism, and participating in the benefits of Christ. Early Christian nurture then becomes an integral part of the process of "regeneration". The nurtural con-

(1) p.19-29

(2) "The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism".

(3) "The Biblical Doctrine of Infant Baptism".

(4) "Baptism in the New Testament".

(5) "The Seal of the Spirit; a Study of the Doctrine of Baptism in the New Testament and the Fathers".

sequences of the two opposed views of Baptism are thus radically different. Inattention to this fact, and insecurity in regard to a doctrine of Baptism generally, has been a fruitful source of confusion in the exercise of the teaching ministry of the Church.

What is needed for a sound theory of Christian Nurture is an interpretation of Baptism which sets the child in a significant relationship to the whole Person and Work of Christ at every period of his growing life. Whatever may be said about the equivocal nature of the positive evidence for the Baptism of infants in the New Testament, "believer's Baptism" is essentially unbiblical in that it not only runs counter to the Hebraic anthropological conception of "corporateness", (1) but sets up a hiatus between the religious life of the child and that of the Christian parent, which is foreign both to the Old Testament and to the New Testament view of the organic character of religious experience and of the divinely instituted order of the family. What is needed is an interpretation which does justice to the fact, apparently ignored by Barth, that the child born and nurtured in a Christian home, related intimately to the life of the Christian *κοινωνία*, does not start from the same place as the child of pagan background or antecedents. Baptism in infancy is "a genuine happening", in that it attests the efficacious and "prevenient" operation of divine grace in the infant life. It is worth while to point out that adherence to a doctrine which allows infant Baptism logically

(1) Developed by H. W. Robinson; see chapter 1 above; and endorsed by Pedersen: "Israel", Vol. I, chapter 1. Dr. Mullenburg, however, expressed the view (in conversation) that the notion of "corporate personality" has been given exaggerated expression in O.T. study, and declares C. H. Dodd also to be of this opinion.

Cullmann, op. cit., p.43-46, makes much of "the solidarity of the family in Baptism". (p.45)

implies the need for clear differentiation between the person who implements the Baptismal act by subsequent confession of faith, and the person who is received into the Church as a convert from paganism. The important distinction is that in the former case the individual has been a "member" of the Body of Christ since Baptism. The rejection of infant Baptism carries the grave objection, from a nurtural point of view, of the loss of the reinforcement of the Christian family as a genuine means of grace, as distinct from its possible evangelistic influence. The continuity is broken between the Old Testament idea of the family as participating in the covenantal relationship, and the New Testament understanding of the family. This continuity is not repudiated anywhere in the New Testament. (1) Unless one is forced to reject it on doctrinal or Scriptural grounds, it is imperative that it be retained and recognized; for the Old Testament has itself a distinctive understanding and practice of religious nurture, in which the element of the solidarity of the believing family is central; (2) and this is fulfilled, surely, and not abrogated, in the New Covenant. Our position is not that "everyone born of Christian parents is born into the Christian Church", (3) or that the period between birth and infant Baptism is "theologically insignificant". (4) This would be virtually to deny to infant Baptism the character of a real and efficacious event. Bushnell's position almost amounts to this. But it is the more

(1) Grossman, quoted by Cullmann, op. cit., p.63.

(2) C.f. Deut. 6:7, and 20; Ps. 78: 1-7, etc.

(3) Ritschl, quoted by Barth, op. cit., p.44.

(4) A statement of a colleague.

necessary to insist on the Jewish antecedents of Christian nurture because certain modern writers, referred to in an earlier chapter, have sought to establish the solidarity of the Christian home on a horizontal basis, and impoverish their educational argument by their failure to appreciate the strong Biblical and theological support which is available. It is not enough to argue sociologically on the basis of the strong sense of the corporate family life which existed in Judaism; but if this can be seen to rest on theological considerations which are part of the heritage of the Christian faith, then the Old Testament becomes the ally of the New as a foundation for a doctrine of Christian nurture. (1)

A consequence of the rejection of infant Baptism, liable to be passed over by the theologian, is that Christian nurture, in the sense of the nurture of the Christian within the Body of Christ, begins after childhood is over. This not only runs counter to the whole idea of the covenantal relationship, (2) but is a disastrous impoverishment, in terms of Christian training. To treat a child as outside the Church, of which his parents are integrally a part, implies an important distinction from a teaching, as well as from a theological, point of view. And it is not unimportant that the matter be considered from a psychological point of view also. From the perspective of the child, it makes a substantial difference to

- (1) This is the position adopted in Sherrill's "Rise of Christian Education", chs. II and III; and in Phillips': "Transmission of the Faith", chs. II - IV.
- (2) Marcel: "Biblical Doctrine of Infant Baptism", Part II, esp. p.107, ff.

him, whether he is regarded as belonging to the household of faith, or as outside it. The crucial nature of the infant years, for the formation of personality, has been securely established in psychology. Indeed it may be affirmed that, in terms of the permanent establishment of the structure of the self, the emphasis has shifted in psychology from adolescence to infancy as the predominantly determinative period. The bearing of this on moral and religious nurture is recognized by such writers as Jean Piaget, (1) Rudolph Allers, (2) Basil Yeaxlee, (3) Louis J. Sherrill, (4) and others. The child's knowledge of the faith has not yet become significant, but his attitude toward God and his feeling about religion, are already in process of formation. Other aspects of this subject will be developed in the next chapter. Let it be said now that whether "Christianity is for adults" (5) or not, the worship of the pre-school child can be a profoundly significant experience. An important result of infant Baptism is that it sets the child securely within the context of the Church as the worshipping community. He worships as a member of the Christian fellowship, and not as a spectator, or as an outsider. Psychologically speaking, he has an "in-group" attitude towards what is

- (1) "The Child's Conception of the World"; and "The Moral Judgment of the Child".
- (2) "The Psychology of Character".
- (3) "Religion and the Growing Mind".
- (4) "The Struggle of the Soul"; "The Opening Doors of Childhood"; etc.
- (5) A thought which occurs in Kierkegaard.

happening, and towards other members. Theologically speaking, God has, in Baptism, placed him within the orbit of the mighty salvation-events associated with the "Name" of Christ. Worship thus becomes, for the baptized child, not an instrument of evangelism, winning him into the Christian fold, but a means conducive to his growth in union with Christ. He worships as a growing Christian. There is a qualitative distinction here which it is important to maintain, and which contains the seeds of a Christian interpretation of childhood. The point is that the entire Christian life of the growing child is placed securely within the ethos of the liturgical activity of the Church.

It is, therefore, impossible to work out a satisfactory theory of Christian nurture while the judgment is held in suspense on the issue of the theology of Baptism, or, as some religious educators have attempted, to state a theory which will apply with equal validity whichever of the two alternative views of Baptism is held. The child's spiritual situation is fundamentally different in either case. Nurturally speaking, it is one thing to treat the child born of Christian parents as a candidate for future conversion; it is quite another thing to regard him as a genuine, though immature, member of the Christian Church. In the one case, he is being nurtured in order that one day he may, by the grace of God, become a Christian. In the other, the "prevenient grace" of God is being vouchsafed to him while he is being nurtured as a Christian with a view to the subsequent spiritual "completion" of his Baptism by personal confession of faith. In the one case, Baptism and "confirmation" are not, so to speak, in the same sacramental continuum; in the other, profession of faith becomes a distinct "moment" in the fulfilment of the total event or process of Christian initiation.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF "CONFIRMATION" FOR  
CHRISTIAN NURTURE

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We turn now to consider the theological significance of that "moment" in the process of Christian initiation associated with confession of faith on the part of the person baptized, and his admission to full communion. The importance of the subject from the point of view of Christian nurture justifies its treatment in a separate chapter, though the tendency of our argument is such that it must be viewed in the closest possible association with the subject of infant Baptism. The use of the term "confirmation" to denote this aspect of Christian initiation may be unfortunate, since it is already used to designate a rite given independent sacramental status by the Roman Catholic Church, and it may convey theological connotations which are not intended. But the term is sanctioned among writers on sacramental theology outside the Roman and Anglican Communion, (1) and may therefore be accepted within the framework of ideas covered by this chapter and the preceding one.

Our present purpose is to get behind the development which produced the dichotomy in the total process of Christian initiation as it was originally understood in the Apostolic period and in the early Church, and ask, what status and value may be ascribed to a rite of confirmation? To speak of separate "moments" in Baptism may appear to involve a begging of the question, since on the one hand, as we have seen, Calvin and Luther were anxious to magnify infant Baptism at the expense of a second rite of confirmation, on the

(1) E.g. by Wotherspoon: "Religious Values in the Sacraments", pp. 174-224; and D. M. Baillie: "Theology of the Sacraments", p.89 f.

ground that Baptism alone had Scriptural status, and that it had a unitary character; and on the other hand we have such theologians as Barth and Brunner seeking to make what was the normal New Testament practice of adult Baptism the universal sacramental pattern for the Church, and thus remove the need for any separate completing rite. The perspective from which we shall examine this whole difficult and controversial question, however, is that the practice of infant Baptism introduces an inevitable change in theological emphasis in the rite of Baptism, requiring provision for subsequent profession of faith, and that, granted infant Baptism, the sacramental unity is Baptism —with— confirmation, together comprising all that is meant by the "Baptisma" of the New Testament. The implicit conviction is that Presbyterianism in particular has, under the impact of certain controversial emphases in the thought of the Reformers, in consequence been deprived of some of the rich theological and spiritual significance attaching to the idea of confirmation, and thus has failed to lay hold on the full "Gospel in the sacrament".

What, then, is the theological meaning of confirmation, and how may its relation to infant Baptism be understood and defined?

There can be no doubt whatever that the emphasis of the New Testament is on Baptism, as the one initiatory rite by which incorporation within the Body of Christ is symbolized and secured. The Apostolic injunction of Peter at Pentecost draws attention to its main elements as they were understood by the primitive Church: Repent, and be baptized, every one of you in the Name (ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι) of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins (εἰς ἄφεσιν



ἁμαρτιῶν) and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (1)  
 This passage indicates the close connection of Christian Baptism with Johannine Baptism. It was βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, (2) but, unlike the latter, it was administered in the Name of Jesus Christ, and it was associated with the gift of the Spirit. This distinction is given special attention in Acts 19: 1-6, the passage referring to the twelve men at Ephesus who had been baptized εἰς τὸ Ἰωάννου βάπτισμα, and who were rebaptized by Paul εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ. It is probable that both these passages incorporate the earliest baptismal formula, and that the Trinitarian formula of Mt. 28:19 represents the liturgical practice of a slightly later period. (3)

New Testament Baptism is administered, upon confession of faith in Jesus as the Christ. Its strongly Messianic and eschatological reference may be noted in passing. It is administered also to the household (ὁ οἶκος) (4) of the baptized person, which, by analogy with contemporary Jewish practice, and on other grounds, may be taken as including children and even infants. (5) Presumably, (since there is no direct New Testament evidence for this), the infant children born later of Christian parents were also baptized. The basis of this conclusion is the universal practice

(1) Ac. 2:38.

(2) Mk. 1:4.

(3) C.f. Rawlinson: "Christian Initiation", p.13.

(4) E.G. The Baptism of Lydia: Ac. 16:15.

(5) c.f. Lk. 18:15 " which, as Jeremias, (quoted by "Interim Report" (1955) p.25) points out, has a baptismal reference.

of the Church in later times, and the absence of any injunction to the contrary. This is the more noteworthy, since Baptism of children of Jewish proselytes born subsequently to their reception into Judaism was apparently not required.<sup>(1)</sup> Such children were sanctified by their relationship within the covenant. This principle might be thought applicable in the case of the children of Christian parents, on the basis of the Pauline passage referring to the unbelieving partner of a Christian husband or wife, regarded as "sanctified" because of the believing partner.<sup>(2)</sup> The passage in question has the interesting addition: "Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy" (*ἁγία*), a clause which raises the problem of the meaning of the term *ἁγιος* in the New Testament, an important one for a doctrine of Baptism and of Christian nurture. Here it may simply be mentioned that the term refers technically to membership in the Christian Koinonia, and therefore means either "a baptized person", or "one whose status justifies or demands Baptism".<sup>(3)</sup> The later practice of the Church, as well as the general tendency of the New Testament teaching (including sayings of Jesus preserved or reported in a baptismal interest), with its emphasis upon Baptism as the indispensable mode of acceptance into the Christian Church, seems to lead to the conclusion that Baptism of infant children of Christian parents was the New Testament practice. At this point the statement is relevant that "we do

- (1) c.f. the discussion of this and related questions in Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p.56, ff.
- (2) I Cor. 7:14. Cullmann's exegesis of this passage is that "Paul represents here the opinion that in their case (i.e. that of children of Christian parents) sanctification through birth alone suffices". *Op. cit.* p.44.
- (3) c.f. Art. "Saint", by Rankin in "Theol. Word Book of the Bible", pp. 214-216.

not come across anywhere in the New Testament the idea that there are two classes of Christians, baptized Christians and born Christians, and nowhere in early Christianity do we find the idea that children born of Christian parents do not need Baptism. 'Christians are made, not born!'. (1) The passage in John 3:3 and 5 about the need for spiritual rebirth, of which v. 5 proves the baptismal context, and which certain scholars (2) associate closely with the Synoptic accounts of the Blessing of the children and the sayings of our Lord connected with them (Mt. 18:3; Mk. 10:15; Lk. 18:17) help to bear out the above argument.

The Baptism of Jesus by John was as we have seen, associated in the mind of the early Church with its interpretation of the Christian sacrament. Christian Baptism could legitimately be regarded as a *μίμνησιν* of the Baptism of our Lord, which was, in His own mind, and in the thought of the Church from the first, connected with, and an anticipation of, His Death. The late Bishop Chase, in his careful exegetical study, from an Anglican point of view of the New Testament evidence for a doctrine of confirmation, makes use of the fact that there is already present, in the Baptism of Jesus, a dual reference (a) to the forgiveness of sins which is the motif of Johannine Baptism; and (b) to the descent of the Spirit, which, as he rightly claims, is intimately linked with the ensuing narrative of the temptation. He adopts the Westcott and Hart reading: *ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ πνεύματι ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ*, and

(1) Interim Report (1955), p.27.

(2) Eg. Jeremias: "Hat die Urkirche die Kindertaufe geübt?" quoted in above Report; and Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p.42, ff., who makes use of the hypothesis of Jeremias that "the step to child Baptism was already taken in New Testament times".

regards the words as a quotation from Deut. 8:2 ( LXX ):

ἤγγαγεν σε Κύριος ὁ Θεός σου ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ,

a point for which there is some corroboration in our Lord's use of Deut. 8:3 in answering the Tempter. (1) He further comments: "The Spirit was to the Lord the Spirit of ministry. The Lord applied to Himself the words of the Prophet: 'The Spirit of The Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor'." (2) His whole discussion of these succeeding episodes, (3) in which the connecting link is the Spirit which descended upon Jesus at his Baptism, is full of spiritual discernment, and shows that there is New Testament authority at this point for the connection, which is insisted upon so strongly by Roman Catholic and Anglo-Catholic writers, between confirmation and Christian vocation. (4) Our concern at the moment is merely to point out that, while there is no articulated doctrine of confirmation to be found in the New Testament, if the close analogy between Christian Baptism and our Lord's Baptism be conceded the seeds are present of what may be regarded as a "legitimate development" prompted, and even necessitated by, the general practice of Baptism in infancy; and some justification is provided in the New Testament for the doctrinal position that there are two distinct motifs in Christian Baptism, that having a predominant reference to a work of redemption accomplished in complete independence of the faith of

(1) Chase: "Confirmation in the Apostolic Age", on Lk. 4:1; p.15 ff.

(2) Lk. 4:18; Is.61:11

(3) Op. cit., pp. 14-21.

(4) Thornton: op. cit. pp. 92-97, etc.; Daniélou: "Bible et Liturgie, chap.

the recipient; and that referring to active appropriation and to the acceptance of specific vocation, and an endowment with the Spirit to this end. Whether the Roman Church was justified in regarding the one moment in Christian initiation as having a primarily Christological significance, and in regarding the Holy Spirit as so exclusively concerned with the second moment as to provide the foundation for a distinct sacrament of confirmation, will be dealt with later. But the germ of a doctrine of confirmation closely related to the total meaning of Baptism can certainly be traced to Scriptural sources. That two motifs were present as distinct elements to the minds of the New Testament writers is apparent from the distinction made in certain passages between Baptism with water and Baptism with the Holy Spirit, though always in such a way as to suggest that both are necessary, and that one is incomplete without the other. (1) The full Baptism of Christ, in which we all share through Christian Baptism, is a Baptism of water, spirit, and blood.

Baptism in the New Testament not only is accompanied by immersion in water (or affusion?), but it is frequently, though not invariably, associated with the further rite of the laying on of hands (ἐπιθεσις χειρῶν). The origin of this practice as a rite specially connected with Christian Baptism is uncertain, though the connection is a natural one in view of the Old Testament antecedents, associating it with the acts of blessing, of healing, of conferring of gifts, and of appointment to office. (2)

(1)E.g. I John 5:6; c.f. Jn. 19:34 f.

