

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

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MAJOR CLEAVAGES AND STRANGE TRENDS OF OUR TIME

Prof. John E. Dahlin, Editor

We are no longer witnessing a smooth expansion of the ecumenical movement. In fact, we find the opposite is taking place these days throughout Christendom. Actually of late there has developed a polarization of positions with regard to both the conservatives and the liberals. Even our secular magazines are writing about the growing strength of the conservative wings within the major denominations. And, correctly they also point out that there is a great determination of the liberals in counter-acting the resourcefulness of those who accept the absolute authority of the Scriptures.

The most recent example of a major cleavage was the recently held convention of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod at New Orleans. Both the liberals and the conservatives were determined that their respective positions prevail there. Dr. Jacob A. O. Preus, President of the 2,800,000 Lutheran body, was up for re-election. The liberals, and even the moderates, were committed to a plan of unseating him. For many months, however, Dr. Preus had prepared himself in meeting the issues that were pending, and he accepted the challenge of his opponents. Dr. John Tietjen, President of the Concordia

Seminary at St. Louis, who was one of the leaders of the liberals and moderates, rejected the authority of Dr. Preus in laying down certain binding guide-lines for the members of the faculty at the seminary in their teaching responsibilities. The position of Dr. Preus was one of no compromise on the authority and the inerrancy of the Bible. At the big conclave he told the delegates openly not to vote for him unless they also were ready to support his position all the way. Almost unexpectedly the conservatives, led by Dr. Preus, won decisively with a 60 per cent vote of the convention. This was more than what had been anticipated. The determined minority, representing 40 per cent of that Lutheran body, has not been reconciled to this defeat. Despite the big margin of the conservatives, some of the leaders of the minority faction are now talking about establishing a new Lutheran denomination. If a full house-cleaning takes place at Concordia Seminary, it seems likely that the polarization will be greater than ever with regard to the two wings within the LCMS. At present the two positions manifested appear to be irreconcilable. Dr. Preus, with a conservative administration elected with him at

the Convention, simply cannot back down and allow false doctrines to be taught at the seminary. The clear mandate of the delegates was that the conservative position be maintained in the LCMC and particularly at the Concordia Seminary. In other words, it appears to be extremely difficult to bridge the chasm now manifested in the 125 year old Lutheran body.

The above illustration is not an isolated example of the polarization of both the conservatives and the liberals. The same condition continues in an unabated manner in some other denominations. Unfortunately in this period, many of the moderates, even the so-called evangelicals, seem unwilling for the sake of peace to register a firm position with regard to the important issues involved. This has resulted in a further polarization of the conservatives who are opposed to any form of compromise or accommodation. In view of these existing conditions, major cleavages will continue among the various denominations. Any student of present denominational trends cannot fail to see that the polarization of both conservatives and liberals will be greater in the days that lie ahead.

An almost identical situation has developed within the Roman Catholic Church. A secular author wrote an article recently under the caption "Thunder of the Catholic Right." Even as late as about a decade ago the Roman Church was securely wrapped within conservatism and the authority of the leaders of the church. Then came Vatican II and pressures from certain elements within the hierarchy, as well as from Catholic leaders, to adopt changes which would be commensurate with the far-reaching

demands of this age. The Papacy, and those who hesitate to move with the tide, are being severely criticized, and even denounced in Catholic areas, for their inflexibility. Notwithstanding the Papal Encyclicals promulgated in order to hold the conservative line, the liberals within Roman Catholicism are continuing to demand fundamental changes in their system. New problems have arisen, and they are facing the Papacy and the hierarchy of the Roman Church. The matter of abortion on demand, sex education, and the modification of the rule on priestly celibacy, is now bringing upon the old conservative Roman Church problems that are very nearly insurmountable. In view of this internal dissension within Catholicism, a number of ultra-conservative organizations have been formed in order to combat the present permissiveness which is being promoted by the liberal wing of the church. Much of the right-wing press within Catholicism is devoted to fundamentalist fulminations against those who dare to suggest that Catholic doctrine is in need of updating and revision. Although not particularly large in numbers, the Catholic right wing's voice is amplified by the surprising number of established publications they control—all of them independent. Their combined circulation is approximately 384 thousand subscribers each week. The Supreme Court's recent decision on abortion and aid to parochial schools has caused a very definite polarization of the right-wing within Roman Catholicism. There is no longer a monolithic position within that system, the largest religious body on earth. Truly the liberal and the conservative elements have crystal-

ized into a kind of inflexibility that has never been seen in that historic body.

