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The Maintenance of Power in the Pulpit*

Ben Lacy Rose

JESUS began his ministry saying, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to *preach*." Then we read that "He ordained twelve . . . that he might send *them* forth to *preach*." Our Lord's final words of instruction to his disciples were, "Go ye into all the world *and preach*." And the last glimpse which we have of the disciples from Mark's gospel is, "And they went forth *and preached* everywhere."

Preaching was the primary task of the apostles. That was why Jesus called and ordained them; that was why he trained them; that was why he sent them forth: *to preach*.

The mantle of the apostles has fallen upon us as Christian ministers. We have been called of God *to preach*; we have been anointed and trained of the Spirit *to preach*; we have been ordained of Christ *to preach*.

Recognizing this fact, Alexander Maclaren said, "I began my ministry with the determination of concentrating all my available strength on the work, the proper work of the Christian ministry—the pulpit. I believe that the secret of success for all our ministers lies very largely in the simple charm of concentrating their intellectual forces on the one work of preaching."

John Henry Jowett professed a similar concentration when he said, "I have had but one passion and I have lived for it—the absorbingly arduous yet glorious work of proclaiming the grace and love . . . of Christ."

Today I would urge upon the members of this graduating class a similar dedication.

For some years there was a movement to minimize preaching. Fortunately for the Church, that day has passed, and we are coming to see that Charles Spurgeon was right when he said, "The pulpit is the Thermopylae of Christendom: there the fight will be won or lost. To us ministers the maintenance of our power in the pulpit should be our great concern."

But how does one set about the achievement or the

maintenance of power in the pulpit? It is to this question that I would address myself at this time.

So much could be said on the subject that one hardly knows what to eliminate. Yet there are two simple but profound bits of advice that must be included in any discourse on the subject, and which constitute the very heart of the matter.

If you would achieve and maintain power in the pulpit, you must first, **TAKE HEED UNTO YOURSELVES.**

I. TAKE HEED UNTO YOURSELVES

All too often we have the idea that about all one has to do to preach is to search about for a text, break it up into three points, gather some illustrations about it, set these down in some logical order, and go into the pulpit and pour the discourse forth upon the people. If the sermon falls flat, it is, we think, because the preacher did not find the right illustration or present any progressive movement in the ideas. Now, it may be true that he failed to do one or more of these important things, but we have overlooked a *more* important thing. "Preaching," says Bishop Quayle, "is not the art of making a sermon and delivering that; preaching is the art of making a man and delivering that."

One must not minimize outline, illustration, order and movement in a sermon, but these are certainly not the primary elements of effective preaching. The first essential of effective preaching is the Christian character of the preacher himself.

Preaching, as Phillips Brooks so aptly put it, is "truth *through* personality." Preaching is not sim-

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* Commencement Address delivered May 24, 1955 at Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va.

ply the presentation of truth. It is truth through personality.

The importance of the character of the one who speaks is emphasized by almost every classic treatise on oratory. Quintilian says, "An orator is a good man skilled in speaking." Aristotle observed that no audience trusts a speaker if it considers him to be a man of bad character. And Foster in *The Basic Principles of Speech* points out that "speech is effective, other things being equal, in proportion to the intrinsic worth of the speaker."

If this is true of the platform, surely it is true of the pulpit. If the preacher is himself nothing and cheap, then no combination of ideas or beauty of illustration can make his words have power.

Oman in *Concerning the Ministry* devotes a whole chapter to the development of this idea. He entitles the chapter "Personal Weight." This personal weight of the preacher, he observes, "is not position, is not reputation, is not ability; it is somehow just the man himself." Bryan in *The Art of Illustrating Sermons* says, "Picturesqueness, dramatic act, contemporary illustration, irony, humor, personal anecdotes, exaggerated emphasis, all have their place in preaching to ordinary people, but the aim of the sermon, the end of the effort must always be spiritual, lofty, tender, human with more of the breath of Galilee than Hollywood about it. . . . There must be flowing of personality, God-filled, from preacher to people." Canon Dewar therefore concluded, "The primary prerequisite then, if Christ is to capture the imagination of men . . . is that the preacher should be a man of God."

THE FIRST TASK OF THE PREACHER

If this be true, that the first essential of effective preaching is the Christian character of the preacher, then the first task of every preacher is not simply to learn the methods of sermon construction, or even the techniques of biblical interpretation. The first task of the man who would preach effectively is the development of his own personality in the likeness of Jesus Christ. If, as Foster says of the secular orator, "The first step in the development of speech-power is to set about the slow business of making oneself worth listening to," then surely the first step in the development of pulpit-power is to set about the slow business of making oneself more worthy of the high calling which is his by God's grace. Thus does Beecher say to the divinity students of Yale, "Your work as Christian ministers . . . requires that you

should first of all see to the elevation of the character of the man who preaches."