(2) c.f. Article by R. R. Williams: "Laying on of Hands" in "Theol. Word Book of the Bible"; pp. 126-7.

The use of this act by Jesus in the Blessing of the children<sup>(1)</sup> links the practice at once with Baptism, since this passage has been shown to have a liturgical connection with the sacrament.<sup>(2)</sup>

The other passages where the imposition of hands is used in a baptismal context are:-

- (a) Acts 8:12-17, the Baptism of the Samaritans by Philip, which occurs without the gift of the Spirit, (verses 12 and 16); and the subsequent donation of the Spirit associated with the laying on of hands by Peter and John;
- (b) Acts 19:1-6, referred to earlier, in which Paul both baptizes and lays hands on the Ephesian disciples, on the same occasion; the suggestion being (verse 6) that the conferring of the Holy Spirit is associated with the imposition of hands, though this is not stated;
- (c) Hebrews 6:2: "Of the doctrine of Baptisms, and of laying on of hands", sheds little light on our subject, though it may connect the latter rite with Baptism.

The other passages (Acts 13:3; I Timothy 4:14; II Timothy 1:6) connect the rite with ordination to office and with the gifts of the Spirit conferred therewith. "It would appear", Rawlinson writes,<sup>(3)</sup> "that whatever the significance to be attached to the laying on of hands as a rite accompanying Baptism, or supplementary thereto, the full process of Christian initiation included both

- (1) Mk. 10: 13-16.
- (2) E.g. by Cullmann, op. cit., p.78.
- (3) "Christian Initiation", p.10-11.

Baptism with water in the Name of the Lord Jesus and also the reception of what is described as the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Christian initiate must, in the words ascribed to our Lord in the Fourth Gospel, be 'born from above' of 'water and Spirit'; (1) and he later states (2) "----So soon as the Acts of the Apostles came to be regarded ---- as having the status of canonical Scripture, the passages in question could be readily held to afford Scriptural warrant both for regarding the gift of the Spirit in Baptism as being specifically linked with the laying on of hands, (which, whatever the historical process by which it became so, had in actual fact come to be, as Dom Gregory Dix rightly points out, an established part of the Church's baptismal ritual, at least over wide areas, by a date earlier than that at which the New Testament Canon was formed), and also for the view that it was legitimate, and might on occasions be necessary, --- to baptize apart from this ceremony, leaving the deficiency to be made good later on".

Evidence, then, has been adduced for the opinion, not only that there is within the integral rite of New Testament Baptism a two-fold emphasis, and that the two emphases, closely interrelated theologically, might conceivably be separated in time, but also that the second emphasis, however it later came to be interpreted, had quite early an association with the ceremony of the laying on of hands. However weak, therefore, may be the Biblical grounds for a rite of "unction" as a constituent element in

(1) John 3: 3 and 5.

(2) Op. cit., p.15-16.

Christian initiation (and the Reformers were indubitably right in discarding it as without clear Scriptural warrant), there appears to be as valid a Biblical foundation for the association of the ancient rite of the laying on of hands with Christian <sup>Baptism</sup> as there is for its use in ordination to ministerial office.

We have touched upon some of the Biblical considerations which help to explain, even though they do not necessarily justify, the subsequent separation, in doctrine and in liturgical practice, of the two emphases in the original sacrament of Baptism. Some historical considerations may now be mentioned.

There is first of all the strong impression created by the New Testament documents, of the organic unity of the baptismal event. There was in fact no distinct rite of confirmation in the Apostolic Church, and in the earliest liturgical documents we have either no mention of anything corresponding to confirmation, or else a "complex" of ceremonies all included within the one sacrament. Water Baptism and Spirit Baptism are simply aspects of a single liturgical whole, and there are passages which, as we have seen, clearly suggest that the act of Baptism in water was understood as itself imparting the gift of the Holy Spirit.<sup>(1)</sup> To regard water Baptism, therefore, as solely having to do with cleansing and the forgiveness of sins, and as not associated with the operation of the Holy Spirit in the forgiven life, is historically inaccurate as well as theologically untenable. The Holy Spirit cannot be separated from the work of Christ in redemption. The

(1) Lampe: Op. cit., p.29: "The teaching of the New Testament as a whole forbids us to find here a theological dichotomy between a water Baptism and a separate Baptism with the Spirit."



Third Person of the Trinity is to be regarded as present and operative in the total spiritual event of Baptism.

In this connection, it is significant that in the earliest liturgical document which survives, the Didache, while there is a close thought-relation between Christian initiation and the Eucharist, there is no mention of what later came to be known as confirmation, though this was actually a manual for catechetical instruction.<sup>(1)</sup> Justin's First Apology, similarly, in its description of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, includes no reference to a separate rite of confirmation. At the same time, the predominant reference of Baptism is here to the future, to the life in Christ. Thornton's contention<sup>(2)</sup> that the early Church looked on confirmation as the Christian counterpart of circumcision, and his appeal to Justin Martyr in this connection, has been shown by Leeming to be without foundation, who points out that Baptism is the Christian equivalent of Jewish circumcision.<sup>(3)</sup>

On the other hand, Tertullian's Treatise "De Baptismo" shows that by the end of the second century the sacrament of initiation had undergone considerable liturgical elaboration, and that we now have a complex ceremony which includes Baptism with water, by immersion, "sealing" with oil, and laying on of hands. "The Apostolic Tradition" of Hippolytus, dating from about the same time (c. 215 A.D.) and reflecting earlier practice, presents a

- (1) Wotherspoon, op. cit., p.174 ff. discusses some of the early liturgical material; referred to also in "Interim Report" (1956), pp. 22-29.
- (2) Op. Cit., pp. 33-38.
- (3) "Principles of Sacramental Theology", App.

similar picture, of which a three-fold confession of faith, accompanied by a triple immersion, is a noteworthy feature. It may be noted, also, that the Baptism of little children, some of them infants, is mentioned, though the document presumes adult Baptism as the norm. We have here, then, the liturgical beginnings in the Western Church of the subsequent division of the original sacrament into two: infant Baptism, with water, and confirmation, by laying on of hands (and unction). Dix, (1) in the interests of a sacramental theology which attempts to depreciate Baptism as a mere preliminary rite and seeks to make confirmation the positive sacrament, is anxious to press the evidence of the "Apostolic Tradition" back much further than would be allowed by other reputable scholars, and, as we have seen, his entire historical construction has been severely questioned by Lampe, (2) Flemington, (3) Leeming, (4) and others.

The use of the actual term "confirmation" to designate a "detached" sacrament is apparently not found earlier than 441 (the First Council of Orange, and in a letter written by Pope Leo I in 458. (5) The changed pastoral situation confronting the post-Nicene Church, and later Augustine's theology of infant Baptism, were two of the influences forcing upon the Church the task of a reformulation

(1) "The Theology of Confirmation", pp.10-14.

(2) "Theological Issues in the Baptism-Confirmation Controversy", (Art.); passim.

(3) "New Testament Doctrine of Baptism", App.

(4) "Principles of Sacramental Theology", App.

(5) D. M. Baillie: "Theology of the Sacraments", p.90.

of its sacramental doctrine which would take account of what Canon Quick calls "a shifting of emphasis from the instrumental to the symbolic aspect of the sacrament", (1) when the subject of baptism is an infant and not an adult. The formulation of the Mediaeval doctrine in the West is to be found in Part III of the "Summa Theologica" of Aquinas (Q. LXXII), which regards confirmation as a sacrament of spiritual growth in which the Christian is strengthened for his spiritual warfare (*confirmatur ad pugnam*). Dix regards the Mediaeval development as a declension from the point of view held by the Church in the first centuries (and, he would affirm, found germinally in the New Testament), and he has to concede that the distinctive content of confirmation is reduced by the admission that the spiritual gifts with which the individual is endowed were "to some extent already imparted at Baptism". (2) Dix is of the opinion that the position adopted by the Reformers, on the Continent and in England, represents the triumph of the "Mediaeval theological distortion" over the "primitive Apostolic tradition of the liturgy" which up till the Reformation had preserved confirmation intact as a "Baptism of the Spirit". (3) Calvin's position -- he is described by Dix as "that most lucid of Mediaevalists," -- adhering to the integrity of the New Testament "Baptisma", is well summed up in the words: "Baptism is altogether perfect without confirmation," which is the general point of view reflected also in his "Genevan Catechism".

(1) "The Christian Sacraments", p.169.

(2) *Op. cit.*, p.26 and 27.

(3) *Ibid.*, pp. 28 and 29.

In the Eastern (Orthodox) Church, the acute problem raised for sacramental theology in the West was avoided in the continuous retention of the close temporal and sacramental connection between Baptism, signifying remission of sins, spiritual rebirth, and incorporation into the Church, and the rite of "sealing" conveying the gift of the Spirit. Baptism is regarded as a dramatic of our Lord's Baptism. When infant Baptism became general, the conservative instinct which retained the primitive New Testament pattern did not feel the need for a subsidiary sacrament of confirmation, since there was already something corresponding to "infant confirmation" already in use. (1)

The word "confirmation" itself includes a variety of theological connotations, -- appropriation through confession of faith, endowment with the Spirit, strengthening for spiritual combat, acceptance of vocation -- all of which have their due place in Christian nurture, however their relation to the sacrament of Christian initiation be conceived. Bishop Chase, holding that the real meaning of confirmation is that "the redeemed child of the Heavenly Father is outwardly, visibly, historically, brought into contact with the second great 'momentum' of the whole Christian dispensation", and that ratification of baptismal vows is altogether secondary, has an interesting historical comment in which he suggests that the substitution of the tautological phrase "ratify and confirm" in the Second Prayer Book (1552) of Edward VI for the phrase "ratify and confess" of the First Prayer Book of 1549, and its perpetuation in the Prayer Book of 1662, has deprived the rite of its fundamental and primary meaning. He declares, rightly,

(1) Cf. Ratcliff: Articles: "The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism in the Early Roman and Byzantine Liturgies. I and II. Sept. and Oct., 1946, p.p. 258-265 and pp. 290 - 295.

that "there is not real analogy between 'confirming' (=ratifying) promises and 'being confirmed' (=strengthened) by the endowment of the Spirit."<sup>1</sup>

The attempt must now be made to draw together some of the theological considerations which have emerged in our discussion. The starting point in any debate concerning the status of confirmation in relation to Christian initiation must be the fact that it lacks the indispensable criterion of a true sacrament, namely, Dominical institution. The attempt may no doubt be made to play up the claims of confirmation by referring to the insecure Scriptural warrant for Baptism in Mt. 28:19, "the historicity of which, says Neville Clark, "is on many grounds suspect;"<sup>2</sup> but the Biblical authority behind Baptism rests on a broader foundation than a single text, and must include, among other factors (a) our Lord's own Baptism, and (b) His references to children preserved or reported in a Baptismal context. Karl Barth, indeed, says that Christ "instituted" (eingesetzt) Baptism "by putting Himself - - into the representation that prefigured these things", and that "the mighty Dispenser of water-Baptism is neither John, nor the Church, but the Lord Jesus Christ Himself." This mode of reasoning, however, while it has a certain validity, can be and actually has been, used with equal force in favour of the virtual institution

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<sup>1</sup>"Confirmation in the Apostolic Age", p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>"An Approach to the Theology of the Sacraments", p. 16. But contrast "Interim Report" (1955), p. 5: -

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 18, and p. 17.

by our Lord of a sacrament of confirmation. Dix refers, for example, (speaking of confirmation), to "this Dominically instituted sacrament,"<sup>1</sup> and when he insists that "it is the teaching of the New Testament that Baptism in the Spirit is not Baptism in water, but something which follows closely upon it",<sup>2</sup> he is using our Lord's Baptism virtually as a means of establishing confirmation as an authentic, and, indeed, as his argument shows as the positive sacrament of initiation, i.e. as that rite without which Baptism is ineffective and incomplete. Confirmation can, nevertheless, only be accepted as a sacrament, as Bishop Chase does, "in an extended sense", which is the general attitude of the Anglican communion. He claims that "the 'outward and visible sign' in confirmation, the laying on of hands, has the clear authority of the New Testament," but admits that we have no explicit declaration in the New Testament that it was 'ordained by Christ Himself!'"<sup>3</sup>

The grounding of Christian Baptism on the Baptism of our Lord by John as the archetype of the sacrament should not allow us to forget that the rite to which Jesus submitted was an adult Baptism. The real question is, what, theologically speaking, happens to Baptism when the rite is transferred from adulthood to infancy? Is its essential structure as a sacrament affected? Is the whole theological and spiritual significance of the sacramental process of Christian initiation capable of being expressed in terms of infant Baptism? Canon Quick, accepting confirmation as an initi-

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<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 33.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 9, footnote.

atory rite having sacramental quality, expresses the same problem rather differently when he asks: "Is it the purpose of confirmation to symbolize and effect a radically new indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the soul?"<sup>1</sup> And he points out that, if the answer is negative, confirmation becomes of secondary importance; if an affirmative answer is given, on the other hand, there appears to be no justification for the prolonged temporal separation of (infant) Baptism and confirmation (in later youth): the theological and the nurtural consequences are alike unendurable. The Roman Church, he reminds us, has in general, following Aquinas, adopted the former alternative, holding "nothing other in kind or in essential principle, to be conferred in confirmation" from what Baptism has already given.<sup>2</sup> There is, however, within the Anglican communion a strong minority which is <sup>in</sup> favour of restoring to confirmation the distinctive sacramental status which it was felt to possess in the early Church reflecting, it is argued, the dual character of Christian initiation at its inception; the late Dom Gregory Dix, and, more recently, Fr. L. S. Thornton, being, perhaps, the principal exponents of a view which, as Quick, Rawlinson and Lampe have pointed out, received stimulus from a much earlier work by Mason.<sup>3</sup> Lampe, in particular, has recently set forth the theological issues

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<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 181.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 182.

<sup>3</sup>"The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism" (1891).

which are at stake in the controversy, and it is not necessary to recapitulate these. The minority position is briefly represented in the words of Thornton: "First comes Baptism for the remission of sins: then the promised circumcision of the heart in the seal of confirmation.<sup>1</sup> When these two stages are completed, then, and not till then, the indwelling of the Spirit takes place.

In view of the complex character of the material, and in view of the controversial atmosphere of the debate, it is not easy to isolate clear theological principles for the guidance of the nurtural ministry of the Church. The following considerations may, however, be claimed to be involved in any solution:- Pre-eminence must be given to the element of faith, in the sacrament of Baptism. The question of the manner in which the faith of the candidate is involved in Baptism, and of the way in which the endowment of the Holy Spirit is felt to be related to the two "moments" of the sacrament, are, indeed, the two crucial theological questions, an answer to which will help to determine the importance to be attached to confirmation in Christian initiation, or, more precisely, whether there is, over and above infant Baptism, an element in the total process of baptismal initiation that demands separate "sacramental" recognition.

One does well to start from the Reformed principle nullum sacramentum sine fide, from which Barth argues, and to which Cullmann also adheres, though he reaches radically different

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted Lampe, Article cit., p. 20. It is only fair to point out that Thornton's "Confirmation etc." expresses his position more moderately.



conclusions. The principle finds its undoubted basis in New Testament Baptism, which was normally adult Baptism. The interpretation of this principle to which one is driven by the evidence, is that within the total Baptismal process, responsible confession of faith on the part of the candidate is a necessary element. Scriptural authority, however, lays down no law which would exclude infants from Baptism; in other words, infant Baptism has Biblical warrant. A changed situation confronting the Church led to this practice, instead of being exceptional, becoming the usual one. Now faith, in the clear New Testament understanding of the term, is manifestly impossible in infancy. One cannot but agree with Barth at this point, though his interpretation of faith appears too intellectualistic, and he acknowledges that Luther and Calvin both make use of the idea of "fides infantilis or "unconscious faith" (Kinderglaube).<sup>1</sup> The idea of a "vicarious faith" (fides aliena) either on the part of parents or of the Church, cannot, on Biblical grounds, be allowed as a valid substitute for the faith of the candidate himself, though the faith of the congregation and of the parents is an indispensable factor in Christian Baptism, and although the solidarity of the believing fellowship is an undoubted element in the awakening of faith. The conclusion to which this argument tends is that infant Baptism points to a "moment" of confirmation as a constituent element in the baptismal event, and required for its completion. The very inseparableness of the two

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<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., pp. 46-47.

moments which we have seen to be present in the New Testament Baptisma, and the incompleteness of the one "motif" without the other, is one of the strongest arguments in favour of restoring the theological and spiritual values that are present in a doctrine of confirmation.

This does not mean, obviously, the adoption of a third sacrament. Nor is the matter fairly described, as in Karl Barth, as the recognition of confirmation as a kind of "half-sacrament".<sup>1</sup> What it does mean is the holding together, in their theological integrity, of the two moments of the original sacrament of Christian initiation which have, through the vicissitudes of history and of liturgical practice, become temporally separated, in what Thornton quite rightly describes as "a process of erosion which was destined to affect adversely the whole notion of 'unity in plurality'". It means that belief in the legitimacy of infant Baptism points inevitably to a strong doctrine of confirmation as perfectly consistent with Reformed principles.<sup>2</sup> The reaction of Calvin, for example, was predominantly a rejection of the priestly practice of unction, which, as Rawlinson indicates, is a development from the second century, and not from New Testament times, rather than any lack of sympathy for the idea that infant Baptism as a "birth from above" implies and requires implementation in the later life of the candidate, which is one theological root of confirmation, and to which

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<sup>1</sup>"Confirmation etc.", p. 153.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. D. M. Baillie, op. cit., p. 90.

his thought is entirely hospitable.

