

" . . . Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error"

The
DISCERNER

AN
INTERDENOMINATIONAL
HERESY-EXPOSING
QUARTERLY

Volume V. Number 2

2. POLITICAL AND SOCIAL RADICALISM
5. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF LIBERAL THEOLOGY
FOR OUR PRESENT-DAY MORAL DECADENCE
10. THE ECUMENICAL DETERIORATION OF THE
EVANGELISTIC AND MISSIONARY IMPERATIVE
14. BOOK REVIEW
16. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

April — June, 1965

CONTENTS

The DISCERNER

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Published Quarterly
Price \$1.00 for 6 issues; \$2.00 for 12 issues;
20 cents a copy; for foreign
subscription add 4 cents per issue.

John E. Dahlin, *Chairman*

C. Victor Nyquist

Copyright 1965 by Religion Analysis Service, Inc.
902 Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis, Minn. 55403
Printed in the United States

Dr. Ernest Pickering

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL RADICALISM

Prof. John E. Dahlin, Editor

For a number of years there has been a growing trend among people throughout the world in turning to governments for the assumption of economic and sociological programs with the purpose of providing many of the good things of life materially for the masses. The idealistic concept of governmental functions are being side-tracked more and more in order to obtain the materialistic benefits. Truly, the present socialistic trend is world-wide in its outreach. Even such governments as the British and the United States (with a historic Christian philosophy) are moving rapidly into the economic and sociological spheres of activity. Since the expansion of these programs are gradual or piece-meal in achievement, many people have very little awareness of these present day trends. But for discerning people it is apparent that even the United States is embarked on a course wherein the government is assuming an ever larger economic and social responsibility. The recent anti-poverty program, initiated by the present administration, is simply another step in involving the government directly in local economic and social responsibility. The writer does not advocate a complete aloofness on the part of the government in matters pertaining to general welfare. But it is alarming, nevertheless, how rapidly we are

drifting into a welfare state concept. In every country where such a course has been charted, invariably, it has led to less and less reliance on God and human initiative in meeting the daily problems of life. Communism and Socialism have this in common, namely, that both give the major emphasis to the earthly and material aspects of life. The provision of security from the cradle to the grave for the people seems to be the primary goals of present-day governments. The modern trend in giving excessive emphasis to the economic and social needs of men will leave little room for the promotion of the all-important spiritual and moral values of life. The main burden of this article is to point out that churchianity today seems to be leading the way in the promotion of programs which are earthly in scope.

THE MODERN CHURCH ABANDONS ITS PRIMARY MISSION

As we read daily the developments within our country, we find more and more the concern of the church is to involve itself in every area of earthly activity. Unfortunately at times many within the evangelical wing of Christianity also are parading with the popular word *involvement*. While it is proper for the church to make forceful pronouncements regarding the wrongs and the shortcomings of our economic and

social order, it is not however, the primary functions of Christianity in seeking to correct all of the social evils of our time. When such a course is pursued practically no time remains for effective evangelizing and witnessing. The directives of Christ to His church are clearly spiritual, and all other functions of Christianity must be considered as secondary.

Recently many church leaders from all parts of the land have involved themselves in mass demonstrations, sit-down activities, and in other determined efforts for the purpose of achieving racial integration. It ought to be known that only through the Gospel will such a desirable goal be attained. Ministers by the score have traveled across the land meddling in sectional areas, and a few have lost their lives. These misguided zealots believe an ideal society will come about through the application of modern panaceas. Clergymen have been arrested for violation of laws and city ordinances, and some have been jailed for various illegal procedures. Never once did the first century church follow such a course. The early church majored in the Gospel ministry.

Our newspapers carried the reports lately that many ministers from all parts of the land came to Chicago to participate in a project called, "The Rock Bottom Plunge." This involved posing as bums, sleeping in bug-infested flop-houses, parks, or in all night bars and theaters. Scores were arrested for blocking traffic, others were apprehended for various forms of disorderly conduct. Of course it is the mission of the church to minister to the down-and-outers spiritually and manifest compassion. But the whole description of the "Rock Bottom Plunge" failed to indicate a concern for a spiritual ministry to the unfortunate men and women. While these tactics are dramatic and serve as publicity stunts, they are never-

theless a disgrace to participating clergymen. Law-breaking can never be justified no matter how well the intention may be to do good. The right places to seek remedial measures are at the legislative halls and in city councils and not on the streets performing clumsy demonstrations.

Moreover, financing fair employment has become a popular program for liberal churches and clergymen. This has led to the boycott of commercial firms which may not have achieved racial integration with all deliberate speed. Both Protestant and Catholic leaders have moved rapidly in meddling in the matter of giving certain contractors and suppliers orders and bids, who are following a fair employment practice. This is based not on quality or costs, but rather on the nebulous employment practices. I do not believe in discrimination in any manner, shape or form. But these liberals who are so concerned about the elimination of discrimination, become guilty of an equally bad practice of partisanship and discrimination. In New York certain churches have adopted resolutions in which they have been committed to confine investments to corporations which have seemingly provided equal employment opportunity. One large denomination has adopted a policy of granting no contracts to a contractor where total integration is lacking. There seems to be no attempt on the part of these liberals to understand that lack of training and qualification often serve as greater barriers than racial prejudice in providing jobs.