Frequently we ministers drive too directly at the sermon. We go into the garden seeking flowers without working and fertilizing the ground which is to produce the blooms. It is only from well-cultivated soil that beautiful roses grow. And it is only from a well-cultivated soul that great sermons spring.

HOW IS IT DONE?

This thought is not an attractive one. It makes preaching an even more tremendous task than we had formerly considered it to be. It is not difficult to compile a paper on some subject. It is not such an overwhelming task to write a dissertation on some passage of Scripture. But to build a life, to cultivate a personality which will be exposed to Christian people Sunday after Sunday—that is a terrifying thing! How in this world are we to do it?

It should be said immediately that there is no trick about it, no short-cut to its accomplishment. We do not just "get religion," and suddenly we are like Christ. We certainly do not simply spend three years in a theological seminary, and lo, we are great souls. The carving of the image of Christ in us is like the carving of any statue. It takes patience, and the stone falls away only a chip at a time. Even then it takes hours of filing and polishing to smooth the rough corners. Justification is an act, but sanctification is a life-long process.

But how does the preacher deliberately set about the cultivation of a Christ-like personality? The preacher develops his soul in the likeness of Christ in the same way that any other Christian does—by living daily with the Lord Jesus Christ.

DAILY SECRET COMMUNION

Gentlemen, if you would maintain power in the pulpit, it is imperative that you draw aside regularly into a quiet place with your Lord, there to renew the sense of His presence. In that place, away from the busy rush of church office and city, you must drink deeply of the Scriptures. Wholly apart from any connection with next Sunday's sermon, you must dip your cup into the cool, life-giving water of the Word, and fill your soul with it. There you must unburden your heart to the Lord. There you must confess your sins, and accept the Lord's forgiveness. There you must find the strength and guidance which Christ alone can give to you. Other

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things you may neglect, but your daily secret communion with Christ of the Word, you *dare not* neglect.

Then as you prepare your sermon or as you move about your parish performing the varied activities of your ministry, you must discharge each duty as in the presence of Christ, you must fulfill every ministry as in the stead of Christ. The prayer of the poet must be yours:

Jesus, come and dwell in me,
Walk in my steps this day.
Live in my life, love in my love,
And speak in all I say.
Think in my thoughts, let all my acts
Thy very actions be;
So shall it be no longer I
But Christ that lives in me.

LOVE IS ESSENTIAL

If you would preach to people in Christ's name, you must look at those people from His side and with His eyes, in order that you may come to love those people with His love. For to love with His love is the essence of Christ-likeness.

If you would preach effectively, you must love those to whom you preach. And the more closely your love coincides with the love of Christ, the more effectively will you preach.

Numerous times we find it recorded in the Scriptures that Jesus was "moved with compassion" toward an individual or a multitude. And this also is recorded: "And the common people heard him gladly." There is a connection between these two records. The preacher must love those to whom he preaches if he expects them to hear him gladly.

No man can preach effectively to farming folk if he thinks of them as "dumb country yokels." No man can preach to city folk if he believes that they are so depraved that there is little need in preaching to them—Jonah to the contrary notwithstanding.

Once I asked a young minister what kind of congregation he had. His lip curled as he replied "Aw, they are a motley lot of low-class working people." A few months later when I heard that he had been forced to leave that church, I was not at all surprised. He did not love the people there. And they knew it, for no man can hide a lack of love. And without love, he was powerless among them.

LOVE IS CAUGHT

With Christ you can love anyone. Therefore, stay close to Christ. Closet yourself with Him regularly. Walk the streets and fields of your parish with Him. Visit the sick, the sinning, and the sorrowing with Him. Live and serve with Him, until you *catch* His love for people. For love *is caught* from someone who loves abundantly.

I remember walking with the late Dr. William Louis Poteat, who was a distinguished botanist and a Christian gentleman of the old school. He visited my home when I was a child, and took me into the

woods with him looking for a Venus Fly Trap. I remember him stopping in the path and exclaiming with delight, "Oh, here's a *drosera rotundifolia*." Then he showed me the delicate beauty of a Sundew. Later he took some of the green scum from a stagnant mill pond and told me that it was really a plant, one of his many plant-friends. As he talked about it and worked with it, I came to see it thru his eyes. And it ceased to be filthy scum, and became a fascinating, even lovely thing. As I looked at his plant-friends from his side and through his eyes, I caught his love for them.