It must be maintained, then, that Cullmann is right in holding that the complete baptismal event is inclusive of "what happens at the moment when the baptismal action takes place", and "what results from Baptism,<sup>1</sup> and that faith" essentially belongs to the second and not to the first act of the event of Baptism.<sup>2</sup> There is an anthropological reference at this point which must be made explicit. It is that in the New Testament conception of Baptism the two "polarities" of passive incorporation into the "Being" of Christ, and into His earthly Body which is the Church, and active appropriation of the salvation accomplished for man by Christ, are both given due recognition. In any restatement of sacramental theology, we dare not relax the paradoxical tension that exists in the New Testament pattern. The tension is not lost, indeed it is seen in its most dynamic form, where infant Baptism is envisaged. For nothing could more eloquently exemplify the divine priority, and the "prevenient grace" which lies at the heart of the sacrament, than the Baptism of an infant.<sup>3</sup> Here is poignant recognition of the fact of divine saving action, and of our being

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<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 47.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>3</sup>It is important to bear in mind that the presupposition of this sacrament is the General Baptism for all men accomplished by Christ on Calvary, prior to, and independent of, man's preparedness or capacity to respond to it. It is this which links the two sacraments together. The "One Baptism" is presumed in both. Cf. J. A. T. Robinson, "Scot. Journal of Theology", Sept., 1953.

"already "chosen in Christ", which is prior to, and independent of, any exercise of faith on the part of the recipient.<sup>1</sup> This emphasis on man's utter dependence on the divine grace, and his helplessness to achieve his own salvation, belongs essentially to the earlier "moment" of Baptism. The efficacy of Baptism does not depend on the exercise of the faith of the candidate, as even Barth admits. Nevertheless, what is given in Baptism has to be accepted and appropriated, and this response must be a work of freedom. This accent on conscious appropriation is naturally prominent in the New Testament accounts of Baptism, which are concerned with adult initiation, and where the two foci of the complete event are in the closest possible association. Nevertheless Dix is justified in pointing out that, while preoccupation with the individual reference of Baptism at the expense of its communal aspects is not characteristic of the New Testament ("The Gospel knows nothing of a 'salvation' of isolated individual souls"), "it is a more Scriptural, as well as a more dynamic, notion of 'salvation' which insists that it cannot be passively received".<sup>2</sup> He makes this observation apparently in the context of a conception of the Holy Spirit as operative ab extra in infant Baptism, and as an indwelling presence in confirmation, a distinction which must be disputed, but his insistence on the dynamic character of faith as the element of active

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<sup>1</sup>"Interim Report" (1955), p. 21. Baptism as "grounded in the divine election" has profound implications for Christian nurture.

<sup>2</sup>"Theology of Confirmation", p. 30.

appropriation necessary to the completion of Baptism, must be accepted and welcomed.

There are, then, lying at the heart of the New Testament doctrine of Baptism, two apparently contradictory principles which, as Niebuhr affirmed about the paradoxical polarities of the Biblical understanding of man, become untenable when held in isolation or separately pushed to a logical extreme: the one, that the individual becomes a Christian by being set, passively, within the covenanted Fellowship; the other, that being a Christian is a matter of active, personal, responsible decision. Evidence for both these positions is to be found in the New Testament. The latter view is expressed in many of the earliest Biblical descriptions of adult Baptism, and in the "Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus", with its threefold confession. But there is also prominent, in the Pauline teaching as elsewhere, the conception of the organic corporeity of the Church, where the individual finds the fulness of his life through "losing himself" within the Agape-Fellowship. This element in the Baptismal paradox does justice to the truth that the initiative in salvation rests with God; that faith is not a meritorious operation that validates the sacrament, but that in the sacramental action of the Church as the sphere of the Spirit's operation, God sets the individual within the environment in which the great redemptive events which centre in Christ are operative, and which occurred prior to, and independent of, man's responsive faith. It does justice to the organic character of the church,

as well as to the organic nature of Christian faith, which is awakened through the operation of the Spirit, active in the life of the Church. It draws attention to that element of dependence on the life of the Fellowship which characterizes the Christian life; and to that quality of relatedness which is not only a psychological phenomenon in the development of personality, but is expressive of a profound spiritual truth.<sup>1</sup>

The other aspect of the paradox preserves the truth that in the conception of the "New Israel", and of Baptism as "the sacrament of the Covenant of Grace",<sup>2</sup> grace is not communicable magically, as a sacerdotal opus operatum, independent of the volitional life of the person, and that there is, in the soul's encounter with the divine, even in the uniquely corporate life of the Church, and the intensely corporate character of Christian worship, an element of privateness which is inseparable from the Christian understanding of personality, which derives from the fact that the Primary Relationship, inclusive of all other relationships with persons, is with God, and to which mystical forms of Christian devotion attempt to give expression. The reality of the New Israel of God does not annihilate the true individuality of the personal life, though it is the negation both of individualism and of collectivism. Christian faith demands the total surrender of the personality to Christ, in order that the fulness of personal life may be found, as it can only be found, within the Body of Christ. In individual

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<sup>1</sup>Expressed, for example, in the theology of Brunner, referred to in Part I of the thesis.

<sup>2</sup>Marcel: "Biblical Doctrine of Infant Baptism", Part III.

appropriation, the life of the "member" within the "Body" becomes intensely individual; as in the achievement of "organismic wholeness," differentiation of function is essential. In losing his life "in the corporate faith-life and agape-life of the Body, the Christian has "found" himself. Individual personality thus achieves its fulness "in Christ" whose aim is fulness of life.<sup>1</sup> This emphasis does not ignore that unique, inner core of human self-hood to which the Christian doctrine, not only of a general Creation, but of the creation of each individual person, pays deference. It may well be that a doctrine of "believer's Baptism" represents, as Berdyaev<sup>2</sup> felt Barth's entire thought to represent, an un-Biblical individualism which is a survival of a Renaissance anthropology. Undoubtedly it marks a loss of one element in the theological paradox to which the New Testament Baptisma gives sacramental expression. But there is, on the other hand, a thread of connection running through religious biography from Moses, Amos, and Jeremiah, through Paul and Augustine, to Pascal and Kierkegaard, drawing attention to a Biblical type of individual faith which judges the Church, as well as being fed and moulded by it.

Christian Baptism, therefore, as the sacrament of initiation into the Body of Christ, as "members" within an "organism" of faith, involves a setting forth of the anthropological tension which, as we have seen, lies at the heart of the Christian faith. There is both an active and a passive voice, so to speak, in the Baptismal process, and this is true at whatever age the rite of Baptism takes

- (1) Cf. Thornton, "Confirmation etc.", Chap. VI. The reference to specific Christian vocation is important for Christian nurture.
- (2) Cf. Griffith, "Interpreters of Man", p. 225; also "Interim Report" (1955), p. 20.

place. It would be wrong to press the dual emphasis too far, and to enquire what, distinctively and separately, is the precise content of Baptism, and what of confirmation. That would involve splitting the sacramental whole into two detached sacraments. This is what has happened in the developed Roman doctrine, which not only provides an example of theological literalness, but is a departure from Biblical principles. Both moments of Baptism are "grounded in the divine election", and adoption. We are dealing with one sacrament, of which the normal New Testament type is adult Baptism, in which the essential unity of meaning is most clearly seen. The "passivity" of the subject, for example, or, to put the matter in another way, the prior initiative of God, applies to the entire sacrament. But in infant Baptism, the passivity of the candidate appears as a predominant emphasis, and throws into prominence the need for implementation in a completive moment which may be described as confirmation, to which the elements of active appropriation and personal confession are inevitably transferred. Thus the presumption of infant Baptism means the inevitable association of the passive aspects with the first "moment," signaled by the rite of Baptism with water and of the active and individual emphases with the second "moment"; with both of which we must believe the activity of the Holy Spirit to be associated, as "the Bearer of Christ to the Church".

It becomes apparent that the acceptance of infant Baptism as the normal practice of the Church, not seriously questioned in the first four centuries of its history, produced an alteration of



theological emphasis, if not of the inherent structure of the Sacrament, which brought into prominence the question of the theology of a temporally separated or "detached" rite of confirmation. In the West it gradually was elevated in status to a separate sacrament, for which New Testament authority cannot be claimed. The result is an unfortunate example of the confusion caused by the theological separation of entities which can only be understood in relation. The wrong questions have been asked. Instead of the question being put in the form, What is the meaning of Christian initiation, as it is discoverable in the "classical" pattern of the New Testament Baptisma? it has been raised in the form: What is infant Baptism? and then: What is confirmation? Or else the alternative has been adopted of refusing to acknowledge the legitimacy of infant Baptism, and substituting instead a doctrine of universal "believer's Baptism" which retains the close temporal connection between "incorporation" and "confession" of the normal Biblical practice.

One is forced, then, to the acceptance, in some form, of a process of Christian initiation in two stages. The considerations on which this judgment is based may be summarized as follows:-

In the normative baptismal pattern as it is found in the New Testament there is a two-fold reference, to the divine election and adoption, and to the response of faith. In other words, there is in the original, Dominically instituted sacrament an element incapable of fulfilment in terms of infancy. Cullmann rightly argues the necessity of subsequent faith on the part of the baptized infant

for the fulfilment of the complete event of Baptism.<sup>1</sup> This may be said to provide the valid theological ground for the later theological development, i.e., for the liturgical separation of two aspects of a sacramental whole which had become temporally separated by the fact of Baptism in infancy. To recognise the theological origin of a liturgical growth for which the New Testament itself provides no direct precedent is not to accept the theological superstructure which was later built upon it. There is, as we have seen, some New Testament justification for the association of a second rite, the laying on of hands with Baptism, in addition to immersion in, or sprinkling with, water. There is none for the institution of a second sacrament of confirmation. In the Apostolic Age, Baptism is the one sacrament of initiation into the Church. The attempt of Thornton and Dix to magnify confirmation at the expense of (infant) Baptism is inadmissible on Scriptural and theological grounds. If initiation in two stages means the acceptance of the position that water Baptism has reference only to the work of Christ in cleansing from sin and regeneration, but that only in confirmation is the Holy Spirit received, and that therefore one is neither fully a Christian nor truly a member of Christ's Body before confirmation, then it must be rejected. There is no real Biblical basis for the sacramental separation of water Baptism and Spirit Baptism. Not only are they closely connected in John 3:5, but in the New Testament Baptism and the endowment with the Holy Spirit are normally associated together. Baptism is a sacrament complete in itself, in as much as (a) the baptized infant is

(1) Op. cit., Chap. III.

a true member of the Body of Christ; and (b) the Church has not normally held any subsequent rite of confirmation to be necessary for salvation. These considerations are enough to place confirmation in a position of secondary importance to infant Baptism.<sup>1</sup>

The fundamental question is: What happens to the essential theological unity of the New Testament Baptisma when the sacrament is transferred from adulthood to infancy? Is that organic unity destroyed? Or is there any objection to the retention of the indivisible wholeness of the sacrament of Christian initiation where there is a prolonged separation in time between its earlier and later "moments"?

Escape from this theological dilemma has been sought in various ways:-

- (1) That of Eastern Orthodoxy, in retaining infant Baptism and associating with it infant confirmation.
- (2) That of "believer's Baptism", on the assumption that Baptism is only a half-sacrament if it has "no reference to the conscious acknowledgment of regeneration and faith".<sup>2</sup>
- (3) That of making confirmation a second sacrament, on the ground that it has the authority of virtual Dominical institution, and that the temporally separated rite has specific theological content: the practice of the Roman Catholic Church.

(1) Cf. Quick; op. cit., p. 184. "Thus interpreted, confirmation cannot be called a primary necessity of the Christian's sacramental life".

(2) Barth: op. cit., p. 47. Cf. p. 48.

- (4) That which regards infant Baptism as a sacrament complete in itself, equivalent to the New Testament Baptisma, the once-for-all rite of initiation into the Church, without any organic sacramental connection with the later ceremony of admission to full Communion.
- (5) That of recognising that the full reference of Baptism embraces not only the elements of incorporation within the covenantal relationship, but "cognitio salutis" and appropriation by faith as well; and therefore of giving an inclusive sacramental value to confirmation, without recognising the claim to separate status as a third sacrament.

The last alternative appears to be the one most in accord with the Scriptural evidence, and with the theological considerations. There is room for a much stronger doctrine of confirmation within the framework of the theology of Baptism than has usually been acknowledged by the Reformed communions, except, perhaps, by the Anglican. The demand created by Baptism in infancy that the two foci, separated in time, should be held in sacramental tension, presents no real objection to their being considered as parts of a sacramental whole. An important argument is that in the Church of the first centuries Baptism and the Lord's Supper are held in the closest possible theological association. The full meaning of the one is bound up with that of the other.<sup>1</sup> And in the "Apostolic tradition of Hippolytus", "the rite of initiation is not properly

(1) Cyprian: Ep. 75:5, quoted in Interim Report 1956, p. 20.

concluded until after the baptismal Eucharist is celebrated. - - -  
 "This Eucharistic celebration is within the one sacrament, comprising Baptism and the Lord's Supper".<sup>1</sup> The idea of the incompleteness of the full meaning of Baptism, requiring sacramental fulfilment in a subsequent rite, is therefore present in early liturgical tradition.

The question arises, then, Does the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper leave any distinctive theological meaning to a rite of confirmation? Is the Christian not continually "strengthened for combat" by participation in the Lord's Supper? Canon Quick, in his note on confirmation, observes that to regard it as associated with a "radically new indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the soul" leads to theological conclusions that are intolerable. He further declares that confirmation, if it be separated in time from Baptism, must "in some degree be modified in meaning", and that "the emphasis in baptismal theology must be changed, where Baptism of infants, ~~not~~ adults, has become the rule".<sup>2</sup> What is the modification of meaning, and what is the change of emphasis? We would maintain that the distinctive element in the baptismal whole not given expression in infant Baptism, and which, because of its displacement from the place occupied in adult Baptism, causes a change in the theological emphasis of that rite, is the responsible declaration of faith. This is part of what the New Testament

(1) "Interim Report", (1956), p. 27. Cf. Daniélou; "Bible and the Liturgy", p. 140.

(2) Op. cit., pp. 183-184.

means by Baptisma. It is organically involved in the total meaning of the sacrament. This is what gives to confirmation its distinctive, and sacramental, character, and provides strong justification for regarding confirmation, in this sense, as an integral part, though temporally separated, of the complete baptismal event. It comes naturally at the end of a process of nurture and preparation, in order that, the prerequisite of cognitio salutis having been fulfilled, and the conditions for the ΤΟΥΤΟ ΠΟΙΕΙΤΕ of our Lord's command having been met, the baptised Christian may be admitted to the Sacrament of continuing fellowship.

Anglo-Catholic and Roman sacramental theology have tended to establish their doctrine of confirmation

- (i) on our Lord's Baptism in Jordan as the archetypal pattern of Christian Baptism, with its dual aspects of Baptism in water, and Baptism with the Spirit;
- (ii) on an exegesis which alleges that in the New Testament accounts of Baptism, water-Baptism is not Baptism with the Holy Spirit;<sup>2</sup>
- (iii) on an identification of the second "moment" of Baptism with the idea of equipment for vocation<sup>3</sup>

In pleading for the closer integration of a doctrine of confirmation into a comprehensive theology of Christian initiation,

- (1) Daniélou, Dix, Thornton are the principle sources used.
- (2) Dix: Op. cit., p. 30.
- (3) Thornton: Op. cit., Chap. VI.

it is necessary to show clearly where a truly Reformed position would be differentiated from the above interpretation. The distinction lies basically in the conception of the relation of the Spirit to Baptism. This question has been answered in Anglo-Catholic and Roman thought by the association of the work of Christ in the forgiveness of sins with Baptism, and the donation of the Spirit more or less exclusively with confirmation. "Confirmation", said Bishop Chase, "is the Pentecost of the individual soul".<sup>1</sup> Thus to separate Christology and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the theology of Baptism however, would be disastrous. The position cannot appeal to our Lord's Baptism for support. The Holy Spirit is represented in the Gospels as continuously operative in our Lord's life, indeed, from the time of His conception. Lampe has shown that there is a "fundamental Trinitarian error" involved in this theological separation.<sup>2</sup> We cannot thus separate the work of Christ from the work of the Spirit, except in thought. "Our possession of the indwelling Spirit - - - is simply another aspect of our being 'in Christ?'" He quotes Sladden: "The Spirit is not merely complementary to the Christ. He is the bearer of Christ to the Church".<sup>3</sup> And he concludes that this view "denies that the Spirit is given in the sacrament which is the sign of incorporation

(1) "Confirmation in the Apostolic Age", p. 21.