In a broader evaluation of the polarization of major groups within the whole religious sphere, it logically has brought about a distinct crystallization of the positions among the liberals and the conservatives. According to press reports and from periodicals, it is entirely clear that the position of the liberals within the LCMS was hardened since the time of their defeat at New Orleans in July. In fact, this wing has declared it will not abide with the decision reached by the conservative majority at that denomination's convention. In other words, their teachers expect to continue to teach in the seminary and not feel bound by the directives of their national meeting. Recently in St. Louis, where the Concordia Seminary is located, some 1200 people gathered at a mass rally protesting the Orthodox stand taken at New Orleans. Dr. Tietjen, representing the liberal wing (a majority of the teachers) of the Seminary was looked upon as a hero in his struggle to preserve freedom of the teachers in interpreting the Scriptures. But the right-wing led by Dr. Jacob A. O. Preus captured near-absolute control over the LCMS by a clean sweep in their 1973 convention. Overwhelmingly the conservatives are in control of the various boards and hence are enabled to chart their program all the way. The polarization of the two major factions is very distinct in this large denomination.

As we move outside the Lutheran struggle and the development within Roman Catholicism, we find scores of Protestant congregations disengaging themselves from their

denominations and establishing independent churches. And more and more independent educational institutions are also arranged. The polarization continues within numerous denominations. It is this writer's view when liberalism gains almost complete ascendancy, there is no alternative for the conservatives but to withdraw from the groups which have departed from the historic faith. It was none too soon for the conservatives to act in the LCMS. While they were in the majority, yet the liberals had infiltrated the seminary until they occupied about 90 per cent of the teaching positions in that large theological institution.

There is considerable merit in the establishment of independent churches and institutions. When such a step is taken the total control over all the spiritual activities is possible. In denominational work too often loyalty to the national body is stressed continually, and much room is made possible for maneuvering in order to achieve the objectives desired. We find e.g., within certain larger denominations the support of foreign missionary work presents a formidable problem especially when the missionaries represent a broad spectrum of theological views. And, when the educational institutions are divided between liberals and conservatives, it is nearly impossible for those adhering to the fundamentalist position to give undivided support to such institutions. Obviously independent churches and institutions will have problems but they will be lesser in proportion. Some of the strongest and fastest growing spiritual institutions of today are inter-denominational and independent. The recent example of the polarization

of the two major wings in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod serves to illustrate the general problems facing Christian organizations of today. There comes a time when a polarization of positions will take place. The Apostle Paul deals with this kind of situation: "Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you (II Cor. 6:17). We will witness an expansion of a polarization involving both the right and the left wings in religious organizations of our time.

Some very important lessons may be learned from the recently held convention of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. First of all, it is very doubtful that many other denominational bodies of our time are willing to meet the issues as openly as was done in the LCMS. The conservative majority of that organization took a forceful stand against the deviation from the Scriptures by a majority of the members of the faculty of their seminary. We discover almost without an exception it is in the seminaries where the rejection of Scriptural authority and infallibility has its origin. During many years of observation of trends, I have found that usually denominations fail to supervise their theological institutions. Too often members of the boards of the seminaries are chosen either by geographical recognition or known loyalty of such persons to the denominations. There seems to be little concern in electing men of courage to such positions. By these procedures

followed, nominating committees often place *yes men* on such boards. Unless church organizations awaken to the seriousness of the present-day spirit of accommodation, the trend will broaden with reference to the deviation from Scriptural authority. Since the predecessor of the present leadership of the LCMS failed to deal properly with the situation, it took rare courage of Dr. Preus in accepting the challenge which confronted the convention of this major Protestant body.

Without a doubt the LCMS has been enlightened through the ventilation of the situation in the St. Louis seminary. Now the rank and file within that denomination know something about the major issues of that body, and that the unpleasant matters could not be swept under the rug or ignored. The inerrancy and the authority of the Word of God are fundamental matters and deserve the concern of each denomination, especially at a time when a deviation from the historic position is so wide-spread.