RADICALISM IS MANIFESTED IN ATTACKING SCRIPTURAL EVANGELISM

The Time magazine, for May 14th, carried a news item regarding the pronouncement by the members of the National Council of Churches' Commission on Evangelism, meeting in

Atlanta, Georgia in May. A key statement was given: "The concept of evangelism is broadened to include a totality of man's life. Old evangelism tried to get everybody in the ark; today the church is trying to get the significance of God's love to people outside the ark," said Dr. Gerald Jud. The sessions were spent mostly dealing with race relations and experimental ministries that seek to *serve men* rather than *convert them*. Witnessing in line with the New Testament might well be abandoned according to the report of this commission.

When religious leaders and denominations give priority to the immediate solution of all economic and social inequalities, they simply beat the air, because it invariably leads to the neglecting of the primary functions of the church which is witnessing. If the church seeks to correct all the economic and social shortcomings of our society, it will rob itself of time and energy needed in the evangelizing of men.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS MEDDLE IN THE VIETNAM WAR

Recently 900 sign-carrying Protestant, Catholic and Jewish leaders stood before the walls of the Pentagon keeping vigil in protest against the administration's policies in Vietnam. Many of these leaders have openly advocated the recognition of Red China and urged the admission of this ruthless regime to membership in the United Nations. Such blindness and unrealism seems unbelievable, yet religious leaders carry on this kind of activity regularly.

In a report issued in Washington, D.C., by the American Friends Service Committee, a call was made for the recognition of Communist China, and a plea for the support of the admission of that country in the United Nations. The report in a book form

was entitled: *A New China Policy*. Speaking recently in Buck Hills Falls, Pennsylvania, President John C. Bennett of Union Theological Seminary, New York City, suggested that "*The American policy* should concentrate on *nudging* Red China toward the *more stable and moderate stage of Communism instead of overthrowing that regime.*" The China policy he advocated would include establishment of economic and diplomatic relations with mainland China and efforts to admit her into the United Nations. These are disturbing developments taking place particularly when religious leaders lack patriotism and loyalty to their government in a time of unprecedented crises.

Not long ago a large advertisement appeared in the daily papers with the heading: 2700 Ministers, Priests and Rabbis say: MR. PRESIDENT: In the name of God, STOP IT! A national cross-section of clergymen had allowed their names to be entered on this full-page advertisement, and new names were coming in at the rate of 100 a day seeking to be identified with this list sponsored by Clergymen's Emergency Committee for Vietnam. Among the six leaders of this organization is the name of Dr. Edwin Dahlberg, former President of the National Council of Churches. Listen to their attack on the President's Policy. "Mr. President, everyone of us is deeply, personally dismayed by the role the United States is playing in Vietnam. Our government's actions in Vietnam have been, and continue to be, unworthy of our common religious faith, or the lofty aspirations on which our country was founded . . . Let us call a conference of all nations involved, including China, not alone to conclude peace but to launch at once a major and cooperative effort to heal and rebuild that wounded land." The attack on

(Continued on page 9)

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF LIBERAL THEOLOGY FOR OUR PRESENT-DAY MORAL DECADENCE!

Rev. C. Victor Nyquist
Pastor Park Avenue Covenant Church
Minneapolis, Minn.

"We are rapidly drawing to a crisis. What the event will be, is beyond my foresight. Let us with caution indulge in the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle." Thus wrote President George Washington to a contemporary during the days following the American Revolution. French infidelity was riding high, wide, and handsome in the Colonies. "Men laughed at the brilliant wit of Voltaire, wept in sympathy with the exquisite romance of Rosseau and stood in wonder, or followed in hesitating thought those master magicians, the Encyclopedists, as they pursued their problem of reconstructing the universe without a God" (Dorchester, *Christianity in the United States.*)

This country, not to say the world, has faced many a crisis. It is to be doubted however if anything quite like the present has been seen before. The church has always been the champion of moral values down throughout its history save for a very few unhappy instances. Today the church has become the proponent of every moral license in the name of personal liberty.

A candid look at present-day conditions is not a happy one. The lurid details are shocking . . . if we still can be shocked! Immorality is walking unabashed in broad daylight. Pornography is fast becoming one of our nation's greatest ventures. Over \$500 million dollars worth was sold this past year! Illegitimate births have increased 30 per cent the last

decade! Dr. Newton Senn, director of the Child Study Center at Yale University, says: "In the United States we have more high school girls dropping out because of pregnancy, even girls who aren't yet in high school. They are 12 and 13 years old and come from all kinds of homes" (*Christian Life*, Feb. '65). A special committee in the California state legislature reported that two out of every five teen-age marriages were forced marriages because of pre-marital pregnancy, and one out of every two would end in divorce! *Newsweek* reported recently that a university junior testified that, "If a girl reaches 20, and is still a virgin, she begins to wonder whether there is something wrong with her as a woman!" A high school principal in Washington, D.C. reports that thirty-four girls in his high school were dropped this year because of pregnancy. He also reported that two of his high school girls had set up a brothel directly across the street from his school! Billy Graham in a recent issue of *Eternity* related concerning a letter received from a 17 year old asking for special help because of things he had discovered in his own home. His parents considered respectable neighborhood people had been discovered in horrible night orgies with other families, which involved mate-swapping plus other obscene procedure.