(2) Article cit., pp. 23-24

(3) Article in "Theology", Feb., 1955, quoted by Lampe, p. 23

into Christ".<sup>1</sup> "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His". We must thus maintain that the Holy Spirit is associated with the whole meaning of Baptism. The distinctive emphasis of a rite of confirmation, we conclude, must be the appropriation by personal confession of faith of what has been given in Baptism. Attention has been drawn to the two aspects or "moments" of the Sacrament of Christian initiation. They draw attention to two profound spiritual facts which are witnessed to in the sacrament: to the fact of God's initiative in redemption; and to the fact that revelation, to be effectual, must be accepted as such, by faith. One of these is incapable of complete fulfilment in infant Baptism. The pattern of the New Testament Baptisma is, to that extent, disturbed. It therefore points forward, inevitably, to the "moment" which completes Christian initiation, which, by accepting the term while repudiating some of its theological connotations, we may call "confirmation".

(1) Article cit., p. 24.



PART IV

THE EDUCATION OF THE WORSHIPPING LIFE

THE EDUCATION OF THE WORSHIPPING LIFE

We are now in a position, from our examination of the character of Christian worship, and of Baptism as the sacrament which initiates the life of worship, both viewed from the perspective of the Christian understanding of the person, to consider how the interpretation of the nature of Christian worship presumed, in the foregoing pages, and approached experientially rather than structurally, will influence the formulation of a theory of Christian nurture, and help to determine the course of Christian training. Our method, broadly speaking, may be compared with that of Farmer, to "examine the essential elements in the specifically Christian encounter with, and apprehension of God as personal, in the distinctively Christian act of worship".<sup>(1)</sup>

The Beginnings of the Life of Worship

It has been said that "the Christian life flows out of Baptism".<sup>(2)</sup> The sacrament of Christian initiation is taken, therefore, in this study, to be the starting point of thought on the subject of Christian nurture. The previous chapters have indicated reasons for believing that infant Baptism is consistent with New Testament thought. The central tradition of Reformed Christianity, moreover, has consistently maintained that "the

(1) "Revelation and Religion", p.46. He describes the method as that of "productive empathy", of "penetrating to the living essence of religion ---- by feeling our way into it on the basis of our own religious faith and experience", p.45 -- a method distinguished from the merely subjective by keeping one's thought in close touch with the classical patterns and expressions of worship in the life of the Church.

(2) "Interim Report" (1955), p.18.

Church consists of all professing believers, together with their children".<sup>(1)</sup> To this may be added the thought that, not only is there a Christian interpretation of human nature implicit in the sacrament of Baptism, but what we have affirmed about Infant Baptism is in every respect compatible with the Christian understanding of man. There is included in this what may be termed a Christian doctrine of Infancy,<sup>(2)</sup> which requires to be taken account of by sacramental theology. Some aspects of this may be mentioned, since they are the presuppositions of the theory of nurture which is to be developed.

Much of the educational theory and underlying liberal American Protestant nurture appears to have drawn more upon scientific psychology for its understanding of human nature than from the presuppositions of Christian faith.<sup>(3)</sup> Pratt, who has written on the religious psychology of childhood with profound insight, nevertheless takes issue with Wordsworth's poetic statement that "Heaven lies about us in our infancy!" and begins his study with the declaration that "the baby is born into the world a little animal, with an equipment of senses, reflexes, instincts, and incipient intelligence".<sup>(4)</sup> With this may be compared the statements of a

- (1) C.f. D. M. Baillie: "The Theology of the Sacraments", p.81. C.f. Ac. 2:38 f.
- (2) Calvin's thought in the "Institutes", Book IV, contains the elements of what amounts to a Christian doctrine of Infancy, based partly on such predecessors as Irenaeus and Augustine.
- (3) This is evident in the work of George Albert Coe: e.g. in his "Social Theory of Religious Education"; and more recently in the writings of Ernest Ligon, e.g. "A Greater Generation", and "Dimensions of Character".
- (4) "The Religious Consciousness", p.92, c.f. p.91.

more recent psychologist, that "in infancy, of course, religion is lacking. Desires there are, and a rudimentary social responsiveness; but neither intelligence or self-consciousness are sufficiently developed to sustain anything that might be called a sentiment, least of all such a highly complex mental organization as the religious sentiment. For this reason the first apparently religious responses of the child are not religious at all, but wholly social in character." And, commenting on the religious observances of a particular child of four, he says that "the words of the prayer he said had essentially no different significance for him than the words of his nursery rhymes."<sup>(1)</sup> The earlier writer starts his thought about the religion of childhood from a biological perspective, and thinks in terms of an animal organism gradually acquiring human characteristics and "personality" by social interaction with other selves. The later writer begins with a definition of religion in terms of a developed sentiment requiring intelligence for its expression, and therefore excludes the infant from its scope.

It is our contention that the understanding of the spiritual life of the child cannot begin from within a psychological frame of reference, and that the question: What does it mean, to be a human self? carries us beyond psychology. Here the statement of Brunner is relevant, that man must first be defined theologically, before any philosophical or psychological statement can be made

(1) Allport: "The Individual and His Religion", p.28-9.

about him. (1) The Christian doctrine of Man affirms, not that there is first created an animal nature, to which is added, at a subsequent stage of development, the humanum, the personal ingredient. It is that man is constituted a person in virtue of the relation in which he stands to God. This is the essential meaning of creation in the divine image, that personality, the state of being a person, is a consequence of man's standing in confrontation with the Author of his being. This is the Biblical truth which Martin Buber declares at the beginning of his book, (2) that the primary word is not "I" (3) (man known from within himself), but "I - Thou" (man in relation to God, and man in relation to his neighbour). Thus while it is true that the beginnings of the spiritual life abeyant in mysterium, Wordsworth or Masfield (4) may penetrate nearer to the heart of the mystery than Pratt or Allport. And the fundamental assertion, with which all sound reflection on human nature must surely start, is this, that the state of being a person is not an acquired characteristic, but is a primary spiritual reality. The

- (1) c.f. Brunner: "Man in Revolt", p.102. c.f. "His God and Man": "The more we apply ourselves to comprehend the centre of human personal life, the less adequate we find an empirical method of observation, because this life clearly cannot be interpreted, at least in its essence, as a composite of parts". p.141. c.f. Niebuhr's comparable statements in "Nature and Destiny of Man", Vol. I, p.78: "An object which has both surface and depth cannot be correctly interpreted in terms of one dimension when in fact it has two." Psychology "deals with a dimension of depth in the human spirit, transcending the scientific method."
- (2) "I and Thou", p.3.
- (3) c.f. Buber: "Between Man and Man", p.70: "I do not consider the individual to be either the starting point or the human world." And note p.199: "An individualistic anthropology --- cannot lead to a knowledge of man's being."
- (4) As in his long poem: "Wonderings".

implication of the Christian doctrine is that there is no moment in man's life, however far back this moment be carried, when he does not stand in a personal relation with God. This actuality of a spiritual relationship with One who creates us for communion with Himself, is the fundamental meaning of the word "religion". In that sense the judgment that "in infancy ---- religion is lacking" is one that lies outside the province of psychology on the premises which we have stated, the argument is sound that "if religion, (as distinguished from particular forms of belief, worship and conduct) is anything more than an acquired habit of mind, it must be an innate capacity ----". (1) The implication of this point of view, which has the character of an affirmation of faith, and is implicit in such Biblical writings as Psalm 139, and in the prophetic awareness of a God who "knows" man from the womb, is that infancy is not excluded from the experience of being addressed by the divine Word, and that, within the humble limitations imposed by its status, the infant is capable of response. These are the conclusions which are arrived at in considering what the Biblical teaching about human nature means in terms of infancy. One has no right to assert a verbalistic criterion of the capacity of the individual to receive revelation, i.e. to enter into a personal relation with the divine Being. The God of the Bible does not speak by written words or spoken sounds, though we may hear His Word in and through these. God's Word, as Tillich says, "is an event created by the divine Spirit in the human spirit;" (2) God's creative Self-manifestation

(1) Yeaxlee: "Religion and the Growing Mind", p.39.

(2) "Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality", p.78

not confined to spoken words. The Word may come in the form of an experience, or an event, or a person. It may "become flesh". What is asserted is that in all of life, not only in the later part of it, or in that part of it after conceptual formulation has become possible, the individual stands over against God, and is addressed by Him, and, in terms of his stage of growth, makes his own response, which, as Brunner says, (1) may be a response either of acceptance, or of rejection. In that relationship of being-with-God, the individual is constituted a person. And, as Buber declares, "we speak the primary word with our being, though we cannot utter 'Thou' with our lips". (2) It follows that, though self-consciousness marks, as all psychologists would affirm, a new departure in the development of the self -- and in the spiritual life -- the beginnings of religion are earlier, and may be said to coincide with the beginning of life. It may be claimed that this is one of the aspects of the Biblical conception of the spiritual solidarity of the covenanted people, that the Word, addressed to the Spirit-filled Community, is mediated, through the intimate nexus of personal relationships within the home and the fellowship, to all who belong to it.

John Baillie, in what to one interested in Christian nurture is a profoundly arresting portion of his book, (3) traces the awareness of a transcendent claim back to early infancy, and

- (1) Brunner: Chap. on "Christian Understanding of Man"; Oxford Conference Books; p.162 f.
- (2) "I and Thou", p.6. Yeaxlee makes use of his thought, in the chapter referred to.
- (3) John Baillie: "Invitation to Pilgrimage", Chapter VI. c.f. his "Our Knowledge of God", p.4, f.

declares it to be contemporaneous with the dawn of awareness of the self as a self over against other selves. The argument, briefly reviewed, is that knowledge of the self implies and includes knowledge of Being Itself. Even at the level of infancy, that is, the rudimentary awareness of a claim, a constraint, a demand, a tension, or a conflict, constitutes a rudimentary apprehension of God, since it has as its components the same elements as are later recognized as constituent elements in the encounter with God. To the question, therefore: "Is there a human consciousness in which God is not yet?" Baillie answers with a negative. (1)

It may be noted that Baillie's description of the content of his infantile experience of self-awareness included (a) awareness of the self as "standing under the sovereign constraint of One who has never ceased to make it known to me that He claimed me for His own and required me for His service", (2) (i.e. as standing within an encounter); and (b) awareness of the presence in oneself of "a tendency to rebel against the constraint". ---- "Its essence lay in the tendency to find the centre of my life in myself to behave as though I were the centre of my world." (3) His word for this was "naughtiness", i.e. the state of being "no true wight", no true man; since in true manhood the only centre is God. That is to say that (if the knowledge thus acquired from recollection of infantile experience is valid knowledge, and may be made the basis

(1) Op. cit., p.40.

(2) Op. cit., p.47.

(3) Op. cit., p.39.



of a true generalization) the essentials of the Christian understanding of man, as made for personal communion with God, and as "fallen", are already present in a rudimentary way to the self-consciousness of early childhood.

These results, which, as has been maintained earlier, appear to be consonant with the attitude of Jesus Himself towards infancy, and with the whole Biblical picture of the relation of the child to the community of faith, are highly significant for the foundations of Christian nurture. In the first place, they point to a revelation communicated in the first instance through relationships rather than through verbal symbols. Secondly, they point to the possibility of a fides infantium(1) which, while it is not the mature faith, dependent on cognitio salutis,(2) which is presumed in adult Baptism in the New Testament, may be none the less genuine as the response proper to infancy, and may be that out of which the faith of manhood, involving belief in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, may come. The whole concept of fides infantium deserves the most serious consideration in Christian nurture, and not the perfunctory dismissal accorded to it by theologians who have failed to perceive how the cognitive and dogmatic elements in Christian faith are related to other aspects of the human psyche, as well as to those earlier but genuine experiences of confrontation by God of those who do not "know the Lord", in the sense of being able to give him His Name.

(1) c.f. Barth, op. cit., p.45-47.

(2) Ibid., p.27.

In the third place, there is a suggestion here of an answer to the important question: what place is to be accorded to teaching about sin in the religious nurture of early childhood? The question has been presented in a more acute way to Christian teaching as a result of the more radical interpretation of the Christian doctrine of man and his sin in contemporary theology. (1) What is implied in it is the more inclusive question whether in fact "Whole meanings belong in Christian education at every stage"; (2) and there is a prevalent feeling that the "optimistic" approach to the moral training of childhood in American Protestant nurture, from which, in fact, the cross and all that it implies about human nature was left out, fails to do justice either to Christian faith or to the religious consciousness of early childhood. (3)

The fundamental principle on which the answer to the above question can be given is suggested by some words from Tillich's "Systematic Theology": (4) "--- The revelatory answer is meaningless if there is no question to which it is the answer." Man cannot receive an answer to a question he has not asked. ---- Any such

- (1) c.f. the Article by Hunter: "Neo-Orthodoxy comes to the Kindergarten", in "Religion in Life", Winter number, 1950-51.
- (2) A statement made at a Conference on Christian Education, at Belleville, Ontario, Sept., 1949, by Dr. John Line, then Professor of Systematic Theology in Emmanuel College, Toronto. He made a plea for the presentation of a Gospel of the "Whole Christ", i.e. His total meaning, in outline even in early childhood, as the young child experiences the "whole sun" even though its intellectual knowledge of it is limited; and criticized the "partial meanings", (ethical teaching, historical Jesus, etc.) of much contemporary nurture.
- (3) c.f. the criticism by H. Shelton Smith in "Faith and Nurture", Chap. III; and also the comments on pp. 14-17.
- (4) Vol. II, p.13.

answer would be foolishness for him, an understandable combination of words --- but not a revelatory experience." What do the words underlined imply for Christian nurture? (1) They imply a search for the moment at which "existential concern" may be predicated of the child. There is a genuine analogy here with what Havighurst describes as the need to look for "the teachable moment" in general education, in relation to "developmental tasks". (1) The evidence of Baillie is such as to suggest that this ultimate concern may express itself much earlier than many writers on Christian education, (2) and some theologians, (3) feel to be the case. (2) The words also imply a criticism of dogmatic teaching in Christian nurture, and of a type of catechetical instruction, common in Presbyterian Scotland in an earlier day, and still substantially the basis of Roman Catholic nurture, in which the questions are not only beyond the child's cognitive capacity, but are unrelated to his religious situation. (4) The answers are dogmatic in form, and unlikely to become the basis of "a revelatory experience", because they are, to him, unreal answers, not a genuine response to revelation.

It would be wrong, however, to restrict the Christian teaching of a child (or an adult) to what can be intellectually

- (1) "Developmental Tasks in Education", p.25.
- (2) Eg. Ligon: "A Greater Generation"; and Elliott: "Can Religious Education be Christian?", p.161-177.
- (3) Eg. Barth, in "The Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism", pp. 46-47; and Brunner, "The Divine-Human Encounter", p.180.
- (4) c.f. Leen: "What is Education?", pp. 159-174. It is only fair to point out that this book reflects a search for an educational use of the catechism which takes psychological realities into account.

understood. There is evidence to suggest that a distinctive kind of "latent learning"(1) occurs in the child's experience of God, in which the full meaning of what is being experienced and "learned" is not understood until later. "Modern pedagogy in religion", Dean Sperry has written, "may do the child a grave injustice in selecting only such truth as is immediately intelligible and serviceable. Many impressions of the world in its totality pass into the unconscious stuff of a child's mind, to be understood later."(2)

If the above evidence and argument is valid, also, the child cannot be excluded from the possibility of a genuinely revelatory experience. Cognitive capacity cannot be made the criterion of ability to receive revelation. It appears that the child begins very early to ask "the question about man"; and, as Pratt points out, "theology is often the child's first science". If genuine, even though naïve, questions concerning ultimate reality are being asked, this means that the "immediacy" of encounter has already taken place.

All this points to worship as the basis, as well as the true context, of Christian nurture; through which, first in the home, and later in the cultic expression of a congregation, by participation in the most significant act of the life and faith of the Church, the child experiences the "priority" of God, God

- (1) A psychological concept discussed, e.g. in Hilgaard: "Theories of Learning", from various psychological points of view.
- (2) Sperry: "Reality in Worship", p.199. He quotes Carlyle in support. And Schweitzer reflections in "Out of My Life and Thought", are also relevant. Ligon's exclusion of certain children's hymns on the ground that they contain concepts beyond a child's comprehension, is an illustration of the opposite point of view: op. cit. p.28.

"coming to meet" man in Christ; through which, therefore, "existential concern" is awakened, and genuine questions -- "What mean ye ---?" --- are asked.

There is a valid kind of catechetical teaching presumed in Biblical Christianity, which preserves a true, spiritual order of priority: first, participation in the expression of the Church's faith, in Worship, through which the encounter with God is mediated; second, the awakening of concern about ultimate matters; and third, Christian teaching, which formulates and introduces the child to the Church's reflection on the meaning of its experience of the revelation in Christ, and which may be summarized in a formal catechism. The phrase from Aquinas "Credo ut intellegam" suggests this order. (1)

Authentic catechetical teaching will consist in giving the "the Christian answer" to the child's own questions, questions which are prompted by his "existential concern" about the ultimate, and are therefore real questions for him. Formal catechisms for children must therefore be composed in the context of knowledge of the questions children ask, about themselves, about life, and about God. They should not presume an artificial "adult" situation. This does not mean the restriction of Christian teaching to answering the childish questions of children, which would imply the determination of the content of the curriculum of Christian teaching by the child (2) rather than by the Christian revelation itself,

(1) See also the Chapter on "Catechetical Teaching", in Wightman: "Youth in the New Order", p.p. 58-72.