As you look at the least of these His brethren from the side of your Lord and with His eyes, you will catch His love for them.

And if you will love people with the love of Christ, if you will pray for them with the yearning heart of Christ, if you will visit them in the company and with the sympathy of Christ, then you will be able to preach to them with some of the effectiveness of Christ Himself, for in reality Christ will be preaching through you.

As your soul takes on something of the likeness of Christ, your preaching will assume a power of which you will hardly be conscious, and for which you can harbor no pride.

McCheyne was right when he observed that "it is not so much great talents that God blesses, as great likeness to Christ."

However, it is a grave mistake to think that if one is a good man, but possesses no other ability, he will have power in the pulpit. Other things too are quite necessary for effective preaching, but a Christ-like character is a thing *without which* a man should stay out of the pulpit entirely.

But let this warning be sounded: let no minister ever, ever, ever say to himself as he enters the pulpit, "I have a Christ-like personality, which is worthy to be seen of this people today." But as he enters the pulpit, let him pray with all the sincerity of his soul, "O God, I am so unworthy! Therefore, let not this people see or hear me at all, but let them see and hear Christ Jesus who dwells in me."

For while you must give diligent heed unto yourself, since "we have this treasure in earthen vessels," yet in the final analysis, it is not yourself or your own ideas that you are to preach, but Christ and His Word. Thus does Paul say, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord."

If then you would maintain power in the pulpit, while taking heed unto yourself, you must *also*, PREACH THE WORD.

II. PREACH THE WORD

We have *not only* been called to preach, but we have been called to preach *the Word of God*. And for us the Word of God is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

If ours is a revealed religion, and the Bible is the record of that revelation; if the Creator has spoken,

and that Word is preserved in the Scriptures; if God has performed in Jesus Christ of Nazareth the mighty deed of redemption, and that deed with its Spirit-guided preparation and interpretation is set down on the pages of holy writ; *then* it is our primary business as ministers of God to interpret, illustrate, and apply the truths that are found in the Bible.

The message which we have been sent to proclaim is not of our own creation. Its source is not in us. Preaching, as we have said, is truth *through* personality. The personality is the transmitter, not the originator, of the truth proclaimed. If the transmitter is faulty, the message will be distorted. But the nearer our lives are conformed to the image of God's Son, the more surely will His message pass through us without being perverted. But this we must understand: the source of the message which we proclaim is NOT in us, but in God.

Gentlemen, the sooner you understand it, the better: You have no original ideas that are worth proclaiming from a Christian pulpit. God's people are not required to come together regularly to hear you expound your own theories on religion and life.

"ANY WORD FROM GOD?"

If as you enter the pulpit one morning, a member of the congregation should rise and say, "Sir, we recognize that you are a man of transparent character and blameless life; but have you any word from God today?" And you in all honesty should reply, "No, but I have some good ideas of my own." Then the congregation would have every right to get up and go home. You do not deserve to be heard in a Christian pulpit, if you have no word from God.

As P. T. Forsyth says, "A man is not invited into the pulpit just to say how things strike him at his angle. . . . He is there to declare the eternal. . . . He is there to declare a certain message."

You are not in the pulpit to proclaim *any* message, but to proclaim "a certain message"—the message which God has set forth in the Scriptures. As James Stalker says, "In the pulpit not only must a man have *something* to say, but it must be a message from God. . . . He who receives the message from God (Stalker continues) now finds it in the Word of God."

You are not to be mere teachers of truth. There is much truth that is not your business. You are called to be teachers of the truth *from* God and *about* God. And the truth from God and about God is, for you, to be found in the Bible.

Gentlemen, you have been called to preach the Word of God, and your power will be in preaching it. When your sermons are based obviously and directly on the Bible, then the power of your preaching will be the blessing of God Himself upon His own Word, proclaimed by you.

This type of preaching may not always have the power to draw great crowds. But it will have the

power to do what preaching is supposed to do, namely: to bring men to the knowledge of salvation.

THE DOOR IS OPENING

The door is opening today for biblical preaching. There is a growing desire on the part of laymen to re-examine the claims and teachings of the Bible. The war, the hydrogen bomb, the general unrest of the world have set men searching for a sure word of truth, which many are finding and which others sense they may find in the Scriptures. A newspaper man in a recent book said, "In an era of anguished uncertainty, of increasing mistrust of human thought, Christianity's offer of divinely guaranteed truth is anxiously reinspected." I agree with Canon Wedel, Warden of the College of Preachers in Washington, D. C., who said in a recent copy of *Theology Today*, "We might be surprised to find how little the storms of enlightenment have really robbed the Bible of its ancient sway over the hearts of humble men and women."