Dr. Pitirim Sorokin, Harvard sociologist, wrote recently, "Every phase of our culture has been invaded by sex. Our civilization has become so pre-occupied with sex that it now oozes from all pores of American life!" Dr. Goodrich C. Schauffler of Portland, Oregon reports that illegitimate

births to teen-agers has doubled within the last 15 years. He goes on to say that the reason for this is that children today "are subjected to sex in its rawest forms before they have the faintest concept of its total meaning in life, and we adults furnish the example. We have only to look about us to realize that, as a nation, we are preoccupied—almost obsessed—with superficial aspects of sex; you might say, with sex as a form of amusement. This is not true sex, with its corollaries of love, marriage, and child-bearing." He goes on to say: "Young people nowadays are exposed to teachings such as those of Freud and Jung, and to research material such as that of Kinsey, without the co-operation of a mature intelligence. The result is an emotional shambles which fosters many of the deviations and denatured biological trends which are common among our young folks."

Stanley High wrote almost two decades ago: "To anyone who is undrugged, unsmothered and uncoerced, the evidence of the nation's moral disarmament is too plain to be missed. It can be given, chapter and verse, in terms of the record." Our annual crime bill now towers over \$20 billion dollars! We have over one million less than 35 years old, living criminal lives! Three million children are born every year to drunken parents, and half of these are born idiots! Three hundred thousand of them are born deaf, dumb, or blind! The District of Columbia, which headquarters the "Great Society," shows a crime increase of 19.3 per cent in 1964! A recent news release in the *Minneapolis Star* (Sat. May 29, '65) reports that the chief of the Washington, D.C. transit system is requesting the creation of a special 250 man police squad to ride their buses at night to protect the drivers and passengers against the rising tide of nocturnal assaults and robberies! In New York city additional officers

have been assigned to the subway lines for the same reason! Edgar Hoover of the F.B.I. warns us that if conditions worsen in our larger metropolitan areas it will not be safe to walk the streets after dark without a special escort! Cities such as Detroit, St. Paul, and others have been forced to ban all night games and to restrict the attendance to pupils, faculty and officially identified persons because of rowdiness at high school athletic events!

It is no wonder that Charles Gould, the publisher of the *San Francisco Examiner*, in a recent editorial bewailed what's happening in our beloved country:

"What has happened to our national morals?

An educator speaks out in favor of free love.

A 'man of God' condones sexual excursions by unmarried adults.

Movies sell sex as a commercial commodity.

Book stores and cigar stands peddle pornography.

A high court labels yesterday's smut as today's literature.

Record shops feature albums displaying nudes and near nudes.

Night clubs stage shows that would have shocked a smoker audience a generation ago.

TV shows and TV commercials pour out a flood of sick, sadistic and suggestive sex situations.

A campaign is launched to bring acceptance to homosexuality.

Radio broadcasts present discussions for and against promiscuity.

Magazines and newspapers publish pictures and articles that flagrantly violate the bounds of good taste.

Look around you. These things are happening in your America!"

This thing is called the "New Morality." I believe it was Bishop Robinson of Woolwich who began to use the expression some years ago in his writings. Naturally it is not "new."

It is as old as all human evil. It is the obnoxious filth of ancient Sodom walking about in a new guise. The dress may be different, but the degradation is the same. It is simply another witness to man's attempted rebellion against all Divine authority. It is the puny creature trying to get rid of the powerful Creator. It is the prophetic cry of the 2nd Psalm . . . "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us" (v. 2.3).

Where shall we place the blame?

Nicolas de B Katzenbach, Attorney General of the United States, blames it on "tensions in society, the lack of jobs for the unschooled, dope, changes in family life." He speaks of parents "who are more interested in themselves than their children," and affirms that "society is going to have to create substitute parents." (*Look*, June 1, '65). Dr. Harold Hodgkinson, dean of Bard College, a trained sociologist, writes: "We went through a period of extreme permissiveness in dealing with youngsters, the drinking went along with that. Parents drank more themselves, and as their kids grew up the parents didn't seem to care whether their youngsters were experimenting with alcohol or whether they were setting a bad example for their children" (*Saturday Evening Post*, April 10, '65). I am afraid that these learned gentlemen are confusing symptoms with causes. The eminent criminologists of the Harvard Law School, Professor and Mrs. Sheldon Guleck, may have been closer to the root of the sickening matter when they said, "Not only parents but others are uncertain in many cases as to what is morally right or wrong!"