(2) The procedure in Sophia Fahs: "Consider the Children", and similar works on Christian nurture produced under the influence of educational pragmatism.

that "God was in Christ". Christian nurture may be described as "a life of dialogue", which is neither "objective" nor "subjective" education, but is an encounter with reality in which the process of paradosis and that of education both participate. (1) Christian teaching is bound to be dogmatic, in the sense that it offers forthright Christian answers to the existential question of man which could not be discovered by man himself, or produced from within himself. The Kerygma is the basis of Christian teaching. It must not, however, be dogmatic in manner, in the sense that it must be content to wait till a question has become a genuine one within the child's experience. The "answer", moreover, must be given within the context of the child's first-hand experience of God within the fellowship of faith.

To revert to the question, raised earlier, concerning teaching about sin, in Christian nurture: it may be suggested that Christian nurture concerns the whole meaning of Christ, and that such fragmentation of the Gospel as occurs, for example, in the curriculum propounded by Ligon (2) in the interests of "Christian character building" and "the ethical teaching of Jesus", produces a distortion of its total meaning in the direction of a modern form of legalism, and results in a Pharisaical type of character. The omission of all reference to the Cross, and to that in human nature which produced it, until the intellectual and moral life of the child has developed, is to be unfaithful both to what is known

(1) C.f. Buber's Essay on "Education" in "Between Man and Man", Chapter III, in which he contrasts the "Funnel" and the "Pump" theories of education, and substitutes for both, education in a "Dialogical Relation". p.89 f.

(2) Known as the "Character Research Project".

of the moral life in early childhood, and to the requirement that whole meanings be present; i.e. that the whole Gospel be set forth, in the form in which a child can receive it. The statement of Baillie implies that the beginnings of the moral consciousness are contemporaneous with the beginnings of self-consciousness, and is a consequence of the awareness of encounter or "sovereign constraint". The work of Rudolph Allers, (1) Jean Piaget, (2) and others provides corroboration at the psychological level of the early beginning of moral experience. This means that the "question" of sin -- or, in the language of childhood, of "naughtiness, or no-wight-i-ness", -- is a real question for the very young child, and that he is ready, therefore, for the answer of Christian faith, the Gospel of forgiveness, the essence of which can be suggested to the child by the Christian parent through whom the love of God may be conveyed, even before its message can be articulated in verbal language. The following through in terms of its meaning for infancy of a doctrine of the forgiveness of sins in a love that became incarnate in the Man Christ Jesus, and a doctrine of the Church as the Body of Christ through which that reality is still experienced, issues in this conclusion. The alternative is to hold that the whole Christ of faith is an "end term" in the process of Christian nurture, and that only "partial meanings" -- which are not the Gospel of the New Testament -- can be conveyed to the child. All this points again to the inseparableness of Christian teaching from Christian Worship, for, while intellectual instruction may be concerned with partial

(1) "The Psychology of Character".

(2) "The Moral Judgment of the Child".

meanings and conceptual abstractions, the object of worship -- even of the worship of an infant as he shares, "wondering", in the simple ritual of a Christian home, is the whole Christ of faith.

The position assumed in the above paragraph requires to be distinguished from the view, elaborated in its extreme form by Freud<sup>(1)</sup>, but reflected in varying degree in certain studies of the psychology of religion that the God of infancy is simply the result of the deification of human parenthood. Pratt quotes Tracy as saying: "It is a tolerably safe assertion that a child who, for any reason, has never worshipped his mother, will be by so much the less likely ever to worship any other Divinity"<sup>(2)</sup>; and he declares that the attitude of the child towards his parents is "psychologically the same in nature as the attitude which he will in future years come to have toward God." "His God, growing directly out of his father or his mother, is made in the image of man."<sup>(3)</sup> Yeaxlee speaks in similar terms, and concludes that the infant's parents fill the place of God.<sup>(4)</sup> He is careful, however, to point out the fallacy of the Freudian position that because the attitude of the young child towards his parents is psychologically similar to that later adopted toward God, belief in God is therefore merely the survival of an infantile attitude; and he refers to the thought of Bovet<sup>(5)</sup> that we should speak rather of a "paternalization" of God

(1) In "The Future of an Illusion".

(2) Tracy: "The Psychology of Childhood", p.190, quoted by Pratt, op. cit., p.94.

(3) Op. cit., p.94.

(4) Op. cit., p.43; where he refers also to Freud.

(5) "Le Sentiment Religieux et la Psychologie de l'Enfant", p.30. Eng. Tr., "The Child's Religion", p.26; quoted by Yeaxlee, op. cit., p.49.



than a "divinization" of parents. Yeaxlee points out that parents "are interpreting or misinterpreting God to the child in the only medium possible". The revelation of a personal God must be mediated through a relation which is personal. The personality of the parent is the vehicle of the I - Thou relationship between God and the child. The love of the parent is experienced by the child as a clue to the  $\xi\gamma\acute{\alpha}\lambda\tau\eta$  of God; which is the ground of all human  $\xi\gamma\acute{\alpha}\lambda\tau\eta$ . Baillie's discussion draws attention to the fact that, however vaguely, the concept 'God' is formulated at a very early age (though God is already experienced as a reality, through his parents); and therefore Christian nurture should take note of the distinction made even by the young child between an "absolute constraint", and the obligation felt towards those who help to mediate this reality to him.

The issue of the spiritual status of the child cannot be settled at the level of the psychology of religion. It must be settled by asking what are the implications of the Christian doctrine of man for infancy? We have attempted to show that this doctrine is consistent with the view that the infant is, in a very real sense, capax Dei. "A new born child", the late D. M. Baillie wrote, "is the beginning of an immortal soul, but is not yet an independent soul". (1) The Biblical view is that he not only comes from the hand of God, but is at no point in his existence, out of touch with God. The child, in the act of divine creation, is constituted, not in a sort of Cartesian duality, an animal organism to which human

(1) "Theology of the Sacraments", p.82.

attributes are later added, but, holistically, "a living soul" (or an "animated body"),<sup>(1)</sup> both body and spirit, capable from the first breath of life of responding not only to the suggestions of sense, but, in and through those same sensory media, to the world of spirit, because he is an inhabitant of two worlds. This is the application to infancy of what Von Hügel termed "the sacramental principle". It is entirely Christian to speak, as the late Archbishop Temple did, of a sacramental view of the whole of life,<sup>(2)</sup> where all the rich sensory suggestion of the material and personal world may contribute to "the waking up of spirit".

The sacrament of Baptism is, as we have argued, an attestation of the truths affirmed in the Christian doctrine of man. If there is included within that doctrine the truth that man at no stage in his life, is out of touch with the ground of his human, personal life, in God, the spiritual character of infancy has been established, and this doctrine supplies one of the strongest arguments in favour of admitting the infant of Christian parents to Baptism. Infant Baptism is an expression of the spiritual solidarity of "the structure of the Divine Society",<sup>(3)</sup> and declares the infant to be capable of being received into that Society. Infant Baptism is a genuinely significant expression of divine grace, which, as Protestant theology has insisted, is not a mechanically operating force,<sup>(4)</sup> but, in Oman's words, "a gracious personal relationship".

(1) Cf. Robinson: "Christian Doctrine of Man", Ch. I, p.25.

(2) Referred to in the study by Iremonger.

(3) The title of the book by Dillistone.

(4) Cf. the criticisms of the Augustinian doctrine of grace in "Interim Report" (1956), p.39.

There is no point in life, we have contended, at which such a relationship is impossible. Infant Baptism is, further, a genuine instance of "prevenient grace", not in the sense that the operation of divine grace is in the first instance a "Thou - it" order of relation. To assert that an infant may be a true member of the Household of Faith, the \_\_\_\_\_, would be meaningless if predicated of a merely animal organism afterward to be endowed with "human" or "spiritual" qualities. What is asserted is that the child may be the actual recipient of grace, and the active recipient of revelation, before he is capable of articulating the experience in words, or receiving an explanation of its meaning. In this connection, the words of D. M. Baillie may be quoted: "When does the child become capable of the beginning of faith? If there is such a thing as a Christian child, a child's religion, at what age does this possibility begin? How far back can we go? And where shall we draw the line? The answer is that we dare not draw the line at all."<sup>(1)</sup> And again: "It is surely vital to realize that childhood is part of God's plan for human life, just as much as is manhood or womanhood. It is not His will that we should try to force upon little children an adult type of experience. It is His will that so long as they are children they should really be children ---. But neither can it be His will that they should go through their childhood without any part or lot in Christ, for He Himself delighted in little children, and even said: 'Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven'. It is rather God's will that children should

(1) Op. cit., p.86.

have such an experience of His grace and love as befits their stage of growth; in short, that they should be Christian children. Therefore they should be regarded as part of the Church of Christ, the entrance to which is marked by the sacrament of Baptism". (1)

It should, perhaps, be made explicit that the position here maintained is not in favour of the possibility of a "rudimentary profession of faith" which would justify the admission of a child to an "infantile believer's baptism". This would make nonsense of what the New Testament means by profession of faith. What is being argued is the possibility of a genuine though rudimentary spiritual and personal relation on the part even of an infant to God, which may, through the "nurture and admonition of the Lord in a Christian home", issue in a later profession of faith. What the "Interim Report" (1955) says regarding the exegesis of Mt. 18:3 -- "one of these little ones who believe in me" -- may be referred to. The words either refer to eligibility for Baptism, or else they refer to the actual belief of "little ones" in Christ. If so, "to despise 'the faith' of an infant and its relation to God is dangerous for it is against the heavenly ordering of God. To say the very least, they are given a spiritual relation to the Heavenly Father." -- The words "warn us against excluding little children from the whole sphere described so wonderfully in the New Testament by 'the Name of Jesus Christ'."

(1) D. M. Baillie: *op. cit.*, p.81-82.

## Incarnation and Infancy

It has already been maintained that the significance of Baptism is not confined to identification with Christ simply in his death and resurrection, but with His whole meaning. Every aspect of the total meaning of Christ has reference to the believer, at every phase of his life. This means, that there is a "Gospel in the Infancy" which has a very intimate reference to childhood. In the first place, there is corroboration here for what has been asserted regarding the spiritual character of infancy. Incarnation means that even in the Babe of Bethlehem, Godhead was present, which would be meaningless on any other interpretation of infancy than the one outlined above. The Pauline conception of a *κένωσις* finds its most extreme and poignant reference in the Christmas Message; and we may find here also an instance of accommodation of revelation to meet the human situation. (1) There is profound truth in the assertion that in the infancy of Jesus, God addresses Himself to the state of childhood. The Divine Life, and redemptive grace, touch human life at every point. It may be noted that the whole question of the religion of childhood is as much concerned with the child's capacity for receiving grace as it is with his capacity for exercising faith, and it should therefore be said that a sacrament, as a "means of grace", can operate through the subconscious levels of human nature. Moreover, the grace of God can be mediated, personally, through the influence of the Christian parent.

It may be stated, further, that the Gospel accounts of

(1) Cf. Torrance: Article on "The Meaning of Baptism", already quoted, p.131.

the miraculous birth of Jesus attest the fact that at no point of His earthly life was the Spirit not operative in Him. While He was given a special endowment of the Holy Spirit at His Baptism, for His divine vocation, the story of the nativity witnesses to the truth that the Spirit was present with Christ from His birth. Burrows, in "The Gospel of the Infancy", (1) has pointed out the deliberate symmetry in the first three chapters of Luke's Gospel, which has the intention of enforcing these truths. The deliberate parallelism between the events recorded of the childhood of Jesus and the childhood of Samuel is also given attention. (2) Even Thornton, who makes so much of the endowment with the Spirit at Confirmation, asserts His presence with the Infant Jesus. (3) The relation of Jesus to God was an unbroken communion throughout life. Two statements from the "Interim Reports on Baptism may be brought together as having a bearing on the Christian doctrine of Infancy, and the genesis of Christian faith. In discussing Mt. 11:25 f., it is stated that "it seems clear that the relation of little children to the Father is understood as mediated through the Sonship of Christ. Little children may not know what they are saying, but Jesus is Himself their cry to the Father. In the language of Paul: 'It is through the Spirit that we cry, Abba, Father' (Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:15; cf. Mark 14:36). (4) Also, "If Baptism is related to the Person of

(1) Op. Cit., Chap. I.

(2) It is not to be inferred that the episode recorded in I Sam. 3:1-18 refers, as some educators have indicated, to infancy. The word used is  $\text{רִצָּן}$  which has a wide range of meaning, from "weaned infant" to "youth". The rest of the context suggests the latter, vv. 11-14.

(3) "Confirmation", p.97.

(4) "Interim Report" (1955), p.22

Christ, it follows, as Athanasius was not slow to point out, that it is related to His humanity. It was our humanity which He assumed at His birth when He came down into our mortal life ---. This means that the pattern exhibited in the human life of Christ from His birth to His resurrection has become the normative pattern for our life in Christ."<sup>(1)</sup> And Calvin is quoted: "If in Christ we have a perfect pattern of all the graces which God bestows on all His children, in this instance we have a proof that the age of infancy is not incapable of receiving sanctification."<sup>(2)</sup>

Thus, if there is a true analogy, as Irenaeus, Augustine, and Calvin suggest, between the life of Christ and the life of the Christian, the infancy of our Lord has a special meaning for early childhood, which should be understood in its light. The infancy of Christ is the image of our restored humanity in terms of infancy. In short, Christianity is for infancy as well as for adulthood. Infant Baptism contains the recognition that from the beginning of life the child is capable of standing in the personal relationship through which divine grace is bestowed, and of making the response appropriate to him; i.e., of exercising the beginnings of faith. Baptism therefore represents the genesis of the life of Christian worship; for through it the individual is set as a "member" within the worshipping society. On the basis of the faith of his Christian parents, which is not a vicarious profession of faith on the child's part,<sup>(3)</sup> but the sign to the Church that the conditions exist for the

(1) "Interim Report", (1956), p.34.

(2) "Institutes" IV:16:18; cf. II:16:19.

(3) The fides aliena of the Reformers; c.f. Barth on Luther, op. cit., p.45-46.

implementation of his Baptism, (1) the child is baptized into the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and his life in Christ has begun. His infant Baptism is efficacious, as the Blessing of the Children by Christ was undoubtedly efficacious, for thereby he is set within a new spiritual environment wherein redemptive powers are operative, and his life henceforth is lived within the life of the Spirit-endowed Community. The interpretation of the foundations of personal life, and of the genesis of faith, given above, has been given at some length, because a distinction has to be made carefully between it and the psychological interpretation of the self and of the genesis of personality through social interaction, the truth of which must be given due recognition in the total Christian view of the person. An endeavour has been made to show the consistency of this interpretation with a Biblical understanding of the meaning of "the Great Sacrament" of initiation, through which the individual is constituted a Christian, a disciple, through which he is not only recognized as standing within the divine encounter, but also within the operation of the salvation-events centred in the Name of Christ. Christian nurture is thus implicitly defined, as the elucidation of the experience of confrontation, and the implementation of the meaning of Baptism in the subsequent life of the believer. The attempt has been made to establish the foundations of Christian nurture in a manner consonant with the Biblical view of childhood, i.e. in harmony with a fundamental aspect of the Christian Doctrine of Man. And finally, it has been our aim to indicate, right at the beginning of the process, the

(1) Cf. Cullmann: "Baptism in the New Testament", p.51.



way in which worship, regarded dynamically, in terms of its essential meaning, determines the nature, and the whole course of Christian nurture.

### A Note on Conversion

Because of the importance of the subject of conversion, especially in relation to the psychology of adolescence, it is necessary to refer briefly to its place in a theory of Christian nurture, and particularly to the way that is affected by the interpretation of the doctrine of Baptism which has been offered, and its relation to the "dynamics" of faith and to the experience of worship.

It is, perhaps, appropriate to begin the discussion with the statement that "if the objective reference of Baptism is lost, and all the emphasis is laid upon conversion, and Baptism is thought of as the sacrament of conversion rather than the act of Christ, then the conception of infant Baptism becomes impossible".<sup>(1)</sup> The subject of conversion will be viewed differently, according to the point of view adopted in regard to Baptism, and to the status thereby accorded to children within the covenant of grace. As with the question of the beginnings of personal existence, the question of conversion must, for our purpose, be approached from within a theological frame of reference, rather than from a psychological perspective. The psychology of conversion has been extensively studied within recent times,<sup>(2)</sup> and the results are of profound interest to Christian

(1) "Interim Report", (1956), p.35.

(2) William James: "Varieties of Religious Experience", Lectures IX and X.

Starbuck: "The Psychology of Religion".

Pratt: "The Religious Consciousness", Chapters VII and VIII

Clark: "The Psychology of Religious Awakening".