Therefore, if you would maintain power in the pulpit, resolve now that the messages which you bring to your people shall be drawn directly and obviously from the Bible. Set yourself to the arduous task of discerning the Word which God has caused to be recorded on the pages of Holy Writ. And determine to proclaim that Word without respect of persons. Then your pulpit will be endowed with the power of God Himself.

SO MUCH MORE

There is so much *more* that could be said about the maintenance of power in the pulpit.

Something should be said about the necessity of regular consecutive study. A few sermons may come in a flash, but consistently effective preaching is the result of tremendous labor. In the beginning of your ministry you may require one hour in your study for every minute you spend on your feet. Your people will not begrudge you the time spent behind closed doors, if on Sunday morning when you go into the pulpit you have a message from God that is clear and to the point. They will not mind being told by your wife or your secretary: "He's in his study now. Could you call later?"—if when you stand before them the following Sunday you have a sermon worth hearing.

Something should be also said about the importance of the preacher's health, and the necessity of his keeping one day of rest in seven. You need not think that because you are ministers of God that you can break with impunity the divine law which decrees one day of rest in seven for *every* man. Many of the rest-cures that doctors are advising ministers to take are nothing but the accumulation of Sabbaths which those ministers forgot to keep. Your continued power in the pulpit is much contingent upon your health.

There is so much more that could be said on this subject, but my time has run out, and I must close.

Let me conclude by reminding you once again of the heart of the matter. You have been called to PREACH. Other tasks you must perform, but the

maintenance of your power in the pulpit should be your great concern. Therefore, take heed unto yourselves, and preach the Word.

The Battle of the Scrolls

Simon J. De Vries

Eight years have passed since the scholarly world came into possession of one of the greatest manuscript discoveries of modern times. It was in the spring of 1947 that Bedouins of the Ta'amireh tribe entered a long forgotten cave near a place called Ain Feshka, high on a bluff overlooking the Dead Sea, where they discovered a cache of ancient Hebrew scrolls stowed away in tall clay jars. Originally there had been a great number of these jars in the cave, but long ago in early Christian times the cave was plundered and only a few intact manuscripts besides a great quantity of fragments were left behind. The Bedouins gathered up the scrolls that were left, recognizing their commercial value, and brought them to Jerusalem to be sold.

Eventually four of these scrolls came into the hands of the bishop of a Syrian monastery, Mar Athanasios Y. Samuel by name, who allowed them to be studied by various scholars and to be transported to America, where they have been published by the American Schools of Oriental Research. These four scrolls include a complete copy of the book of Isaiah, a "commentary" on Habakkuk, a sectarian scroll of discipline, and an—up until the present—unopenable scroll of a Lamech apocalypse. Recently Mar Samuel has sold these four rolls for a tidy sum to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

Other scrolls have already been in the hands of the Hebrew University, where Prof. E. Sukenik has carefully prepared them for publication under the title, *Otzar Ha'Megillot Ha'Genuzot*, meaning "Treasury of Hidden Scrolls." This volume includes the extant portions of another Isaiah scroll, a sectarian apocalypse titled "The Battle of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness," and a collection of "Hymns."

In addition to these intact scrolls, numerous fragments of various manuscripts have been collected by scholars who visited the cave during February and March of 1949. These too are of great scholarly interest. Fragments of almost every Old Testament book have been identified among them. Of particular interest are those of Leviticus and Daniel. Of the book of Isaiah, fragments of ten different manuscripts have been found—these in addition to the two intact scrolls already mentioned.

Since the discovery of the first cave in 1947 several other caves have been entered in the same vicinity and scrolls of lesser antiquity have been found. Full information on their contents is not yet available.

In the eight years which have passed since these scrolls first came to light, members of our circles have learned something of them from newspaper notices and from an occasional article disclosing their general importance appearing in our own periodicals. But otherwise they have gone virtually unregarded among us. This is in stark contrast to the general feverish excitement of the scholarly world. This is a great thing in biblical studies! Hebrew and Semitic scholars everywhere have been studying the scrolls with avid interest. Numerous graduate students have been assigned an aspect of their study. In various countries a disproportionate number of pages in the scholarly journals have been devoted to them. Book after book concerning them has come from the press. Thus already in the fall of 1952 a Dutch scholar was able to compile a bibliography on the Dead Sea Scrolls of over three hundred titles. By this time the number probably approaches a thousand!