The concept of maintaining peace at any price has brought spiritual ruin to many denominations. Too often leaders of these bodies seek to avoid rocking the boat, as we say, and unbelief as well as a rationalization of the Scriptures are tolerated. Dr. Preus is to be commended for meeting the issue honestly and resourcefully. We need to pray that other groups facing the same situation will be equally ready to act when the Scriptural authority is challenging as it was in the LCMS in 1973.

THE MASTER'S MANDATE

by Robert P. Lightner, Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology
at Dallas Theological Seminary

At no time in the past has the church been faced with more pressure from within and from without than at the present time. The pressures are multitudinous and varied.

One of the most subtle and strongest comes from those who preach and practice the philosophy that the church, through its individual members and outreach, has as its primary function the Christianizing of society. This is called God's *cultural mandate* for the believer. We are told that the church is responsible to exert its influence upon the world in such a way and to such an extent that it will effect a substantial change in the character and conduct of the world. The primary task of the church is, in short, to make the world a better place in which to live. Christians ought to have as their chief concern, according to the proponents of the cultural mandate, the correction of such things as the great evils of the day, civil and social ills, injustices, air pollution, poverty, crime and the general corruption of the world. Sins of society ought to be the church's chief concern, says the cultural mandate. Giving strong voice to this concept, Donald A. McGavran, director of the Institute of Church Growth of Fuller Theological Seminary, said: "Only as that is done, only as thousands of churches are established in urban areas, will it become possible to influence individuals and societies in such a fashion that a just, merciful and peaceful society becomes somewhat possible" (*Church Growth Bulletin*, January, 1970).

This concept of the church's role seems to have an affinity to the present-day "evangelism in-depth" or "saturation evangelism" ideas. Both of these designations refer to that type of evangelistic endeavor which cuts across denominational and doctrinal lines, even disregarding liberal and ecumenical associations in the name of evangelism and for the sake of reaching the most people possible with the Gospel. Some of the recent congresses on evangelism in this country and in other parts of the world have stressed this approach very strongly. The same writer quoted above in the same editorial said: "From two congresses on evangelism we get our emphases which urban church planters need to incorporate in all their efforts, and it will always be remembered that urban church planting is an essential ingredient in *urban justice*. The church is more than social action, but even if we limit ourselves for the moment, the church-as-social-action should plant churches so as to get at least some Christians engaged in works of justice and mercy."

The cultural mandate emphasis is really not new. As early as the second century of the church a similar concept existed in the philosophy of those known as Gnostics. Gnosticism, the system of belief which Gnostics embraced, provided a serious threat to Biblical Christianity. In fact, it was nothing short of a perversion of Christianity with its emphasis upon the philosophies of man and its claim to superior knowledge. Seeberg was right

when he said Gnosticism was "the first attempt in the history of the church to bring the world to subjection to the church by interpreting Christianity in harmony with the world." That is precisely the intent which the cultural mandate embraces—to bring the world to subjection to the church.

Unfortunately, such attempts have continued to be made, and they are still being made today. It is quite common among those who subscribe to the cultural mandate philosophy to reinterpret Christianity constantly so as to place it in harmony with the world. Usually this means the offensive edges of the gospel are removed. The Gospel is made more acceptable—relevant. There is failure to see that the message of the cross does not parallel the world; it intersects it. In an effort to communicate the Gospel, no doubt a sincere effort on the part of many, the believer often gets so entangled in things secular that the spiritual work of the Lord, the church and the individual is substituted for another Gospel. Getting involved and being relevant seem to be the highest ambition of many evangelicals. On the other hand, too many go to the other extreme and say and do nothing for Christ. They really do hide their light under a bushel, if Satan has not already blown it out completely.