This last statement brings us back to our quotation from President Washington; namely, "Reason and

experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."

Dr. John Roach Stratton, one of the great prophetic voices of our nation of a past generation, wrote: "The source of all the disorders of today—the wars, the Bolshevism, the strife between capital and labor, the riots and the bloodshed, the vice and the crime—all of these things have come about because men have lost faith in God and His Truth. And they have lost faith because the pulpit has not been upon its job. Lawlessness is rampant because the fear of God has been lost" (*The Menace of Immorality in Church and State*, P. 16).

Mr. Ernest W. Zimmerman, in a well-documented article in (*The Sunday School Times*, July 21, 1962) entitled *Evolution and Behavior in Our Schools* points out the irrefutable fact that the evolutionary hypothesis not only undergirds practically all of our educational theories today, but also effects very definitely our present-day ethics. He reports that in a recent issue of the NEA publication a leading divinity school dean was invited to write the lead article. This dean admitted that our present generation was "presenting a blurred image of American ideals and values to American youth." The learned dean, with a touch of pathos, said that he hoped that though we were following pathways of uncertainty, the rising generations of American youth would nevertheless do better than their elders! When our youth is informed and taught constantly that they are nothing more than improved animals it is rather dubious to think that anything but animal morals will result.

Dr. L. Nelson Bell, that highly esteemed missionary doctor and statesman and writer, puts his finger on the immediate source of our present-day moral infection when he states with candor and without equivoca-

tion: "*The New Morality is an inevitable result of the New Theology*" (*Presbyterian Journal*, May 26, 1956) He goes on to say: "There is one good thing about the New Morality—it has shown the lengths to which the New Theology may lead in its utter bankruptcy when confronted by human depravity."

This New Theology demands the right to determine for itself, without the Scriptures, its own standards of morality. It insists that there are no moral absolutes. To these present-day theologians the Divine Revelation is only relative, and can never be a definite norm for personal human conduct. They affirm that the Bible is culturally conditioned. What was applicable in St. Paul's day cannot be applied today. Consequently the "church" has lost its "Thus saith the Lord!", and the results are disastrous indeed.

In one of our larger cities a concerted move was made to bring respectability to homosexuality. Who were the leaders in this movement? The liberal clergymen! A group of righteous-minded citizens in one of our southern towns made plans to organize a special committee to combat obscene literature on the news stands, and to oppose as much as possible questionable movies. Who was it that took steps to stymie the move? The local Ministerial Association! These ilberally-minded men felt that to curb the sale of such matters or to try to stop the showing of such films would be a threat to personal liberty! A leading seminary president has gone on record approving the publishing and promulgating of obscene books. Dr. Theodore Gill, the head of the San Francisco Seminary at San Anselmo, California, speaking before the Committee on Intellectual Freedom of the American Library Association bewailed the fact that certain people with out-dated notions, based primarily on certain

Bible principles, trying to give "authoritative answers to all possible questions" were at the root of all this furor. He openly defended certain books, many which have been barred from our news stands. At a later date he wrote a lead article in his own seminary paper in which he boasted about his twelve year old son indulging in these lurid productions. No one who knows the Truth will be surprised to know that this same man has repeatedly refused to affirm his personal faith in the Virgin Birth of Christ and other kindred doctrines. *There is a sinister synonymy between liberalism in theology and looseness in moral behavior.*

James Burns in his classic *Revivals, their Laws and Leaders*, writes: "This unrest in the sphere of belief has arisen through the scientific revival which has characterized the second half of the last century . . . the result of these changes has been the unsettlement of belief, for many others the loss of faith, and for all a certain hesitation regarding even the most central doctrines. It has introduced into the pulpit, also, a certain conscious insincerity, as of men who were not quite sure of their ground. . . . The result is that much, if not all that is distinctive and life-giving in the message of Christianity, has been lost; passion is simulated, earnestness is often directed toward useless things, and men in the pew, even though they do not consciously realize it, are yet unconsciously affected by the absence of the note of certainty and of intense conviction . . . For a weakened church means a strengthening of every influence which works for man's undoing, and no heart escapes its sorrows" (Pp. 65-67).

There is a spiritual nature to this sex-crisis, which we must recognize if we are to procure a proper remedy. The Apostle Peter and also the Apostle Jude by Divine Inspiration wrote of these ominous days. "There shall

be false teachers among you, who privily (as by stealth) shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of which the way of truth shall be evil spoken of . . . having eyes full of adultery . . . while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants (slaves) of corruption . . . the dog is turned to his own vomit; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Pet. 2:). "Ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ . . . filthy dreamers . . . mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves sensual (in a psychological sense!), not

having the Spirit (the Holy Spirit!)" (Jude)

The Christian's answer is Romans 12:1,2. He must never be governed by the mores of this world, but by the Word of God. Our bodies are also Blood-bought. They belong to our Lord!