Allport: "The Individual and His Religion".

nurture, but a descriptive account of the phenomena associated with the experience of conversion does not take us to the heart of the matter. The subject of present concern, therefore, is the theological nature of conversion in the context of the appropriation of the revelation disclosed in Jesus Christ.

Tillich has given a philosophical definition of the experience of conversion as signifying either (a) the awakening from a state in which ultimate concern is lacking (or hidden), to open awareness; or (b) the change from one set of beliefs to another -- in which case only if "the ultimacy of the ultimate concern is better preserved in the new beliefs"<sup>(1)</sup> is the happening of truly "ultimate" significance. His study is of profound value for the understanding of Christian experience, especially in showing how the "dynamics" of faith is related to the "dynamics" of doubt, and how Christian faith can, and must, live within a context of continuing doubt. His account indicates that conversion has a much wider reference than to institutional religion. And Pratt has shown that conversion may be away from religion to disbelief, for example to the acceptance of scientific secularism. In the latter case, the scientific view of life is regarded as of "ultimate concern".<sup>(2)</sup>

The English versions of the New Testament only rarely use the terms "convert" or "conversion". The significant word in the Greek New Testament is μετανοεῖν, (and the noun μετανοία), which, as Richardson points out,<sup>(3)</sup> "implies much more than a mere

(1) "Dynamics of Faith", p.123

(2) Op. Cit., p.126 ff. He uses the term "counter-conversion" to designate this type of experience.

(3) "Theol. Word Book", Article: "Repent", pp. 191-192.

'change of mind'; it involves a whole reorientation of the personality, a 'conversion'." Again, "repentance means much more than being sorry for one's misdeeds; it involves the active acceptance of God's gift of faith." The connotations of the Hebrew word  $\text{נָחַם}$ , which "represents a reorientation of one's whole life and personality, which includes the adoption of a new ethical line of conduct, a forsaking of sin and a turning to righteousness", (1) shed light on the Christian meaning of repentance. Souter says that  $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha\nu\omicron\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$  has particular reference to "acceptance of the will of God by the  $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ , instead of rejection", and implies "a change in the inner man". (2) Within the context of the Christian faith, then, conversion may be taken to mean a profound change within the self, associated with profound changes in the relations with other selves, induced by the experience of the encounter with Ultimate Reality, disclosed in the revelation in Jesus Christ, and evoking the absolute affirmation of faith.

If this provisional definition be accepted, the question arises, how soon in the life cycle of the individual may the occurrence of conversion be regarded as possible? On this question the psychological studies of conversion have not shed a great deal of light, for they have generally started from an a priori understanding of its nature in the light of an "adult" type of experience, and have proceeded to declare conversion to be "an adolescent phenomenon", (3) rather than something which can happen in childhood. Our study of the

(1) Ibid., p.191

(2) "Pocket Lexicon to the Greek New Testament", p.157. The New Testament and Septuagint use of the word  $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$  is wider than in classical Greek, and is sometimes inclusive of the Old Testament connotations conveyed by  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ , the person, personality, inner life. c.f. Robinson, "Christian Doctrine of Man", Chap. I, ad.loc.

(3) Pratt, op. cit., p.124; c.f. Allport, op. cit., pp. 33-36; Yeaxlee, p.136.

nature of the beginnings of the dynamic experience of Christian faith in the life of the individual has suggested that the essentials of "the acceptance of the will of God by the VOÛS, instead of its rejection", and the "change in the inner man" involving a "reorientation of the personality", may take place much earlier than the majority of psychological studies, preoccupied with the profound psychic experiences of adolescence, have indicated. It may be affirmed, if revelation is communicable through relationships before it is appropriated through verbal symbols, that God in Christ may truly confront the very young child through the encounter with a Christ-filled personality in an authentic Christian family, and the radical transaction of acceptance may already have begun, long before it has been given verbal articulation, and responsible appropriation has taken place. (1)

It should be made clear that the position being adopted is not that the child born of Christian parents is, by the fact of his birth of Christian parents, a Christian. This would involve the conclusion that the interval between birth and infant Baptism is theologically insignificant, and would ultimately imply the evacuation of Baptism except in the case of converts from paganism, of any real meaning. Our position is that Baptism does not mean one thing in the case of an infant, and another in the case of an adult, a thoroughly un-Biblical point of view. "We do not come across anywhere in the New

- (1) i.e. The essential meaning of *μετανοια*, a turning to God with the whole being, and the beginning of the faith attitude involving the recognition of sovereign constraint and the reversal of the tendency to make self the centre, -- in short the beginning of the *καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ* in Christ, of which Baptism is the sacramental recognition, and from which issues the process of growth in union with Christ -- may be expressed in infancy within the believing household, and within the Christian

Testament the idea that there are two classes of Christians, baptized Christians and born Christians, and nowhere in early Christianity do we find the idea that children born of Christian parents do not need Baptism".<sup>(1)</sup> Becoming a Christian is not a matter of biological inheritance -- this would be a misrepresentation of the Biblical idea of spiritual corporeity ---; nor is it, in Bushnell's apt phrase, "a vegetative process". It is in all cases a result of spiritual rebirth, an event to be distinguished from natural birth.<sup>(2)</sup> Nor does the position being maintained include the idea that the Christian doctrine of original sin, which attests the universality of the fallen condition of humanity, namely, that there is a root of evil in every human being, which issues in sinful acts, does not apply to infants.<sup>(3)</sup> The words of the unpublished hymn by a Canadian writer do not represent the Biblical view:-

"Here is no sin to wash away;  
 No evil spirits here dismay;  
 Only sweet innocence to give  
 To Him in whom all sweet things live."<sup>(4)</sup>

We must insist that if the sacrament of Baptism is efficacious, it is efficacious for all, a real event, even in the case of an infant, the effects of which, however, are not limited to the moment of administration. Baptism signifies the reversal of man's fallen condition, in the work of Christ; i.e., it has reference to the opus operatum

- (1) "Interim Report", (1955) p.27.
- (2) John 3:3-7.
- (3) A phrase recollected from the writings of James Denney occurs to the mind: "When we are awakened, we are in chains".  
Non potest non peccare.
- (4) Used for many years at the sacrament of Baptism as celebrated in Deer Park United Church, Toronto.

of Christ, the universal Baptism in which all partake. Infant Baptism signifies that, as with all, the benefits of the redemptive work of Christ are applied to this particular life, and that the child is set, by Dominical command, within the orbit of that redemptive work, and in the Christian Society within which those events are operative. It may be noted that this interpretation of the genesis of Christian faith, and of the experience of Christian conversion, is in harmony with the doctrine of Christian initiation outlined earlier, in which the primary emphasis is not upon the individual act, but upon the divine priority, which points forward to an act of responsible appropriation, as well as to a process of *τελειωσις* which is not terminated at confirmation, but is never-ending. We may mention, in this connection, what Dix says about the excessive individualism of certain branches of Protestantism. (1) The remarks made by Pratt, also, in his chapter on "The Factors at Work in Conversion", about the emphasis on conversion in different Christian traditions, are highly significant for our argument. "With most religious people conversion (of the genuine moral sort) is a gradual and almost imperceptible process, with an occasional intensification now and then during adolescence. --- In churches, which lay no special emphasis upon conversion, such as the Roman Catholic, the Greek, the Unitarian, and the Episcopalian, as in most non-Christian religions, no great notice is taken of these periods of excitement. The emphasis in the Catholic Church is on outer acts and on character building, and as the young person is not directed to watch his emotional experiences he seldom finds any of striking importance". (2) If the authentic foundations of Christian

(1) "Theology of Confirmation", pp. 30-34.

(2) "The Religious Consciousness", pp. 153-154.

faith may be laid early, in the nurture of a Christian home, and if, therefore, the fundamental redirection of the life toward Christ, which is the essence of conversion, may take place in early childhood rather than adolescence, the above situation is the one to be anticipated, and what happens in adolescence, therefore, would be the dynamic and responsible laying hold on a spiritual transaction already made, and the integration of the self around Christ as centre, incorporating elements of intellectual belief into a total, committed attitude of life. (1) In the case of the baptized infant, growing up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord", (2) the work to be effected in later childhood or youth is not that of radical conversion, but rather "growth in all things into union with Christ." The life of faith, symbolized in the initiatory rite of infant Baptism, has already begun. To attempt to induce in the child so reared within the Body of Christ, an "adult" and radical experience of conversion, is both a denial of the Biblical reality of spiritual solidarity in Christ, and a denial also of the fundamental meaning of Baptism. It is also to deny the fact, alluded to by Sherrill, (3) of the "continuing encounter", the fact that many persons, throughout the whole course of their Christian life pass through many "revolutionary changes in the self", which may be truly described as "conversions", "re-orientations of the personality", a redirection of the life to face in a more truly Christward direction. Where the

(1) Cf. Yeaxlee: "Religion and the Growing Mind", p.136 ff. For Yeaxlee the essential meaning of conversion is the integration of all the dynamic forces within the self about a new centre.

(2) Eph. 6:4.

(3) "Gift of Power", p.161-162.

life has been "disciplined from the start", (1) in Christian Baptism, what Allport describes as the "traumatic" type of religious awakening is not to be looked for. (2) It is therefore not accurate to say that there is no place for "conversion", where infant Baptism is practised. One must remember, first, that "Christians are made, not born"; and second, there is room for "conversion", in the Old Testament sense of a "return unto the Lord", (3) or in the sense of a maturer experience of, and fuller commitment to, God in Christ, within the context of the experience of the Baptized Christian.

Two points may be made, therefore, in conclusion:

(i) Psychologically, conversion after Baptism is an undoubted reality, i.e. events may take place post-baptismally, especially in the case of "nominal Baptism", which are psychologically indistinguishable from conversion from "outside" to the Christian faith. These experiences bear all the subjective marks of conversion.

(ii) Theologically, however, a fundamental distinction must be made between the above experience, and the experience of radical and genuine conversion to Christianity from paganism. Even "nominal" infant Baptism is a spiritual reality, and is a valid Baptism, in which God is operative. It is a Baptism in which, on the part of the parents, the human side of the covenant has not been fulfilled, and which may not be implemented by the act of responsible faith on the part of the child. The child who has been baptized and has

(1) "Interim Report", (1955), p.21.

(2) "The Individual and His Religion", p.35. He distinguishes three types of religious awakening:

- (a) the definite crisis (traumatic type);
- (b) the emotional stimulus (semi-traumatic);
- (c) the gradual awakening.

(3) As in, e.g., Jer. 4:1.



turned away from Christ or remains indifferent to Him has not the spiritual status of a pagan, but of an apostate Christian.

Thus while the dual concepts of growth and crisis are both operative in the Christian life, there is a genuine theological difference between the spiritual crisis after Baptism, the ἐξόπιξις event, after which, in the nature of the case, no radical conversion, theologically speaking, can take place, and the crisis of initial conversion. The spiritual situation of the baptized person cannot be declared to be identical with that of the baptized person. The latter is a καὶνὴ κτίσις, born anew, in Christ. Something has been done to him, by Another. Baptizatus est. Birth is both an event, and the beginning of a process; and in spiritual birth also, the process may not be fulfilled.

We must distinguish carefully, then, between a theological and a psychological reality. And we may ask what, from both points of view, is the significance of those moments, which occur in Christian worship, in which the worshipper feels his life to be judged, and in which there is a conscious "turning" of the life to face Christ. Psychologically, these are conversion experiences; we may describe them, from a subjective point of view, as "little conversions". Yet theologically regarded, they are of a different order from what the New Testament means by that μετάνοια which precedes Baptism; for they are experiences occurring within the context of the fundamental life-affirmation of faith. The spiritual "sitz im leben" is different.

Some comments must now be made on the consequences for a

theory of Christian nurture of the interpretation of conversion which has been outlined. This interpretation takes its stand upon the position that it is impossible to lay down a law, where the New Testament does not, regarding the time before which it is impossible for the individual to exercise the beginnings of a faith-attitude to God, to experience within the environment of the Christian family a rudimentary turning toward and acceptance of God-Self-disclosed-in-Jesus-Christ, which is the core-meaning of conversion. It maintains also that Baptism, which is the sacramental rite through which the individual is set within the Body of Christ, and is therefore "in Christ", is a decisive spiritual event, which cannot be repeated. If, therefore, evangelism means the proclamation of the Gospel to those who are outside the Church, and the winning of them to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, all talk of the evangelization of baptized persons is misleading and inaccurate. The New Testament nowhere creates the impression that those who, by virtue of Baptism, whether in adulthood from paganism or in infancy as a result of "natural membership of a Christian family conferred on him by his birth", (1) are within the Body of Christ, require to be evangelized, though much is said about the need to appropriate what is theirs by reason of their Baptism, and the spiritual peril of "falling away". (2) One must therefore disagree with certain of the positions adopted by Homrighausen in "Choose Ye This Day", where he appears, for example, to apply to those already baptized the statement that "all Christian nurture rests upon an evangelistic basis." (3) If the sacrament of

(1) Cullmann: Op. cit., p.51.

(2) Heb. 6:5-6.

(3) Op. cit., p.44. Cf. the pamphlet: "The Evangelism of Children", published by the International Council of Religious Education.

Baptism, and the doctrine of the Church, mean anything, they mean that the essential experience of "being won for Christ" has already taken place, and all that now remains is for the baptized person to become what he is. A careful distinction, therefore, requires to be preserved between the evangelistic teaching of those outwith the Church, with a view to their conversion, and the Christian nurture of baptized persons within the Household of Faith, with a view to achieving maturity of faith ( *τελειωσις* ) in union with Christ.

One would not wish this point of view to be identified with that presumed in the movement for educational evangelism which apparently assumes that the soul of the child is naturaliter Christiana and that therefore the note of urgency and of crisis must not be sounded in Christian nurture. It is the merit of Homrighausen to have pointed out that the note of *κρίσις* (judgment) will be a constantly recurring feature of the Christian life within the worshipping society, and that this should lead to that act of implementation of infant Baptism by personal confession of faith, which is recognized in confirmation. As was pointed out in a previous chapter, all that the New Testament means by Baptism cannot be completed in infancy. This includes intellectual awareness of the salvation-events by which man's redemption was accomplished, and responsible confession of faith in the light of that knowledge. Yeaxlee speaks of the formation of the "Christ sentiment", of the process by which Christ consciously becomes the master-sentiment of the maturing mind, and the centre of the whole life. (1) The momentous

(1) Op. cit., p.139 f.

psychological significance of adolescence, as the period within which a personal "philosophy of life" is likely to be formed, and the repudiation or confirmed acceptance of Christ as the "master-sentiment" of the individual life, likely to occur, certainly requires to be recognized, as most psychologists of the religious life have done. The single concept of "growth", in the sense of a smooth and gradual process, is not adequate to explain the Christian life. The presence both of growth and of crisis in the life in Christ is recognized in the New Testament, particularly in the parabolic teaching of our Lord, and, most conspicuously in the case of one whose Christian faith has been "nominal", events may occur to which the psychological term "conversion" may be applied. William James's celebrated distinction between a "once-born" and a "twice-born" type of religious experience, and between a religion of "healthy-mindedness" and the experience of the "sick soul", has a genuine psychological validity. (1) The claim which has to be made, however, in the interests of a theory of Christian nurture consistent with a Biblical doctrine of Baptism and with the Christian Doctrine of Man, is that Christian Baptism signalizes the theologically decisive event.

(1) "Varieties of Religious Experience". Lectures IV and V discuss "The Religion of Healthy-mindedness"; and VI and VII, "The Sick Soul". The terms "once-born" and "twice-born" occur on pp. 80 and 166.