Apparently biblical scholars have recognized how enormously significant the Dead Sea Scrolls are. If we ask why, the answer is simple to give: they are concerned about them because (1) they appear to be older than Christianity itself, dating by the best estimates from the second or first century B. C. and (2) objective study of them is forcing drastic changes in many of the most vital theories of Bible critics, much to the discomfort of some. A discovery so significant could not but provoke a veritable flood of discussion. Perhaps it should surprise no one to see certain normally sedate scholars losing their equilibrium and at times even their tempers as they enter what may well be called "the Battle of the Scrolls." Readers of *The Calvin Forum* will doubtless be interested to take notice of the most salient points of this lively discussion.

I

Literary criticism has long been able to go to the greatest lengths in questioning the integrity of the Old Testament because it reasoned in the abstract, largely apart from faith and with little objective data to challenge its claim. The development of archaeology as an exact science has forced a change in this situation. Increasingly archaeology has learned to speak with authority. The millions of dollars spent on expeditions to the Near East have produced an ever-increasing harvest of concrete

data. Mound after mound has been excavated; temples and palaces have yielded their secrets; inscriptions almost beyond number have been found and studied; works of art, coins, and household utensils have been forced to reveal their story; and the humble potsherd, found in great numbers in every ancient site, has told the clearest tale of all, because by its evidence the chronology of Bible times has been fixed with amazing exactness. By careful study of this information the Palestinian archaeologist has forged for himself a sharp and accurate tool, so that he can now speak with authority where previously every whim of interpretation prevailed.

Conservative Christians, who have often winched before the sharp attack of criticism, ought to be grateful for the fact that these archaeological investigations have tended to corroborate the traditional view of Old Testament origins. Point by point, concrete discoveries have verified the witness of the Old Testament, and because it has been their aim to be honest with facts, many of those scholars who have actually done extensive work in Palestine have moved toward a more conservative position. A notable example is the renowned William F. Albright, who accepts many of the views of higher criticism but nevertheless believes firmly in the basic integrity of the Old Testament writings. This man, Prof. Albright, has probably done more than any other to put Palestinian archaeology on a truly scientific basis. And as we might expect, it is also he who has been in the forefront in making clear to the world the importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for the understanding of the sacred scriptures.

These newly-discovered manuscripts promise to do much to fill a serious gap in our knowledge of biblical times—the gap between the finish of the Old Testament Canon and the beginning of the New. No Bible book enlightens us, except by inference, as to conditions in this period. The apocrypha and pseudepigrapha do not provide sufficient light for full understanding. Josephus and the secular historians are not always reliable. Archaeological remains from this period have been relatively scanty. Thus, because positive evidence to the contrary has been so often lacking, scholars were able boldly to assert their financial opinions. The trustworthiness of the Masoretic Text was denied, to use an example. Or, to use another, high dates were assigned for the composition of certain New Testament books because of what were considered to be advanced theological ideas appearing in them. But now we have the Dead Sea Scrolls! They have come as a light in the darkness to show us that after all the Masoretic textual tradition does date from before Christ and that many of the theological ideas in question were already common among the Israelites long before the New Testament began to be written.

Thus the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls threatens a revolution in many points formerly believed to be firmly established by higher criticism. First, the

study of the Old Testament will be profoundly affected. As already stated, the new scrolls make clear the general trustworthiness of the Masoretic Text, so that light-hearted textual emendations are now definitely a thing of the past for any scholar who values his reputation. On the other hand, the scrolls have provided new evidence of a parallel Hebrew recension underlying parts of the Greek Septuagintal version,¹ demonstrating that its witness will likewise have to be taken more seriously than it has been in certain circles.

The Dead Sea Scrolls also give welcome light on the status of the Canon in pre-Christian times because whenever they quote the canonical scriptures they clearly regard them as fully established and authoritative. This is of greatest importance in regard to those books which critics have dated very late. Duhm, for instance, made almost all the Psalms and parts of Isaiah post-Maccabean, i.e., from the late second century or even from the first century B.C. But the Dead Sea Scrolls quote these very writings as scripture! Prof. Albright emphasizes the importance of this point in one of his many articles on the subject:

The new evidence adds materially to the already impressive arguments against dating any of the Psalms or Prophetic writings after the fourth century B.C. at latest. . . . Of course, the evidence was already present, though disregarded by many scholars. The Greek translation made between 250 and 125 B.C., shows that a great many poetic passages of the Hebrew text of these books were no longer understood. . . which would not be credible if they had actually been composed in Hellenistic times.²