Those evangelicals who are emphasizing the social responsibilities of the church find Biblical support for the cultural mandate from God's command to Adam: "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over every fowl of the air, and over every

living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:28). Recently, one found in this command to Adam the responsibility for every Christian: "The physical is good, and even though we believe Christ will return before man can utterly destroy himself, future generations have as much right to enjoy this world—and make it fruitful—as we. Christians must insure this right and so fulfill the Biblical commission to subdue and replenish the earth" (*Christianity Today*, February 27, 1970, page 25, "Fulfilling God's Cultural Mandate"). Also, God's command to Noah and his sons after the catastrophic flood is often used in support of the present emphasis upon the church's role in altering and affecting the existing culture (cf. Gen. 9:1-3).

That Adam and Noah were told to "subdue" and to "replenish" the earth is without question. But that these commands of God to man before the fall and after the flood teach that the believer's and the church's primary responsibility today is to get involved in correcting society's ills is open to serious question. The command to Adam to "subdue" the earth was a command to gain knowledge of, to master and to bring the elements of creation into usefulness for mankind. God's command to Noah and his sons was to populate the earth, whose inhabitants had just been judged by God. In both passages the emphasis is clearly upon man's place in God's economy as the highest of created intelligences and, therefore, as God's responsible vice regent on earth. Only by extreme spiritualization of Scripture can these texts be made to present the church's primary role in the world today.

Just what is the believer's responsibility in the world? What is the chief task of the church? Can we learn anything in answer to these questions from the Bible itself?

The prophets of old lived in days filled with many social evils, yet they had as their chief concern the proclamation, "Thus saith the Lord." Theirs was a spiritual ministry to individuals in a sick culture.

A study of the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ should also provide answers to the above queries. The world in which He ministered was filled with social ills and injustices of all kinds, yet He did not go about seeking to correct them. To be sure, He did help those who were sick. He cared for the poor and the needy. His concern for the social outcast and those socially maladjusted continued throughout His entire earthly ministry. Yet His first concern was for the spiritual welfare of men. This is why He came—to redeem man. Nor did He ever commission His own to overthrow the existing culture; but, rather, to proclaim His message of forgiveness to those who were a part of the world.

Surely there were grave cultural problems, social injustices and inequities when the Apostle Paul ministered for Christ. At no time, however, did Paul ever make these very real and needy areas his primary concern. He had been sent to preach Christ, and Him crucified. Never did he don the role of a social worker as a substitute for his first calling. This wasn't because he thought it was wrong or unbiblical to assist a social outcast or to improve living and working conditions, but because as an ambassador for Christ he had been given a greater and more basic re-

sponsibility—to present and to proclaim Jesus Christ to lost men.

Scripture is replete with emphasis upon the saved sinner's responsibility in the world. The good news has been committed to us. We are to declare it to all by our lives and our lips, whether we labor in the home, the school, the factory, the office, the shop, the pulpit, the mission field, at home, abroad or wherever. We are ambassadors for Christ. This is a solemn responsibility. The Lord has not asked whether we want to be ambassadors or not. We really have no choice in the matter. We are ambassadors by divine commission (2 Cor. 5:20).

The Biblical approach to the sins of society is to proclaim the Savior's substitutionary death and His offer of salvation to sinners in society. Only as men respond to Christ in faith will their lives, homes, and, in turn, places of employment and pleasure be different. The believer's mandate is to minister for the Master. The world system in which we minister is condemned. The prince and power of it has been judged at Calvary. Our role as God's servants is to snatch brands from the burning.

All of this does not mean that Christians are to be blind to the physical and social needs of men. The Bible has much to say about helping those in need of this world's goods and also about our responsibilities to make an impact upon the world for Christ. But never are we, nor is the church, expected to Christianize society, to sanctify it. That is impossible. We are told to minister for Christ wherever God has placed us, in whatever culture, under whatever political regime. All that we do to help those in physical, social and

emotional need must have an infinitely higher end than simply to help them to live more satisfying and useful lives. The believer's number one responsibility is to share with sinsick souls the Bread of Life and the Water of Life. Other things are needed and are important, but this is most important. Without it all the other deeds of love and mercy fail to fulfill the believer's first and most impor-

tant responsibility.

The Savior's summons to service is for saints to spread the Gospel so that sinners might be saved. Saved sinners will affect society for good, but they will never by their deeds of love and mercy bring in the kingdom. That is God's work, and He will only do it in His own time and in His own way.