The Church in a certain sense has lost its cutting edge. This is tragic. It has watered-down its great teachings on morality and old fashioned righteousness. Consequently our problem is ineffectiveness as a witnessing assembly. We have absorbed the culture of our day rather than opposed it. We have failed to be spiritual salt in this corruption. We have left our "first love," and we will have to go back and "do the first works again" if we hope to keep our candlestick of testimony.

(Concluded from page 4)

the government goes on with additional paragraphs in the Open Letter which are somewhat subversive in content. It is significant that these religious spokesmen made no pronouncement when Communistic aggression took place in Hungary, in Congo, and in Cuba. No protest was made when tens of thousands were slaughtered by Communists. But when our government attempts to resist the spread of Communism, then these misguided liberals become extremely vocal in attacking their government. This is the time for churchmen to support their government when it is committed to arrest the spread of Communism.

It might well be expected that on the University Campuses extremists will ventilate their radicalism and some of the pacifistic theories. But it is sad indeed when nationally known churchmen move into radicalism, and offer support directly or indirectly to socialistic and Communis-

tic programs and revolutionary activities. The apostasy in Christendom is much wider extended than the average Christian is inclined to believe. We are witnessing a breakdown in spiritual and moral leadership by a large and powerful force within churchianity.

Political and social radicalism are being promoted with great determination by those who are the leading spokesmen for the major religious organizations of our time. The deviation by the modern church from the New Testament program is appalling. Religious leaders are seeking panaceas which are mainly economic and social. Great political pressures are exerted to bend the governmental policies in these directions. Modern churchianity has charted a course which will be totally ineffective in achieving the New Testament directives. Truly, the modern church is losing its way and stands bewildered in this crisis hour of history.

THE ECUMENICAL DETERIORATION OF THE EVANGELISTIC AND MISSIONARY IMPERATIVE

*Rev. David L. Larsen
Pastor Elim Covenant Church
Minneapolis, Minn.*

Ours is the ecumenical age. Big-ness and organizational union are seen as the cure-all for all of our problems, even though these are often achieved at the expense of individual initiative and integrity. The pressure is for "togetherness" regardless of the cost. Convictions crumble and forthrightness fails in the panic for congeniality and conformity.

The modern mood has been one of compromise. Someone once said that while Arthur James Balfour knew that two and two make four, he felt a gentleman would never press the point! This is the temper of our times.

Many sincerely motivated folk who have participated in the broad-stream of the ecumenical movement have expressed their dissatisfaction with the hollow-shell of organizational unity realized frequently only at the lowest possible common denominator. They have justified their compromise with the hope of maintaining something of a Gospel witness in the darkness of this "Egypt."

Have they succeeded? Is there a realistic basis in fact for retention of this hope? Jesus said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit" (Matthew 7:16-18).

It is our thesis here that the compromise of the authority of the Bible as seen in the ecumenical movement of our time is ultimately and inevitably fatal to any evangelical idea.

The refusal to view the Bible as a document of unbroken divine authority is ruinous. Mediating views on the inspiration and authority of Holy Scripture are disastrous. It may be that for a time an impaired view of the Bible might not destroy devotion and piety, but sooner or later its tragic denials will take their toll. It is true that John Semler, the great German rationalist, was a devout pietist who conducted family devotions with fervor, but he transmitted his rationalism and not his piety to the next generation.

The ardent hope of some that some faithfulness to the message of Christ could be preserved within the ecumenical movement seems dashed to pieces by the trends and developments of recent years. All sense of the evangelistic and missionary imperative seems to be rapidly deteriorating in the wake of the ecumenical compromise. Compromise on the authority of Scripture has cast the ecumenical movement out on the high seas of radical skepticism and confusion. The tragic default of liberal theology is seen in its humanistic and utterly unbiblical understanding of the purpose of God in this age.

I. THE NEW EVANGELISM

Evangelism has been life-breath of the Holy Spirit through the Church. The main task of the Church is the winning of precious, lost souls to the Saviour through whose blood atonement alone they can be saved. Evangelists, pastors and laymen through the ages have through the centuries been empowered to be "ministers of reconciliation." The urgency of this Gospel witness arises from the command of the living Christ, the great

danger and peril of those who are yet in their sins outside of Christ, the constraining love of Christ, and the compelling distress and bleakness of those who know not our Lord.

These basic Biblical emphases are giving way in our time to new concepts. *Time Magazine* recently reported these trends in an article entitled, "From Conversion to Concern" (May 14, 1965). Explaining that "Conversion, traditionally as basic to Christianity as prayer, is today a concept in evolution," the writer describes how "Renewal-minded clergy of the main-stream Protestant faiths" are seeking to broaden the concept of evangelism "to include the totality of a man's life," in contrast to the "Old evangelism which tried to get everybody inside the ark." Revival-style preaching is now for the uneducated and the uncouth, we are assured.