And thus new questions are being raised all along the line. Jewish history and theology of the intertestamentary period must come in for fresh study. Formerly, the Pharisees and the Sadducees monopolized the interests of scholars, but now greater attention will be given to a third sect of the period, and of Jesus' time, that of the Essenes, since the community which possessed the Dead Sea Scrolls was very likely an Essene group. Moreover, new consideration will have to be given to the old theory that Aramaic was the only spoken language of the common people in pre-Christian and early-Christian Palestine. Now a community has been discovered from that period which actually spoke Hebrew, as appears from a study of the documents they left behind! It would certainly appear that at least a part of the Jewish people retained Hebrew as a living language for a much longer period than formerly supposed.

But this is not all. The Dead Sea Scrolls (or Qumran Scrolls, as they have been called more recently) are perhaps equally important for the New Testament. First, they promise a sizeable contribution to a greater understanding of the influence of

¹ See, e.g., "A Fragment of the 'Song of Moses' (Deut. 32) from Qumran," by Patrick W. Sheahan, *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* (Basor), No. 136, pp. 12 ff.

² Basor, *Supplementary Studies*, Nos. 10-12, 1951, p. 58, text and footnote.

legalism, apocalypticism, and monastic asceticism upon the religious atmosphere of New Testament Judaism. Second, they reveal that a certain tradition in Judaism expected the Messiah not from David but out of Levi and Aaron. Third, it is possible that they will help explain something of the spiritual climate which prepared the way for John the Baptist's preaching, for in them, too, we find a strong expectation of the coming of the Kingdom of God combined with an urgent call to conversion. Again, they show that the great antithesis between Light and Darkness, between Christ and Belial, expressed so forcefully in John's Gospel and in Ephesians, can no longer be taken by anyone as evidence of the dependence of these books upon such late documents as the Epistle of Barnabas or the Didache. This antithesis is already the leading theme of our pre-Christian Qumran scrolls. And thus we might continue, but these examples must suffice. Only the future will tell how extensive the influence of the Dead Sea Scrolls will be.

II

But this influence depends entirely upon the evidence for a pre-Christian date for the origin of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Most of those who have studied the evidence have conceded a pre-Christian date. The writer of this article personally accepts that evidence and welcomes the consequences. But there is no unanimity among scholars in dating the scrolls. On the contrary, there has arisen a very vigorous opposition to a pre-Christian date from many quarters. While Prof. Albright with many others have staunchly defended the early date from the time of their discovery, various scholars have arrayed themselves against them, claiming a post-Christian origin for the scrolls. Most colorful, and probably most notorious, is Prof. Zeitlin, writing in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*. He has been extreme unto absurdity in his heated opposition, affirming vehemently that the scrolls are medieval, and hinting darkly that they were deliberately "salted" in the Qumran cave in order to give the false impression of great antiquity. Another Jewish scholar, T. Wechsler, has dared to accuse Bishop Samuel of disposing of a synagogal Haftaroht-roll (which would be post-Christian) which was originally with the other four scrolls in his possession, in order deliberately to destroy evidence of lateness for the find.

Others who have come out for a late date have been more restrained, usually presenting arguments which have required serious reflection in the opposite camp. Notable among them are such men of high reputation as P. Kahle and G. R. Driver. If their position could be substantiated, the high expectations of many for the Dead Sea Scrolls would be dashed to the ground.

Fact is, most of the arguments of the opposition are too flimsy to bear their own weight. It is not too harsh to say that pure bias has led some of these scholars to their denial of the antiquity of the scrolls.

Often conservatives have been charged with obscuring facts for the sake of theory — and probably justly so in some instances — but here we observe scholars who pride themselves in their scientific objectivity deliberately ignoring objective facts in order to save their theories! One of them is reported to have exclaimed, "I don't care how much evidence you claim to have for an early date! I *know* that these scrolls are medieval, and I'll never believe otherwise"

Prof. Albright expresses his exasperation at this cavalier attitude in words worth quoting. Recalling that formerly various scholars of reputation similarly refused to accept the spectacular discoveries of archaeology, as the ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum, the decipherment of cuneiform, and the Elephantine papyri, all of which they called fakes and forgeries, Prof. Albright writes the following:

In none of the similar episodes of the past two centuries . . . has there been such wide refusal on the part of scholars to accept clear-cut evidence. In a sense this attitude represents a belated revolt on the part of philologists against the archaeological triumphs of the past two generations. Individual leaders of the movement are naturally swayed by different motives, often complex and frequently more or less unconscious. Certain of these leaders are moved by the very elementary instinct for preserving personal theories. Others seem to react violently against innovations likely to threaten the critical schools to which they belong. It is quite true that the discovery of the Scrolls menaces the insecure foundations of many speculative hypotheses of both Old and New Testament scholars, not to mention students of rabbinics.³

All who are content to let the evidence speak for itself will be convinced that these scrolls do indeed date from the centuries before Christ, that they belonged to a semi-monastic Essene brotherhood living in the lonely Judean desert in expectation of the triumph of righteousness, and that they were probably deposited in the cave by members of the brotherhood for safekeeping against the ravaging Romans at the time of the Temple's destruction.

First there is the archaeological evidence. Father de Vaux, the eminent Jesuit scholar of Jerusalem, has determined on the basis of archaeological data that the cave was entered at about 200 A.D., when most of the manuscripts were taken. (Most interesting is the fact that the ancient church-historian, Eusebius, mentions the finding of Hebrew scrolls in a cave near the Dead Sea at about this time, and that Origen made use of some of them. It seems very likely that this must have been the Qumran cave.) The scrolls were stored in tall clay jars with lids, all of Hellenistic or early Roman origin. The linen used to wrap the scrolls has been subjected to a radiocarbon test and has yielded a medial date of 35 A.D. Nothing whatever younger than 70 A.D. was found in the cave, except for a few late Roman lamps left by the original plunderers, and a quantity of cigarette butts left by the recent Bedouin intruders.

Internal evidence likewise speaks for a pre-Christian date. After studying carefully the historical references in the sectarian scrolls of Qumran, the

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 57f.

English scholar, H. H. Rowley, has assigned their composition to the early Hasmonean age before 100 B.C., and he concludes that our scrolls, copied from the originals, could not have been deposited in the cave later than 70 A.D.⁴ Similarly, the forms of the letters, the spelling of the words, and the vocabulary fit properly only in pre-Christian times. The theological ideas likewise are those of pre-Christian Judaism. Prof. Zeitlin claims that the scrolls must be from the Middle Ages because of their many affinities with the anti-rabbinic Karaite movement of medieval Judaism. No one need deny the Karaite affinities. However, it was the Qumran community which influenced the Karaites, and not the other way around.

III

The "Battle of the Scrolls" will probably continue for a long time. We would like to believe that in the end the facts will prevail against prejudice and that all logical deductions will be drawn. Those who hold to traditional Christianity may well rejoice in the discovery of these scrolls, for if they do anything they tend to confirm the authenticity and authority of the Holy Scriptures. It is of course true that the Scriptures do not depend for confirmation upon anything outside themselves. They are God-breathed and bear their own unique authority. And the only force that can persuade a man to accept this authority is the *testimonium Spiritu Sancti*, the voice of the Author of these words Himself. Nevertheless let us who accept that authority be grateful for every vindication of God's Word. Let us thank God for this clearer light upon the distant origins of holy faith.

Lest some who read this imagine that the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls will bring no threats whatever to the treasured ideas of some conservatives, let it be added that in some points reconsideration will be required. Conservative Christians have often been inclined to oversimplify the textual problem, for instance. But now less than ever can anyone lightly regard the Septuagintal text in places where it closely translates a Hebrew original, no more than one can arbitrarily emend the Masoretic Text itself. Moreover, the Dead Sea Scrolls will teach us, if we are willing to listen, that the Jewish religion of New Testament times was rooted not only in the Old Testament, but in the whole complex of theological ideas of the preceding period. Surely, the better we understand these ideas, the better we will be able to understand our Old and our New Testaments.⁵

This is a great day for fresh biblical study among conservative Christians! For the defense of the faith we have been given new and sharper weapons. We ought to cast off every vestige of reluctance in entering into these discussions. Certainly, we may have a voice in the "Battle of the Scrolls," as in any other,

if we have as our equipment a firm faith in the integrity of Divine revelation on the one hand and a willingness to be persistently honest with objective data on the other. Thereby we shall hold fast to our basic belief in the Divine authorship of Scripture while exploring with avid interest the complex pattern of its mediation through mankind.