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CREATION vs. EVOLUTION

by Harold J. Berry

For the last three years, California's Board of Education has been considering what position the state's textbooks should take concerning evolution and creation. Some of the board members had become disturbed because only the theory of evolution was mentioned in the textbooks as an explanation of origins. One member said, "No textbook should be considered for adoption that has not clearly discussed at least the major contrasting theories for origins."

The debate caused the National Academy of Sciences to go on record in opposition to presenting both views of origins and said that science excludes "supernatural causes as a concept."

Stanford biochemist David Hogness revealed how sharply the lines were drawn when he maintained that arguments against evolutionary principles should be "placed in the same arena as those advanced by the flat earth society—and who among you would advocate that we teach the flat earth theory in our schools today?"

The Dean of the Episcopal Grace Cathedral in San Francisco sided with the evolutionists and said that for many centuries the "creation

myth story" in Genesis was "considered by Christians and Jews alike as the reliable account, quite literally," of origins. But he went on to say that science had dismantled the Genesis creation account by investigation and in so doing had "rendered biblical religion an inestimable service" because it showed Genesis to be a religious and theological document, "not a scientific treatise."

In December, 1972, the Board of Education voted to tone down the Darwinian theory in its textbooks in spite of opposition to the move by 19 Nobel Prize winners. This caused *The Milwaukee Journal* to declare in an editorial: "Most organized religions have made peace with Darwin and affirmed that it is not necessary to accept Adam and Eve or the instantaneous creation of the sun and the stars to believe in a God created universe. Someone should tell that to the California Board of Education."

In January, 1973, the Board of Education again met and decided that the creation theory of origins would not be placed in science textbooks along with Darwin's theory of origins; rather, the board voted to include discussions of

“representative religious theories” in social science texts.

This controversy has brought out in the open several facts which we should not soon forget. First, science excludes “supernatural causes as a concept.” Thus, those who refuse to go beyond their field of scientific investigation and research cannot admit to the miracle-working power of God or even to His existence since these cannot be scientifically proved. Such a position naturally tends to force one to the atheistic theory of origins—evolution.

Second, when the lines are clearly drawn the Christian is considered, by the world, to have given himself to superstitions and myths. Third, brilliant scientists sometimes attempt to speak with authority on subjects not in their field of study. Theories of origin are not directly in the realm of science because science is concerned with the physical phenomena and process as they exist at the present. For a person to reason how these things came into existence he must make certain assumptions and these assumptions involve faith. Thus, the scientists who appeared before the California Board of Education were defending a faith more than they were defending science.

Fourth, these matters are complicated by the fact that many religious groups have espoused the theory of evolution and have claimed that the Book of Genesis is merely a collection of myths. To such a liberal theological view, Dr. Bolton Davidheiser has answered, “If man evolved, the process was gradual and there never was a first pair of human beings distinct from the animal kingdom. If man

evolved and there never was a first pair of human beings, then the Biblical account of the fall of man is not true but is a myth or an allegory. If man evolved, we are getting better and what is called sin is just a remnant of selfish animal nature. If man evolved, Christ was just a reformer and not the Redeemer; He was a martyr and not the Saviour. Then the Christian religion becomes a code of ethics and not the way of eternal life through a risen Lord. As Paul said, ‘If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable’ (I Cor. 15:19)” (*Evolution and Christian Faith*).

Those of us who know Jesus Christ need to realize that we are in a spiritual conflict. The real issue involved is not one’s knowledge of science but one’s relationship to Jesus Christ. Those who reject Him as Saviour, regardless of their brilliance, will do whatever they can to minimize God in every area of life and field of study.

We also need to be aware of the textbooks our children are reading and be knowledgeable enough on these issues to help our children and be willing to voice our views to the school system. We need to thank God more and pray more fervently for scientists who are Christians and are courageously speaking out to help believers distinguish between fact and theory. These qualified men are showing that vast geologic ages and evolution are not required scientifically nor theologically in the explanation of the origins of the universe and man.

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IS THE WATCHTOWER SOCIETY GOD'S CHANNEL?

by Prof. Edmond C. Gruss, Los Angeles Baptist College
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The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, the governing body of Jehovah's Witnesses, identifies itself as God's "sole collective channel for the flow of Biblical truth to men on earth" in these last days (*The Watchtower*, July 15, 1960, p. 439). How long has God used the Society?