The experience of becoming a Christian, and of maturing in the life in Christ, has been seen to be so intimately bound up with the dynamic experience of Christian worship as the context of the "continuing encounter" of God with men, as not to be understood apart from it. It is for this reason that it has been found necessary to approach the whole subject of Christian nurture, which is concerned with the "formation"<sup>(1)</sup> of the Christian person, through an examination of the nature of Christian worship. Kierkegaard, sometimes described as the greatest psychologist of the Christian life,<sup>(2)</sup> offered a profound analysis of the process by which a man becomes a Christian.<sup>(3)</sup> This was "scientific" in the sense that it was the product of a highly skilled power of introspection, which Augustine affirmed to yield a true knowledge, both of the self, and of the divine nature.<sup>(4)</sup> But it was not "mere" psychology, in the sense of being the result of an objective analysis, but was made from within the existential experience of encounter. It had, however, the serious disadvantage of failing to understand the creative relationship of the tension between individuality and corporeity

- (1) The word is frequently used by the Roman Catholic writer on Christian Education, Edward Leen, *op. cit.*, Chapters I and III. It is used here without the association with "sacramental regeneration" which is part of his conception of Christian nurture.
- (2) Niebuhr: *Op. cit.*, Vol. I., p.46, note; and H. R. Mackintosh, "Types of Modern Theology", p.219.
- (3) His thought on this subject is expounded by Walter Lowrie, "Kierkegaard", Part V, esp. pp.409 - 449.
- (4) Cf. Sherrill's reference to "two central tenets of Augustine's; namely, (1) that self-consciousness is distinct in kind from all other forms of consciousness, because it shows us what being truly is; and (2) that all self-consciousness is at bottom creature-consciousness, i.e., the consciousness of being finite creatures. He refers to J.V.L. Casserley, "The Christian in Philosophy. And cf. Augustine on "Knowledge" as discussed in Battenbury, "Guide to Augustine", chapter by T.K. Scott-Craig.

within the Christian life. He saw clearly only the demonic aspects of life in community.<sup>(1)</sup> It may therefore be argued that his study of Christian experience is seriously vitiated by his own failure to achieve commitment and community,<sup>(2)</sup> and his inability to understand the nature of Christian community within the Body of Christ.<sup>(3)</sup> His negative attitude to the inter-personal character of the Christian life, upon which Brunner has written with understanding,<sup>(4)</sup> is perhaps founded more upon a realization of the failure of the Corpus Christianum, i.e., of "Christendom", than upon failure to perceive that the existence of the Christian is within the Corpus Christi,<sup>(5)</sup> but he appears to have little positive appreciation of the Church as the Community of believers. One substantial fruit of the attempt to understand Christian nurture in the light of worship is that it sets the ministry of Christian training organically within the life of the Church, and exhibits Christian nurture as a function of the whole Church, and an articulation of its life, and not merely an adjunct existing alongside of the Church. This is important for two reasons: (1) because historically, the rise of the Sunday School movement in Great Britain and in America took place more or less independently of the organic life of the Church, and led to an

- (1) Kierkegaard's virulent attack on the Church, in his last phase, (Lowrie, op. cit., Part VI), makes this apparent.
- (2) Cf. Buber: "Address to the Single One", in "Between Man and Man", pp. 49-51.  
Also Allen: "Existentialism from Within", p.12: "He who preached commitments was unable to commit himself."
- (3) Lowrie, op. cit., pp. 531, ff.
- (4) In "Man in Revolt": "Man cannot be man by himself." p.106.
- (5) Lowrie, op. cit., p.535 ff.

unfortunate separation of corporate worship and religious instruction, the effects of which still persist; (1) and (2), partly because of this historical situation, but also due to the derivation of normative principles for religious nurture by analogy with those of "progressive" general education, instead of from within an understanding of the distinctive character of the Christian faith itself, the true relation between worship and nurture has not been appreciated in American Protestant nurture. (2) A Christian education which regards its responsibility to the child in the area of worship as discharged in the provision of "worship services" which are adapted to the psychological capacity and needs of the child, has no real rationale of worship in Christian nurture. (3) The liturgical and the instructional dimensions of nurture are not genuinely related. An examination of what constitutes the experience of Christian worship, out of which the forms of worship have grown, provides the ground work for such a rationale. Kierkegaard's criticism of aestheticism, (4) and his profound understanding of the relation between the ethical and the religious dimensions of the personal life, (5) as well as his insistence on the fact that the life before God is the life of decision, (6) may also be mentioned because of their relevance in exposing weakness in the contemporary scene in Christian nurture.

- (1) Frank Smith: "Short History of English Elementary Education"; ad loc.; and Benson: "Popular History of Christian Education", p. 119, ff.
- (2) E.g. by Ligon, Chave, and Elliott.
- (3) Books of this type are legion: e.g. MacDormand: "Building Worship Services"; and R. Seneca Smith: "The Art of Group Worship".
- (4) Lowrie, op. cit., p. 232, ff.
- (5) Ibid, p. 150, ff.
- (6) Art. "Kierkegaard", by Garvie, E.R.E.

The term "worship" has, throughout this study, been interpreted as having a wider reference than to cultus, the "agreed embodiment" of men's worship in liturgical structures. It is regarded in terms of its fundamental meaning as that experience in which revelation is communicated and received, and through which faith is quickened. It distinguishes, therefore, between the revelation of God in Christ as originally communicated, recorded and witnessed to in the Scriptures, and the revelation which is dependent on that original source, (1) which is mediated to the individual through Christian worship. That worship assumes liturgical forms which reflect the character of the Christian revelation, and which are expressive of the response of Christian faith. These liturgical expressions of the Christian theocentric life reflect psychological as well as theological realities. Like the revelation itself, they are accommodated to the nature of the worshipping subject. The classical pattern of Christian worship is the liturgy of the Eucharist, (2) the foundation of corporate congregational worship, which consists of a fusion of two liturgical elements, the "prophetic", (3) based upon the proclamation of the Word through the reading of Scripture and its exposition, in the context of prayer and praise; and the sacramental, the appropriation of the Word mediated through sacramental participation. The events of the original revelation, reported in the Scriptures and witnessed to by the Church, were normally communicated to adults, in the first instance. This does not mean, however, as

(1) Sherrill makes the distinction between "the response to original revelation" and "the response to dependent or derived revelation", *op. cit.*, p.86 - 87.

(2) Cf. Maxwell, *op. cit.*, p.111; 119; etc.

(3) A designation borrowed from Heiler; "Prayer".



Kierkegaard appeared at times to suggest, that the Christian revelation is only for the adult,<sup>(1)</sup> and that the child, by reason of his intellectual or psychological immaturity, stands outside its sphere of reference. Sherrill has pointed out that the child is not forgotten in the Bible, and that in harmony with the Biblical understanding of the corporate character of the spiritual life, it is assumed that the revelation will be mediated to the child through his organic relation to the community of faith, his status therein being expressed in terms of sacramental rites of initiation.<sup>(2)</sup> The implication of these circumstances, however, is that Christian nurture within the context of Christian worship has to reckon with the fact of the psychological and spiritual immaturity of the child. The liturgical forms of Christian worship have been elaborated in response to an adult response to revelation, although it has been pointed out that the materials and symbols of worship have themselves a multi-dimensional appeal<sup>(3)</sup> which is calculated to make them fitting expressions of true corporateness. The symbolic and, in the widest sense, "sacramental" character of Christian worship,<sup>(4)</sup> means that its power of communication is not limited by the intellectual status of the

- (1) One is reminded of Allen's criticism of Sartre's "omission of children" from his world, and the comment: "Would the child pass from impulse to self-transcendence and far-reaching decision if he were not trained thereto by the society into which he is born, by the home in the first instance?" *op. cit.* p.90.
- (2) Sherrill, *op. cit.*, p.177 f.
- (3) Underhill, *op. cit.*, p.28; and p.44.
- (4) I.e. "-- the actual conveyance of spiritual meaning and power by a material process --- not only God's meaning to the mind, but God himself to the whole person of the worshipper." Temple, "Nature, Man, and God," p.484; quoted Underhill, *op. cit.* p.43.

worshipper, and therefore includes the child in its capacity to suggest the mysterious and transcendent aspects of the divine reality. A further gain, therefore, in the interpretation of Christian nurture from the perspective of worship, is that it is prevented from assuming the character of Christian nurture "within the limits of pure reason", but includes within it the dimension of mystery.

Consideration of psychological realities nevertheless compels the recognition that the child's experience of worship cannot completely be expressed in terms of participation in the corporate liturgical observances of the adult Christian community. While the essentially corporate character of Christian worship implies a principle of "togetherness" in Christian nurture in which the younger and the more mature may "learn Christ" from, and with, each other, in the Christian family as in the Church School, -- a principle which has been almost lost sight of in the virtual exclusion of children from corporate worship, and in the excessive segregation into grades and departments, -- the problem created for nurture by the fact of immaturity remains to be faced. The definition of Christian worship, therefore, must be inclusive of those less formal types of observance which take place within the Christian home, and in groups within the institutional life of the Church, the purpose of which is to introduce the young child to the experience of Christian worship, and to prepare him for eventual full participation in the liturgical life of the worshipping community. The important consideration is that the worship of the child -- from the very earliest years -- should not be thought of as a thing apart, but that he be considered as a genuine participant in the Church's life of adoration

and praise, a true member, though an immature member, of the Body of Christ. Fundamentally, the term "Christian worship" must be allowed to cover the entire range of experience in which God is encountered and faith is awakened. Even the most private acts of Christian devotion are never solitary acts. At every moment, the Christian is related to the life of the whole Body of Christ, which includes the Communion of Saints.

- A. The first principle concerns the spiritual status of the child within the Church, derived from a Biblical understanding of the nature of its corporate life of worship, and from the interpretation of the Christian doctrine of Baptism already given. It may be stated in the words quoted in Part II, from Evelyn Underhill:-

"The Catholic character of Christianity demands that souls of every sort and at every stage of growth - - - shall have their place within its borders; and each one find there the means of a full personal life of worship suited to his state."<sup>1</sup>

- B. Since liturgy is the whole Gospel of the Triune, Incarnate God in His redemptive Self-disclosure to man, "dramatically" set forth in such a way that the worshipper is led to identify

(1) "Worship", p. 172.

himself with this action, and finds his life transformed thereby; it follows that effective participation therein, and the elucidation of the full meaning of what we do in Christian worship, and the understanding of the implications of worship in terms of the Christian Way,<sup>(1)</sup> is Christian education of the truest sort -- the education of the worshipping life.

The liturgical structure of the corporate worship of the Church suggests that explanation of the meaning of Christian worship, both as preparation for the appropriation of revelation, and as elucidation of the Word that is received there in terms of the "returning movement" of worship with reference to the world and the "sanctification of the total life"<sup>2</sup> of the worshipper, is the centre of Christian training. This is a consequence of the fact that the life of the Church is worship, and that the ethical life of the Christian is simply the expression of the fruits of the Spirit, who is operative in the life of the worshipping Church.

The liturgy, as Dix has observed, was regarded by the early Church as "something done" rather than as "something said". It was essentially a ritual to be performed, in which all took part in the liturgical action, which was thoroughly symbolic and sacramental in character, conveying its meaning through the ritual pattern of word and meaningful gesture, the significance of which was felt as well

(1) Cf. the Didache, with its contrast between the Way of Life and the Way of Death.

(2) Underhill, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

as understood. What is the meaning of the *ΤΟΥΤΟ ΠΟΙΕΙΤΕ* of Christian worship in terms of childhood? There is a meaning to be learned in Christian worship, which does not appear on the surface, and is not fully disclosed to the uninitiated. Participation in the liturgy evokes the educational question: "What mean ye by this service? The meaning therefore, has to be expounded, so that the symbolism and the dramatic pattern which suggest and convey spiritual realities may do their work. Christian worship, engaging every dimension of personal being, appeals also to the understanding. Through it the mind is informed, moral attitudes are changed, personality is transformed. It has, moreover, a theological and Biblical basis which must be known. It is, in the profoundest sense, an educational experience. This mode of approach to worship in Christian nurture is significantly different from its utilitarian employment as a technique for effective moral action.<sup>1</sup> Here the objective reference of Christian worship is lost, and the sacrificial offering of the total self is neglected, or degraded, in concentration on the subjective outcomes of worship.

The educational application of what was said earlier about the symbolic character of all religious communication may be made at this point. Since symbolic language is the language of faith, it is possible to interpret Christian nurture as the process whereby

- (1) As in Bower, "Christ and Christian Education"; and in Elliott: "Can Religious Education be Christian?"
- (2) See Underhill, op. cit., p. 70 on the "non-utilitarian character of Christian worship".

the symbols of Christian faith become meaningful to persons of all ages.

The use of symbols presume "agreed meanings". That is to say, that symbols are an expression of community. A fundamental aspect of participation in the life of the Christian community is acceptance of, and knowledge of, the symbols by means of which Christians communicate on matters of faith. In order that faith may become articulate, and Christian community may become actual, the meaning of symbols must be known and shared. This presents acute problems for Christian nurture, particularly in a time when the acceptance of the religious symbol and myth has become difficult in the rational climate of modern education and of western culture.

The impossibility of the removal of the myth, or the symbol, from religious discourse, or their substitution by conceptual modes of thought, has been pointed out by Tillich.<sup>1</sup> To replace the myth by "literal" truth or ratiocination is to evacuate religious terminology of the dimension of the transcendent and the infinite. The educational problem arises, however, of the proper handling of myth (a) at a time when the distinction between literal or historical and religious truth is not realised; and (b) at a time when the myth has been perceived not to be true in its literal sense.

(a) At the earlier stage, the myth-making consciousness of primitive

(1) In Article on "Theology and Symbolism", already referred to. Cf. "Dynamics of Faith", and "Systematic Theology", Vol. II, ad loc., from all of which the substance of the following paragraph is derived.

peoples <sup>may</sup> be compared with that of the young child.<sup>1</sup> Tillich therefore distinguishes the natural literalism of the child, and of the primitive, from conscious literalism in an older person; i.e. resistance to the "breaking" of the religious myth when the age of intellectual questioning about religion has been reached. He argues that literalism, or resistance to demythologization, is natural and right in the earlier stage; therefore to teach the myth as literal truth is a sound principle in Christian nurture in early childhood, because it is still religiously meaningful; e.g. to teach that Heaven is "up there" is a meaningful description of "the transcendent", for the young child. When the stage has been reached where "man's questioning mind breaks the natural acceptance of the mythological representation as literal", the frank recognition of the myth as myth, should occur, and should be encouraged. Natural literalism and conscious literalism, Tillich declares, are both justifiable, the former in the child and the primitive, the latter "where the questioning power is very weak". It is unjustifiable and spiritually harmful in the mature intelligence.<sup>2</sup> (b) The distinction between historical truth and "the truth of faith" must be made plain to the maturing religious mind. What Tillich has to say about the "deliteralization" and "demythologization" of the central Christian Myths of the Cross and the Resurrection<sup>3</sup>; and

- (1) Cf. Wilson, "Child Psychology and Religious Education", Chapters I and II.
- (2) Tillich: "Dynamics of Faith", p. 50 ff.
- (3) "Systematic Theology", Vol. II, pp. 150-154.

Henderson's criticism of Bultmann's "demythologization",<sup>1</sup> have both an important bearing on Christian nurture. It must be one function of Christian education in its later stages to give a satisfying explanation of the relation between the language and the truths of religion and the other aspects of the intellectual experience of the growing child; and while Tillich may be criticised for appearing at some points to suggest the comparative unimportance of the historical, his discussion of myth has pointed the way to the solution of the nurtural problem of building the bridge between the faith of early childhood and the faith of adolescence and of maturity. The bearing of his thought about the symbolic language of faith on a theory of Christian nurture in which the experience of worship supplies the determinative principles, will be apparent. Education in the acceptance of symbol, and in the recognition of the symbolic as the language of religious utterance, will take its place in Christian nurture alongside of the associated task of the discussion of the theological content of the faith.

- C. The third principle is derived from the historical character of the revelation which forms the basis of Christian worship, and concerns the relation of Scriptural teaching to Christian nurture. In the context of worship, the events, happenings, personalities, and ethical teaching of the Bible are seen in their true character. The events are seen to belong to the drama of God's Self-disclosure in time, and are viewed in their relation to the

(1) "Myth in the New Testament".



culminating "mighty acts" in the Birth, Ministry, Passion, Resurrection and Exaltation of Jesus Christ. In this way, "objectivism"<sup>1</sup> in the teaching of doctrine and of Scriptural knowledge, and the confusion of the true objective of Christian nurture with orthodoxy, are avoided. The reading, study, and explanation of the meaning, of the Bible are brought, through teaching within the experience of Christian worship, into a spiritual and organic relation to the living expression of the Church's faith. Bible study is given its proper motivation and orientation. The main intention of Christian nurture, to fill the Lordship of Christ with meaning, and make this a reality in the life of the growing person, and seek "the integration of the self about its highest centre, -- and its restoration to that life of worship for which it was made",<sup>2</sup> is made dominant. The true significance of the historical Jesus for nurture is made apparent by approaching that life from within the experience of transcendence which is found in worship. For genuine Christian worship is not "Jesus worship", but the experience of the Triune God; just as Christian Baptism is Baptism into the full, Trinitarian faith of the Christian Church. The study of the life of Christ in Christian education, therefore, is engaged in, not as an objective "quest for the historical Jesus", but as an approach to the Christ of faith, and the ethical teaching of Jesus is not understood in detachment from life "in the Spirit". What is of equal importance, the events of the Incarnate Life are

(1) Brunner: "Divine-Human Encounter", Ch. VI.

(2) Underhill: op. cit., p. 188.

seen to have a spiritual correspondence with the life cycle of the worshipper filling the various happenings with spiritual significance, each event, each crisis, each decision being related to the Word. The difficult question of the way in which the Old Testament should be handled in Christian teaching<sup>1</sup> finds its solution in the Christocentric attitude to the whole of Scripture which is found in Christian worship, wherein the incompleteness of the Old Testament revelation finds its explanation and fulfilment in the Christ of the New Testament, and is seen to be part of the total answer to the question concerning Him "that should come".<sup>2</sup> The relevance of the ethics of the Old Testament for the Christian life is discovered through the same Christocentric perspective which is proper to Christian worship, which does not, however, lose the sense of standing within the sequence of the events which are the vehicle of a revelation disclosed in time.<sup>3</sup> Whatever may be the merits of the study of the Bible "to be read as literature", in general education,<sup>4</sup> Christian nurture is concerned with the "whole meanings" which are found through participation in worship, in which Christ is

- (1) A problem handled, e.g., by J. W. D. Smith, in "Introduction to Scripture Teaching"; and by Margaret Avery, in "Teaching Scripture".
- (2) Mt. 11:3.
- (3) Cf. Butterfield: "Christianity and History"; and Cullmann: "Christ and Time".
- (4) See Murray: "Education into Religion".

experienced, as the Apostolic Church experienced Him, as Lord of Life, *Χριστός Κυριός*, and the study of the Scriptures is the occasion of the "continuing encounter" with Him. The teaching of the Scriptures, therefore, should be undertaken with a view to their meaning for Christian worship.