Spearheading these new concepts of evangelism is the Commission on Evangelism of the National Council of Churches. It has recently put itself on record that "Gone are the days when the chief emphasis was on individual 'soul saving' and winning large numbers. Evangelism is to stand as a visible sign in human society of God's love for individual men and his concern for the structures—social and economic as well as religious—which help determine men's lives." *Christianity Today* further reports that "In Los Angeles, churches and synagogues (Protestant, Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Jewish, and 'perhaps even Hindu') are going to cooperate in an 'unprecedented attempt to build structure and meaning in a massive but rootless city'" (June 4, 1965).

This boils down to the old, sterile social gospel which dedicates itself to making this world a better place for unsaved sinners to live. Gone is the necessity of personal regeneration, the centrality of the Cross of

Christ, and the life-transforming ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Church cannot be indifferent to the needs of society as such, but it recognizes that "The soul of reform is the reform of the soul," such as can only be effected by the supernatural power of God in salvation.

This broad definition of evangelism is a betrayal of the Gospel. It views any good deed or charity as evangelism. A civil rights' march or freedom rider's trip are construed to be evangelism. Good deeds, humanitarian compassion and social reform are inescapable implications of the Gospel of Christ but they are not the Gospel. A good sermon on race relations as an exploration of the meaning of the love of Jesus Christ for all men and its significance for us may be timely, but let it not be confused with evangelism. Evangelism is the impassioned expression of the evangel, the Gospel of Christ, the message which has been entrusted to us.

Donald McGavran of the Institute of Church Growth in a recent, thoughtful article in *World Vision Magazine* well states that "It is time to recognize that calling all kinds of good actions evangelism simply confuses the issue," (June, 1965, p. 7ff). He points out that "The social reforms in England did not give rise to the Baptist and Methodist churches. It was the other way around."

Evangelism is far more than social sensitivity. The new "religionless Christianity" would thrust us out into the secular world, but not with the message of redemption for lost sinners. "The new approach to evangelism-visible in such 'unstructured ministries' as coffeehouses, industrial missions, and missions to drag strips and 'night people'—is primarily interested not in selling Christianity but in sympathetically expressing a human concern for others" (*Time*, May 14, 1965, p. 76).

It is imperative that we leave our

cloistered cubicles to bring the message of Christ to those in need, but let us be sure we bring the authentic Gospel with its proclamation of new life in Christ! The bankruptcy of ecumenical theology is seen so vividly in the new evangelism!

II. THE NEW FACE OF MISSIONS

The risen Saviour gave to His followers the mandate to bring the Gospel into all the world. The neglect of the foundations of historic Christian faith is proving most costly in the task of world missions. Studies have shown that church mergers and unions have not intensified or increased missionary outreach and vision. But further it may be noted that the ecumenical compromise not only blunts but ultimately destroys the missionary thrust in any New Testament form.

Included in the World Council of Churches are many who believe that water on a baby's head regenerates the child. Some do not believe that Jesus is the divine Son of God. Many, among whom are the Greek orthodox, ridicule Protestant missions and term it unwarranted proselytism. One prominent spokesman of the World Council of Churches recently said that "The task of missions is to bring out Jesus Christ in every man, not to put him in." He assailed the common Christian characterization of adherents of other religions as "unbelievers." He indicated that invitations to "accept Jesus Christ and be saved distort the Gospel." What is the missionary task in this kind of scheme?

Dr. Horace L. Fenton, new director of the Latin American Mission, has recently called attention to what he calls "the most dangerous assault on missionary outreach since the 'Re-thinking Missions' controversy of 1932—an assault on the Gospel message itself." Writing in *Latin American Evangelist* (March-April, 1965),

Dr. Fenton comments on a critique written by the Rev. V.E.W. Hayward, acting director of the Division of Studies and research secretary in the Division of World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches. "Mr. Hayward seems to believe that our basic call should be to proclaim the redemption of the world. That is, to announce to men everywhere that, whether or not they believe it, God has redeemed the world through Christ" (p. 1). Dr. Fenton quotes D. T. Niles of the World Council to the effect that "the some will be saved and others will be lost", message is an over-simplification. Canon Max Warren of the Church Missionary Society makes the statement that "The difference between them (the non-Christians) and us, which is itself of grace, beyond our understanding, is that we know we are redeemed and they may not."

We know that men like Paul Tillich and Reinhold Niebuhr urge pastors and churches not to try to convert Jews to Christ. Neo-orthodox leaders like Karl Barth and Emil Brunner are clearly universalists. So a leading Presbyterian seminary professor argues that even Judas Iscariot is among the saved. The new Presbyterian "Confession of 1967" as proposed recently in Columbus, Ohio, at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., takes its stand in the new mood that our task is to announce to men that they are saved. Gone is the emphasis on repentance, faith and decision.

This universalism destroys the missionary imperative. It is an open and blatant denial of the clear teaching of the Scripture. There can be no doubt whatever as to the import of passages like Revelation 20:11-15, Matthew 25:45, II Thessalonians 1:9, etc. We do not announce to men that they are saved, but we appeal to them to come to Christ. Men are in a lost condition and will be eternally separ-

ated from God unless they are born-again.