"The WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY is the greatest corporation in the world, because from the time of its organization until now the Lord has used it as His channel through which to make known the Glad Tidings" (*The Watch Tower*, 1917, p. 22, quoted in *Studies in the Scriptures*, VII, p. 144).

It is claimed that Bible translations and interpretations emanate from God. "They are passed to the Holy Spirit who invisibly communicates with Jehovah's Witnesses—and the publicity department according to F. W. Franz, Vice-President of the Watchtower Society (*Scottish Daily Express*, Nov. 24, 1954). In the treatment which follows, ten examples — hundreds could be given — show that the lofty Watchtower claims find no support in an examination of Watchtower publications.

1. Ruth—from historical book to book of prophecy.

STATEMENT: "While the book of Ruth is not prophetic, but merely historical, it is valuable to us in various ways" (*Watch Tower Reprints* IV, Nov. 15, 1902, p. 3110).

CONTRADICTION: "Not only is the book historical, but it is prophetic, the fulfilment of which

prophecy takes place in these present days ". . . We must conclude that the book of Ruth was made part of God's Word or message as a prophecy for the special benefit of the remnant in the last days. . . . the book is a prophecy" (J. F. Rutherford, *Preservation*, pp. 169, 175, 176).

2. Abaddon, Apollyon—from Satan to Jesus Christ. This example relates to Revelation 9:11 and the identification of the angel of the bottomless pit.

STATEMENT: "'The prince of the power of the air.' Eph. 2:2 . . . That is, Destroyer. But in plain English his name is Satan, the Devil" (*Studies in the Scriptures*, VII, p. 159).

CONTRADICTION: "In Hebrew his name is Abaddon, meaning 'Destruction'; and in the Greek it is Apollyon, meaning 'Destroyer.' All this plainly identifies the 'angel' as picturing Jesus Christ, the Son of Jehovah God" (*Then is Finished the Mystery of God*, p. 232).

3. Adam—from resurrection to no resurrection.

STATEMENT: "Just when Adam will be awakened, only the Lord knows. It may be early or it may be late during the period of restoration" (J. F. Rutherford, *Reconciliation*, pp. 323, 324).

CONTRADICTIONS: "There is no promise found in the Scriptures that Adam's redemption and resurrection and salvation will take place at any time. Adam had a fair trial for life and completely failed" (J. F. Rutherford, *Salvation*, p. 43). In recent writings, Adam and Eve

are viewed as among those who are incorrigible sinners who "proved that they were not worthy of life, and they will not be resurrected" (*From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained*, p. 236).

4. Sodom and Gomorrah—resurrection promised, resurrection denied, resurrection reinstated.

STATEMENT: "Thus our Lord teaches that the Sodomites did not have a full opportunity; and he guarantees them such opportunity . . ." (C. T. Russell, *Studies in the Scriptures*, I, p. 110).

CONTRADICTION: "He was pin-pointing the utter impossibility of ransom for unbelievers or those willfully wicked, because Sodom and Gomorrah were irrevocably condemned and destroyed, beyond any possible recovery" (*The Watchtower*, February 1, 1954, p. 85).

RETURN TO FORMER POSITION: "As in the case of Tyre and Sidon, Jesus showed that Sodom, bad as it was, had not got to the state of being unable to repent . . . So the spiritual recovery of the dead people of Sodom is not hopeless" (*The Watchtower*, March 1, 1965, p. 139).

5. Worship of Jesus Christ—from acceptance to rejection.

STATEMENTS: "Question Was he really worshiped, or is the translation faulty? Answer. Yes, we believe our Lord while on earth was really worshiped, and properly so It was proper for our Lord to receive worship . . ." (*Watch Tower Reprints*, III, July 15, 1898, p. 2337). "He was the object of unreproved worship even when a babe, by the wise men who came to see the new-born king He never reproved any for acts of worship offered to Himself Had Christ not been more than man the same reason would have prevented

Him from receiving worship . . ." (*Watch tower Reprints*, I, Oct., 1880, p. 144). The purposes of this Society are: . . . public Christian worship of Almighty God and Jesus Christ; to arrange for and hold local and world-wide assemblies for such worship . . ." (*Charter of the Watch Tower Society of Pennsylvania*, Article II).