D. Since Christian nurture has to do with the communication of revelation to the immature, and particularly with that human response to it which is open to the influence of the parent and the teacher, since it is a speech from faith to faith<sup>1</sup>, a fourth principle must deal with the problem of immaturity in its bearing on the reception of revelation and the awakening of Christian faith. Our study of the Biblical doctrine and practice of Baptism has exposed the fact that the New Testament lays down no law regarding the age before which the event of spiritual rebirth, the beginning of which is marked by the rite of Baptism, is not possible. We have found, likewise, that it is impossible to draw any line indicating when the child is capable of the simplest beginnings of a faith-attitude, which is a responsive turning of the total self to God as revealed in Jesus Christ, of whom the Holy Spirit is the Bearer to the Church; and of which worship, (which, again, engages the whole conscious and unconscious life,) is the expression. The rite

(1) *cf.* Buber's attitude to education as "partaking of the character of a lived relation". Christian nurture is thus a dynamic encounter between selves in the context of the Primary Encounter, which is made explicit in worship.

of Baptism, at whatever age, constitutes the person a worshipping member of the ἐκκλησία . Because of the organic spiritual relation between the members of the believing family and the baptized infant, even the simplest "liturgy of the home", in which the latter may participate in ways of which he is only remotely conscious, in the subtle psychic interplay of feelings charged with spiritual meaning through the dynamic relation of faith in One who is present, in His Church, "wherever two or three are gathered together in His Name", the worship of the Christian home, in which the youngest infant participates in however rudimentary a way, is an integral part of the Church's unceasing liturgy of adoration which the Book of Revelation depicts in sublime symbolic speech. That is to say, faith and worship are not confined to the intellectually mature, and, like the Word of revelation itself, can be expressed in a language which is other than verbal, to which the unconscious as well as the conscious life is open, and which is mediated through the channels of sense, and through personal relationships. This principle, therefore, concerns the possibility of the mediation of God's Word in "sensible" symbols, to all members of His Church, in ways appropriate to the age and maturity of the worshipper. This principle, it is maintained, is in accord with the character of the revelation recorded in the Bible, which is not tied down to the form of words (translated words!) in which it is transmitted. It is in harmony with the truth of the mediated character of all divine Self-disclosure to His sense-bound creatures, which is recognised in

the fact that "the Logos became flesh", and in the fact that "He took bread". The principle acknowledges the dependence on all worship, even at the maturest and most spiritual levels, upon the senses. "Since we can only think, will, and feel in and with a physical body and it is always in close connection with sense impressions received through that body that our religious consciousness is stirred and sustained, it follows that we can hardly dispense with some ritual act, some sensible image, some material offering, as an element in the total act of worship, if that act of worship is to turn our humanity in its wholeness towards God."<sup>1</sup> All that is done here is to carry this observation down to the level of childhood, and to declare that if young children are to have that spiritual relation to God which the Biblical understanding of the person declares them to have, and of the reality of which Baptism in infancy is the sacramental sign, they must approach God perceptually if they are to approach Him at all, and through visual as well as auditory channels. The implications of this principle for Christian education are manifold, and are not confined to liturgical observance, but have reference to the whole curriculum of Christian training: but it is a deduction from the character of worship, and particularly children's worship, itself. The foundations of devotional meditation in childhood, in the contemplation and discussion of religious pictures, is only one aspect of it.<sup>2</sup> The whole question of the visualization of the

(1) Underhill, op. cit., p. 25.

(2) See Iremonger's discussion of the worship of young children in a series of articles "Expository Times", 1953.

supernatural and the principles which govern such forms of teaching, are suggested here. The difficulties raised for Christian teaching are seen in their acuteness in connection with the visual representation, in picture or in film, of the Person of Christ; the danger, for example, through the frequent use of an inadequate picture of Christ in a Sunday School "Worship Centre", of stereotyping the impression of Jesus at an infantile or adolescent level. The loss of the dimension of the Cross is apparent in many such pictures, in which the atmosphere is rather that of Galilee than of Gethsemane; in other words, there is a failure through the inadequate use of sensory media in children's worship, to convey or suggest "whole meanings".<sup>1</sup>

The above principle may be described as that of the addressability of persons of all ages by the language of revelation, that of symbolism, which may or may not be verbal in form.

E. A final principle seeks to define the relation of moral training to Christian nurture. Nothing could be of greater importance for the teaching ministry of the Church than to make clear the true relation between worship and the Christian life. The intense "practicalism"<sup>2</sup> of American Protestant religious

- (1) Research into the question of the visualization of Scriptural subjects is being undertaken currently by the Division of Christian Education. N.C.C.C., in U.S.A.
- (2) Criticised by Sherrill, op. cit., p. 181 f.

education, its concentration on the "problem" instead of the "mystery",<sup>1</sup> has produced a situation in which character-building has become a virtually autonomous area, divorced from its authentic source and motivation. James D. Smart, a Canadian, writing with intimate knowledge of the whole American scene, has criticised the "moralism" in religious education which has made of the Bible a source book of ethical precepts and moral examples.<sup>2</sup> The "Character Research Project", a widely influential experimental undertaking associated with the name of Ernest Ligon,<sup>3</sup> is almost a classical expression of this attitude and temper. While the project does not deny the necessity of worship to the Christian life of the child, it endeavours to elaborate a completely autonomous scheme of Christian character training, based on the "hypothesis" that in the ethical teaching of Jesus is represented the ideal of Christian personality. The entire curriculum, therefore, is founded substantially on the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, with its focal point in the Beatitudes.<sup>4</sup> These are translated into what are termed their "psychological equivalents", which become the eight broad "traits" of Christian

- (1) Cf. Marcel's distinction between "problem" (solved by analysis), and "mystery" (which cannot be analysed), in Allen, op. cit., p. 154 ff.
- (2) "Teaching Ministry of the Church", p. 77 ff.
- (3) Author of: "The Psychology of Christian Personality", "Their Future is Now"; "A Greater Generation", and "Dimensions of Character".
- (4) "A Greater Generation", p. 20.

character which must be "learned" if the child is to become a Christian. The process of learning is summarised in five psychological principles or "laws of learning": exposure, repetition, comprehension, conviction, and application.<sup>1</sup> The traits of Christian character are found to be complex in structure, and so are broken down into specific "attitudes", amounting to several hundred, which are then grouped together on the basis of a kind of factorial analysis, and become the subject matter, or rather the teaching aim of the separate lessons. Extensive psychological research has uncovered the form of presentation of each character-attitude appropriate at the various mental age levels, and illustrative material, from the Bible and from life, has been accumulated and is constantly revised. Intensive leadership-training, and an admirable scheme of close collaboration between teacher and parent ensures the effective integration of Church School with home life.<sup>2</sup> It is anticipated that, provided the teaching has been effective, the attendance regular through the years, and application to the situations of daily life has been secured through the co-operation of the home, this form of moral education will issue in consistent Christian personality. The attempt to isolate the experience of worship from the moral life of the child, however, in the construction of a curriculum in which, moreover, psychological principles and insights of a predominantly

(1) Ibid., pp. 10-14.

(2) Ibid., Chapter VII.



stimulus-response type have taken precedence over theological determinants and sound Biblical interpretation, results inevitably in a radical distortion of a true nurtural perspective, and leads to a religion of self-salvation and of Pharisaism rather than that of the New Testament. One is reminded more of the moral education advocated by Bertrand Russell,<sup>1</sup> in terms of habituation in acceptable forms of behaviour, than of a Christian life issuing out of faith in a living Lord, and of Underhill's words, critical of a certain type of Christian expression:- "Here - - - the moral preoccupation sometimes tends to become excessive; and obscures the purely religious element which gives it significance, Concentration on the Ethos takes the place which rightly belongs to adoration of the Logos: and man, intent upon the moral struggle, forgets the supernatural purpose which that moral struggle is meant to serve - - -".<sup>2</sup> Christian nurture within the British tradition, represented by such writers as Leeson<sup>3</sup> and Murray<sup>4</sup>, is perhaps less inclined to divorce ethics from worship, though within Presbyterianism the tendency has been to concentrate upon the conceptual, non-symbolic, and dogmatic aspects of nurture, and therefore to fail to offer a Christian training which provides for the whole complex nature of the child.

- (1) "On Education".
- (2) Op. cit., p. 81.
- (3) "Christian Education".
- (4) "Education into Religion".

One of the tremendous gains to be secured from the interpretation of Christian nurture from the perspective of the "existential"<sup>1</sup> encounter of Christian worship is that the ethical life of the Christian takes its true and Biblical place as the first of that encounter. Character-building undoubtedly has its place in the enterprise of the Church's teaching ministry, but from the position which has been maintained it becomes apparent that the ethical objectives of the Christian faith are not achieved by encouraging the growing child, by taking thought, to add cubits to his moral stature. It may be said that he becomes good, rather, in a state of absent-mindedness, where the intention of his entire being is concentrated upon God, and not upon his own moral conditions. The connection between election and responsibility, which Brunner declared to be the fundamental structure of Calvin's theology<sup>2</sup>, is also the source of the ethical motive of the Christian life. The knowledge of election, which is the root-principle of Hebrew ethics, is also the source of Christian ethical motivation; for it is the divine election ( *κλήσις* ) which creates the Church ( *ἐκκλησία* ), and the Christian life is constituted in its response to that relationship of divine grace. We are introduced, then, in Christian worship, to a new dimension of morality,

- (1) Used in the sense indicated by H. R. Mackintosh: "Types of Modern Theology", p. 219, note. Cf. the distinctions of meaning noted by Tillich; "Syst. Theology", Vol. II, p. 19-21, and the statement about Kierkegaard, in "The Courage to Be", p. 125, already quoted.
- (2) Brunner: "Man in Revolt", p. 78.

not in terms of conformism or of ethical specifics, but rather of the character of what Berdyaev called the "ethics of creativity",<sup>1</sup> the outcome of the free and uncoerced movement of the human spirit, grounded in God's redemptive action in Christ, and issuing in the life of responsibility and vocation<sup>2</sup>. Thus we are introduced to the idea of the sacramental life, that played a large part in the thought of Archbishop Temple: a life, that is, in which all the actions and activities of the total experience of living are seen as expressions of the individual's meeting with God and response to God, and in which the individual is seen at every moment and every stage as confronted by the claim of God, and the summons to complete self-offering (sacrifice). This interpretation of the ethical life is different from that expressed, for example, in the discipline of the Roman Benedictine Order, where the thought is that the life becomes good as the individual repeats the sacramental experience of the Mass. It is, rather, to be described, as Camfield describes it, as an ethics of the Spirit, a morality of love, having its source in the experience of forgiveness, dissociated entirely, therefore, from all thought of salvation by moral achievement<sup>3</sup>.

- (1) Berdyaev contrasts normative ethics with the ethics of creativity: "Destiny of Man", p. 165 f.; Cf. Spinka's exposition of Berdyaev's ethical teaching in "Nicolas Berdyaev", ch. 8.
- (2) Which is given sacramental recognition in confirmation.
- (3) The words of Berdyaev are opposite: "It is the Fall that made moralists of us! "Destiny of Man", p. 47. And Cf. Kierkegaard's reminder that the object of Christian faith is not simply the Teaching, but the Teacher, i.e. Christ Himself. God in human form, the union of the Absolute and the historical, God become Man, is the Teaching. See Mackintosh, ad loc., and Griffith, ad loc.

an ethic of "obedience unto sanctification",<sup>1</sup> always close to concrete situations, but opening up infinite possibilities of growth; not an ethics of individualism, since it is the Church in which faith is the bond of community, which is the field within which the Spirit works, and the Christian life expresses itself in the realm of personal relations ("God gives us our neighbour")<sup>2</sup>.

The Holy Spirit, in creating faith, sets up the Church; and since faith cannot express itself except through love, there is established "a new supernatural bond between man and man".<sup>3</sup>

The interpretation of Christian nurture from the standpoint of worship proposes the principle, therefore, of an oblique rather than a direct approach to the question of the moral training of the Christian child. It declares the experience of worship and of devotion, rightly engaged in and prepared for, to be morally creative. Its aim is "the sanctification of life".<sup>4</sup> Through the encounter of Christian worship, in the context of an intense awareness of inter-personal dependence, "Christ is formed"<sup>5</sup> within

(1) Camfield: "Revelation and the Holy Spirit", p. 123.

(2) Cf. Brunner: "God and Man", p. 161 ff.

(3) Camfield: op. cit., p. 126.

(4) Underhill: op. cit., p. 77. Cf: "The Christian is required to use the whole of his existence as sacramental material; to offer it and consecrate it at every point, so that it may contribute to the Glory of God". This is Christian ethics.

(5) Gal. 4:19. There is profound truth in the words of Schleiermacher, quoted by Farmer: "Revelation and Religion", p. 76: "The fruits of the Spirit are nothing but the virtues of Christ".

the individual; the "new man"<sup>1</sup> comes into being. The life in the Spirit, of which worship is the supreme expression, is not confined to the conscious mind, but the vitalities of the unconscious life are part of the spirit's unified response. The ethical training of the growing child becomes, then, an understanding of the relation between worship and life.

### The Telos of Nurture.

The statement in the foregoing pages indicates only some of the major principles which are suggested by the contemplation of the meaning of Christian nurture in the context of the experience of Christian worship, which would become the basis of a curriculum of Christian training. A great deal of research is still needed into the forms and symbols that are most meaningful for Children's worship at every age. Our attention has been concentrated chiefly on the theological aspects of our subject, in an endeavour to reach first principles. This is not to say that the question of the psychology of the growing child is not of major importance for a theory of Christian nurture. It is obvious, for example, that what Sir Percy Nunn has to say, with reference to general education, about the meaning of ritual, routine, and play, and, indeed, the whole mimetic aspect of life, has an intimate bearing on the nurture of the child in the Christian life.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the basic question

(1) II Cor. 5:17.

(2) "Education: Its Data and First Principles", Chapters VI, VII, and XI.

that should be asked by all who are engaged in this task is: What does the statement that the purpose of life is "to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever" mean, in terms of childhood? Cullmann has reminded us that the note of "exuberant joy" (ἐγχαλλίασις) was present in Christian worship from the very first;<sup>1</sup> and it is obvious that if life within the Church is to engage the "whole person" of the child, something of that note must be predominant in Christian nurture. It must centre in meaningful activity of the most deeply satisfying kind; and children's worship must partake of this character. It must enable the child to "enjoy God".

In Baptism, the child is incorporated into the "Body" of Christ. Robinson argues that this is not, in Paul's thought, simply a metaphor<sup>2</sup>. The Church is the Body of the Christ. Through the "death" of Baptism, the child shares in the glorious Body of the Risen Christ, as a "member". This is what defines his place and status in the Church.

But it also indicates the final objective of Christian nurture, as of the Christian life. It precludes any individualistic definition of its aim. The "old man" has "died". The "new man" in Christ is one whose selfhood is reconstituted in the restoration of the relationship divinely ordained in Creation: a relation of life-

(1) Cullmann: "Early Christian Worship", p. 15.

(2) "The Body", Chapter III.

to-life in the love of God. The new situation created by Baptism is that of living in the restored Imago Dei, which has been shown to have a two-fold relation (a) with God, and (b) with the other-self through whom the love to God is expressed.

Thus while the final aim of Christian nurture can never be conceived in such a way as to suggest the final extinction of individuality (the self never ceases to be a self; by being swallowed up in divinity for example); yet its fulfilment is not individualistic; its telos is seen to be the perfect expression of true Community: the Glorious Body of the Christ. This is given expression in the sentence in the Ephesian letter which might be taken as the aim of Christian Nurture: "-- till we all come, in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect Man (εἰς ἁπόλυτον τέλειον), to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."<sup>1</sup> It is Christ, the Second Adam, the Restorer of the Image, who defines the "perfect man". He is the bringer of redemption, not only to the individual: He is also the Image, or Type, of the true, or "essential", humanity. It is Christ, not as an individual man, but Christ as "the Body", who is the Image of God. Barth expresses this inseparableness of Christ from His Church by saying that it is Christ with His Bride (the Church) who is the "image" of the "True Man".<sup>2</sup> The idea of true corporateness

(1) Eph. 4:13.

(2) Cf. Hirschwald: Article in "Presbyter", Vol. 5, 4(1947), p. 15.

implicit in the Ephesian letter is finely suggested in Milton's splendid line, referring to England, in the Areopagitica:-

--"One mighty stature of an Honest Man".

Not individual moral perfection or spiritual maturity, then, can be thought of as the end of nurture, but the restoration of the image in the fulfilment of the Church. It is also the telos of Christian worship: the Adoration of God by a Redeemed Society.



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