To what shall we attribute this tragic deterioration of the missionary mandate? Is it not due to substituting man's reason for God's Word? The Bible is seen as consisting of "human words" rather than as the revealed and inspired Word of God, inerrant and infallible; we are subject to the vagaries of human speculation and wishful thinking. (For further study, of "The New Universalism" by Dr. Arthur Climenhaga in *United Evangelical Action Magazine*, December, 1964, and "The New Universalism in Missions," by Dr. Bernard Ramm, *World Vision Magazine*, August, 1964).

III. THE NEW CHURCH

The correlate of these trends is of course an entirely new concept of the Church and its relation to the world and society. The Church as defined in the New Testament is the assembly of the "called-out ones." The hue and cry of our time is for the secularization of the Church and her vocabulary. Worship on the Lord's Day should give way to the celebration of liturgies on another convenient day so as not to conflict with weekend activities, we are now told. Preaching is done for, we are assured, to be replaced with dialogues and study-groups. The preaching form is an archaic authoritarian form doomed to disappear in the sophistication of the post-Christian man. Our hymns will have to go, too. And above all, in a world come of age, we need a new vocabulary. Biblical language must be replaced with a new vocabulary.

Dr. Paul Van Buren, Episcopalian theologian, insists in his book, *The Secular Meaning of the Gospel*, that the secular man, the Christian as well as the non-Christian, cannot believe that "the doctrine of the Virgin Birth means someone was born of a virgin, that miracles actually oc-

curred; that prayer is speaking to God; that the meaning of 'the Word became flesh' is that Jesus was 'very God of very God;' that a genuinely historical Jesus could be anything more than a man." We need to scrap all of these words and ideas and give the modern man something which is palatable.

The witness to Christ is concerned with effective communication of the Gospel message. We cannot be indifferent to the necessity of opening the Word and interpreting it faithfully under the guidance of the gracious "Spirit of truth." We must indeed relate the Gospel to our age, but we cannot surrender it. We must interpret the Gospel to the modern man but not abandon it. We cannot preserve the essence of the Gospel by denying what the Bible says. There is an offense and a scandal in the Cross of Christ and in the Gospel. If we would make this more palatable to the modern man, we shall render it powerless for the modern man. The good news after all is real news. The Gospel is God's Word to man, not man's word about God.

Dr. Van Buren does not have the Gospel. He does not want to go as far as he thinks Bultmann has gone in denying the necessity of an historical Jesus, but what logically can save him from complete historical skepticism when he has no greater authority than his secular world-view allows?

What is left of Christianity at the end of this long road of ecumenical theology? What is the legacy of the liberalizing trends and tendencies of our times? What remains that is satisfying and substantial? What is left of faith and hope? If this is all we have we would have to say with the poor woman in the Gospel, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him."

What often begins as compromise for the sake of congeniality leads ul-

timately to the loss of Biblical Christianity. The fruit of ecumenical theology is now ripening—it is a radical and unbiblical reinterpretation of the meaning of evangelism, missions and the Church. It is the loss of the only message which can bring life and salvation.

I pray that we may not be deceived and caught up further in this tragic web of apostasy. May we be awake

to the inroads of Satan and his cunning devices. May we be true to the perfect and inerrant Word of God. May we see men outside of Christ as lost and bound for an eternal hell. May we through the Holy Spirit proclaim to them the way of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ that many may yet turn from their sins and be converted before our dear Saviour returns. Amen.

Book Review

The Four Major Cults

By Anthony Hoekema

Eerdmans \$5.95 (447 pp)

Dr. Anthony A. Hoekema, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Calvin Theological Seminary (Christian Reformed), has given us a scholarly and thorough study of four cults—Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-Day Adventism and Christian Science. This detailed but readable study is based on the original sources and contains hundreds of helpful footnotes and an elaborate bibliography. It is gratifying to note that at several places in his bibliography Dr. Hoekema refers to the availability of much cult literature through our agency, Religion Analysis Service, 902 Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403.

The treatment of each cult begins with a succinct historical survey followed by a point by point examination of the major doctrines. Several invaluable appendices discuss such crucial subjects as "The Book of Mormon," "The Investigative Judgment and the Scapegoat Doctrine of Seventh-Day Adventism," etc. Our readers will be glad to see that the author regards Seventh-Day Adventism as a cult and not a branch of evangelical Christianity.

Typical of the topics treated in some depth is the appendix dealing with "The Teaching of the Seventh-Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses on the Life After Death." This is the most helpful discussion on the fallacies of soul-extinction and the annihilation of the wicked I have ever seen. The author concludes his discussion by stating, "We conclude that the teaching of both Seventh-Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses on the annihilation of the wicked is contrary to Scripture and robs the proclamation of the Christian Gospel of its deepest earnestness." (p. 371).

A very splendid concluding chapter on "The Distinctive Traits of the Cult" is especially lucid.