CONTRADICTIONS: ". . . No distinct worship is to be rendered to Jesus Christ now glorified in heaven. Our worship is to go to Jehovah God" (*The Watchtower*, Jan. 1, 1954, p. 31). "For example, the magi from the east and King Herod said they wanted to 'do obeisance to' (*proskyneō*) the babe that had been born king of the Jews. 'Do obeisance' is preferable here because neither the magi nor King Herod meant to worship the babe as God" (*The Watchtower*, May 15, 1954), p. 317).

Hebrews 1:6 is a special problem for the Jehovah's Witnesses because it clearly states that the angels are commanded to worship Christ: ". . . And let all the angels of God worship him." In an attempt to explain away the meaning of worship a Witness writer concluded: "If the rendering 'worship' is preferred, then it must be understood that such 'worship' is only of a relative kind" (*The Watchtower*, Nov. 15, 1970, p. 704). Yet such an explanation is rejected in *Make Sure of All Things*, p. 178! "Bowing before men or angels as 'relative' worship forbidden." (Good discussions on the subject of worship given to Christ are to be found in Anthony A. Hoekema's *The Four Major Cults*, pp. 339-344 and F. W. Thomas' *Masters of Deception*, pp. 29-37).

6. Resurrection from the dead—from all to some.

STATEMENTS: "All are to be awakened from the Adamic death, as though from a sleep, by virtue of the ransom given . . ." (C. T. Russell, *Studies in the Scriptures*, V, p. 478). "Under this new covenant the whole human race shall have the opportunity to come back to God through Christ the mediator" (J. F. Rutherford, *The Harp of God*, p. 328 or 334, according to edition).

CONTRADICTION: "It has been held by many that the Scriptures guarantee that 'all must come back from the dead' at Christ's return and during his thousand-year rule. (*Studies in the Scriptures*, Volume Five, pages 478-486). That conclusion does not appear to have support in reason or in the Scriptures" (J. F. Rutherford, *Salvation*, p. 224).

7. Israel—literal Israel to spiritual Israel.

STATEMENTS: "That the re-establishment of Israel in the land of Palestine is one of the events to be expected in this Day of the Lord, we are fully assured by the above expression of the Prophet [commenting on Amos 9:11, 14, 15]. Notice, particularly, that the prophecy cannot be interpreted in any symbolic sense" (C. T. Russell, *Studies in the Scriptures*, III, p. 244). "The promise, time and again repeated, that the Lord would regather them and bless them in the land and keep them there and bless them for ever is conclusive proof that the promise must be fulfilled . . . Behold, that time is now at hand!" (J. F. Rutherford, *Comfort for the Jews*, p. 55). (See also Rutherford's *Life*.)

CONTRADICTION: "Nothing in the modern return of Jews to Palestine and the setting up of the Israeli republic corresponds with the Bible

prophecies concerning the restoration of Jehovah's name-people to his favor and organization. . . . The remnant of spiritual Israelites, as Jehovah's Witnesses, have proclaimed world-wide the establishment of God's kingdom in 1914" (*Let God Be True*, second ed., pp. 217, 218).

8. "And the name of the star is called Wormwood" (Rev. 8:11)—three differing interpretations.

STATEMENT: "Calvin is entitled to the honor of having at one time been a papal star . . . *Is called Wormwood*. —What an ideal name for the doctrine which has caused more bitterness against God than any other doctrine ever taught, and for the man who roasted Servetus at the stake" (*Studies in the Scriptures*, VII, p. 151).

CONTRADICTION: "The 'great star' falling from heaven as a burning lamp was Satan . . . The name of this star is called 'Wormwood', which means bitter. Being cast out of heaven Satan is in the 'gall of bitterness'" (J. F. Rutherford, *Light*, I, pp. 126, 127).

CONTRADICTION: "In view of these features about it, what religious class of people could this blazing, falling 'great star' picture but the apostate Christian clergy of Christendom, Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant and otherwise sectarian? . . . But what should have been spiritual 'water' to sustain the spiritual life of the peoples, the apostate Christian clergy have turned into undrinkable, deadly, bitter wormwood waters . . . false, pagan, unchristian, unbiblical doctrines . . . (*Then is Finished the Mystery of God*, pp. 224, 225).

9. The "superior authorities" of Romans 13.

STATEMENT: Until 1929 it was taught that the "higher powers" or

“superior authorities” (*New World Translation*) were the earthly rulers to whom the Christian paid taxes, etc. (C. T. Russell, *Studies in the Scriptures*, I, p. 266).

CONTRADICTION: From 1929 to 1962 the “superior authorities” were explained as “the Most High God Jehovah and his exalted Son Jesus Christ” (*This Means Everlasting Life*, p. 197).

RETURN TO FORMER POSITION: “In spite of the end of the Gentile Times in 1914, God permitted the political authorities of this world to continue as the ‘higher powers’ or the ‘powers that be,’ which are ‘ordained of God’” (*Babylon the Great Has Fallen! God’s Kingdom Rules!*, p. 548).

10. The Great Multitudes as a spiritual class—yes, no.

STATEMENTS: “Does the Great Company receive life direct from God on the spirit plane? Answer—Yes, they receive life direct in that they have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, and when they are begotten they are just the same way as the little flock, because we are called in the one hope of our calling. They do not make their calling and election sure, but not being worthy of second death, they therefore receive life on the spirit plane” (*What Pastor Russell Said*, p. 297). “Ever and anon someone advances the conclusion that the ‘great multitude’ will not be a spiritual class. The prophecy of Ezekiel shows that such conclusions is erroneous. The fact that their position is seven steps higher than the outside shows that they must be made spirit creatures . . . They must be spirit creatures in order to be in the outer court of the divine structure, described by Ezekiel” (J. F. Rutherford, *Vindication*, III, p. 204).

CONTRADICTION: “Thus the great multitude is definitely identified, not as a spirit-begotten class whose hopes are for a place in heaven, but a class trusting in the Lord, and who hope for everlasting life on earth . . .” (J. F. Rutherford, *Riches*, pp. 324, 325).

CONCLUSION

Do these examples support the claim that the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society “from the time of its organization until now” has been God’s “sole collective channel for the flow of Biblical truth to men on the earth?” Do they support the claim that Witness interpretations emanate from God? Let the reader read and apply the following statements found in Watchtower material.

“Jehovah never makes any mistakes. Where the student relies upon man, he is certain to be led into difficulties” (J. F. Rutherford, *Prophecy*, pp. 67, 68).

“Men not only contradict God, they contradict one another. How can they be reliable guides—unless their words are based on God’s words? But how can you know whether they are or not? By going directly to God’s Word as your source of authority. Search for yourself and let God be true!” (*Awake! March 22, 1963*).

Many former Jehovah’s Witnesses can testify to having come free of this organization because of “going directly to God’s Word” as their source of authority and enlightenment.

(See the author’s other article in the Jan.-March, 1972 issue of *The Discerner*, “The Watchtower Society and Prophetic Speculation,” for more examples of Watchtower error.)

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PERTINENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Prof. John E. Dahlin

QUESTION . . . What will the moderate elements do at the time when the lines are being drawn sharply between Conservatives and Liberals?

ANSWER . . . By observation of these developments in past years, it appears that the greater number of the moderates will identify themselves with the liberals rather than with the conservatives. This will be particularly true when denominational cleavages take place. Loyalty to the organization often leads people to make this decision. Doubtlessly some moderates will summon courage and move into the right-wing group.

QUESTION . . . Is it possible that the ultra right-wing in Catholicism will recapture its present lost power as it did during the Catholic Counter Reformation?

ANSWER . . . It seems unlikely at this time that the Pope and the conservative members of the hierarchy will yield much officially to the internal pressures within Roman Catholicism. Difficult days lie ahead for the old ecclesiastical system. It cannot re-institute the inquisition and the drastic methods used several centuries ago to compel conformity to the demands of the Church. The Roman Church has maintained authoritarian rule in order to preserve unity. Democratic practices would cause the system to collapse. Catholicism may expect that internal dissention will continue due to the demands of the liberal elements.