Dr. Hoekema, writing out of the Christian Reformed background, sees the doctrine of predestination as more prominent and pivotal than some of us would. Only incidentally does he refer to his own views on the mode of baptism (p. 64) and on the millennium (p. 132). Most of our readers would not concur in these views but this does not lessen the value of this excellent study. It is one of the best we have.

—David L. Larsen

(Send for our free catalog)

stealth (their doom has been predicted long ago), impious creatures who pervert the grace of our God" (Jude 3,4, Moffat). Paul likewise admonishes us to "take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them" (Eph. 5:11, R.S.V.).

This does not imply harsh treatment of those entrapped by error—quite the opposite. If it be objected that exposure of error necessitates unkind reflection upon others who do not see as we do, our answer is, it has always been the duty of every loyal servant of Christ to warn against any teaching that would make Him less precious, or cast reflection upon His finished redemptive work and the all-sufficiency of His present service as our great High Priest and Advocate.

Every system of teaching can be judged by what it sets forth as to these fundamental truths of the Faith. "What think ye of Christ?" is still the true test of every creed. The Christ of the Bible is certainly not the christ of any false ism. Each of the cults has its hideous caricature of our lovely Lord.

Let us who have been redeemed at the cost of His precious blood, be "good soldiers of Jesus Christ." As the battle against the forces of evil waxes ever more hot, we have need for God-given valor. There is constant temptation to compromise. "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." It is always right to stand firmly for what God has revealed concerning His blessed Son's person and work. The "father of lies" deals in half-truths, and specializes in most subtle fallacies concerning the Lord Jesus, our sole and sufficient Saviour.

Error is like leaven, of which we read, "A *little* leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Truth mixed with error is equivalent to all error, except that it is more innocent looking, and therefore more dangerous. God hates such a mixture! Any error, or any truth-and-error mixture, calls for definite exposure and repudiation. To condone such is to be unfaithful to God and His Word, and treacherous to imperiled souls for whom Christ died.

Exposing error is most unpopular work. But from every true standpoint, it is worth-while work. To our Saviour, it means that He receives from us, His blood-bought ones, the loyalty that is His due. To ourselves, if we consider "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt," it insures future reward, a thousand-fold. And to souls "caught in the snare of the fowler"—how many of them God only knows—it may mean light and life, abundant and everlasting.

While visiting in our office in the fall of 1950, Dr. Harry A. Ironside dictated the above article for *The DISCERNER*. His eye-sight was so nearly gone, he could not read. To be sure that it was just what he wanted, he had the article read back to him twice. He passed away the 15th of January 1951.

Some Listings from our Catalog

1. NEO-ORTHODOXY, Chas. C. Ryrie, What it is; what it does. 62 pp., 75c.
2. THE CASE AGAINST THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES. Tulga, 60 pp. 35c.
3. THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES, James De Forest Murch. 38 pages, 25c.
4. ECUMENICAL FOLLY, Dr. G. Archer Weniger. 32 pp. 15c.
5. ATHEISM; The Unfruitful Works of Darkness, Mrs. Maud Howe, 34 pp. 10c.
6. COMMUNISM IN OUR CHURCHES, J. B. Mathews. 24 pp, 10c.
7. SOCIALISM, A MESS OF POTTAGE. 32 pp. 10c.

RELIGION ANALYSIS SERVICE, INC.
902 Hennepin Avenue
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403

Return Requested

PERTINENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

By the late H. A. IRONSIDE, D.D.
(*Long time Pastor of Moody Memorial Church, Chicago*)

EXPOSING ERROR: IS IT WORTH WHILE?

Objection is often raised, even by some sound in the Faith, regarding the exposure of error as being entirely negative and of no real edification. Of late, the hue and cry has been against any and all negative teaching. But the brethren who assume this attitude forget that a large part of the New Testament, both of the teaching of our blessed Lord Himself and the writings of the apostles, is made up of this very character of ministry—namely, showing the satanic origin, and therefore the unsettling results, of the propagation of erroneous systems which Peter, in his second Epistle, so definitely refers to as “damnable heresies.”

Our Lord prophesied, “Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.” Within our own day, how many false prophets have risen; and oh, how many are the deceived! Paul predicted, “I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch.” My own observation is that these “grievous wolves,” alone and in packs, are not sparing even the most favored flocks. Undershepherds in these “perilous times” will do well to note the Apostle’s warning, “Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.” It is as important in these days as in Paul’s—in fact, it is increasingly important—to expose the many types of false teaching that, on every hand, abound more and more.

We are called upon to “contend earnestly for the Faith once for all delivered to the saints,” while we hold the truth in love. The Faith means the whole body of revealed truth, and, to contend for *all* of God’s truth, necessitates some negative teaching. The choice is not left with us. Jude said he preferred a different, a pleasanter theme,—“Beloved, my whole concern was to write to you on the subject of our common salvation, but *I am forced* to write you an appeal to defend the Faith which has once for all been committed to the saints; for certain persons have slipped in by

(Continued on page 15)