Some may be fearful that scientific inquiry must clash with faith, that one must be given up or the other; but the writer of this article is convinced for himself that such a belief is utterly mistaken. *A priori*, special revelation cannot contradict general revelation, nor *vice versa*. If a clash appears, it appears only through our misunderstanding of either or both! Men in the darkness of their sinful minds fail to interpret general revelation aright, and/or they misinterpret special revelation. Christians must ever strive to clear away this tangle of misunderstandings in order that God's self-revelation may appear in its purity. If the Dead Sea Scrolls can bring us only a little nearer to this complete understanding we shall be lastingly grateful.

This is the story of the Scrolls, and of the "battle" being waged about them. Upon another occasion the readers of the *Forum* may be interested to receive an evaluation of the theological ideas of the Qumran community in relation to similar ideas in the history of the Christian Church.

As a generation, we dope ourselves with amateur psychology. We buy up all the books of the peace-of-mind cults, pitifully confident that it is possible to have peace of mind in our kind of world. We follow preachers who hawk formulas for banishing worry and fear and tension while the prophets of God, with their painful judgments requiring repentance, go unheeded. We turn wistfully to "inspirational" speakers, and are left with a terrible emptiness and loneliness of soul and a desperation of spirit. Every once in a while we realize that we are renegades from our true natures.

To man today comes a tragic sense of failure—failure in living. We are brilliant but unhappy, clever but unstable, comfortable but comfortless; we own so much and possess so little. We are forlorn souls, groping and hungering and lost. Once again, as in the Garden of Eden, man is a fugitive from God and bereft of spiritual certitude.

FROM AMERICA'S SPIRITUAL RECOVERY
by Edward L. R. Elson
(Fleming H. Revell Company)

CONTRIBUTORS

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⁴ *The Internal Dating of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Louvain, 1952.

⁵ Those who read Dutch will find an excellent appraisal of the Dead Sea Scrolls by a conservative scholar in A. H. Edelkoort's *De Handschriften van de Dode Zee*, Baarn, 1952.

"Christian Principles and Assumptions for Economic Life"

John Vanden Berg

A SIGNIFICANT attempt to formulate the relation between Christian principles and the assumptions and decisions of modern economic life was made recently by the National Council of Churches. At its fall meeting, held in New York, the Council's General Board adopted a statement on the relation between Christianity and economics under the provocative title appearing at the head of this article.

The statement was effected under the leadership of the department of the church and economic life, which is part of the Division of Christian Life and Work of the National Council. More than a hundred persons, leaders in the various fields touching on the subject of Christianity and economics, participated in the discussion and study which led to the formulation and adoption of the statement.

The fact that the statement was formulated under the leadership of the National Council and was the product of large-scale democratic discussion gives one reason to believe that it is representative of the thinking of a large segment of the American Protestant community. If so, this is ample reason to study the document. However, there is a more compelling reason than this. It is an unalterable fact that everyone, whether he be a Christian or non-Christian, is part of an economic order and, therefore, cannot avoid making a judgment on how well he thinks the system functions and on what his relation to the system should be. For the Christian this means that he is always confronted with the question of the relevance and application of his Christian principles to the realm of economics.

The statement adopted by the National Council is comparatively brief. In its introductory section is established the right of the church to deal with matters of this nature.¹ Having established the right of the church to be concerned in these matters, the statement next presents the fundamental religious and ethical assumptions which bear on the economic order. Then a section is given over to the presentation of basic misconceptions in the church which are obstacles to the operation of the principles. And, finally, a portion of the statement discusses the application of these principles to various aspects of the

economic order. The chief concern of this article is with the fundamental religious and ethical assumptions enumerated by the Council's document.

The case for the church being concerned with the economic order is made, essentially, in the following introductory paragraphs of the statement:

Christian churches have as a prime objective their ministry to individuals, and therefore have also a basic relationship and responsibility to the society which they seek to serve. Their role in that society has two aspects.

One of their responsibilities is the conservation and promotion in that society of such values as justice and freedom.

The other responsibility is prophetic, in the scriptural sense of trying to view all human relations and institutions in the light of the teachings of the gospel. It involves leadership in the continuous struggle so to improve what is that it moves toward what ought to be, according to that standard. This means pointing out and trying to correct imperfections and abuses.

These roles — the conserving and the prophetic — are both essential.

There can be little doubt that one of the functions of the instituted church is to enunciate the principles upon which the individual Christian bases his action in the realm of economics. The obvious vehicle by which this is accomplished is the preaching of the Word. The Reformed tradition of preaching the "whole counsel" of God would, it seems, make it mandatory for anyone who is called to preach the Word to give voice to the meaning and implications of these principles in the individual and social lives of Christians. "Thus saith the Lord" is as pertinent here as in any other phase of the Christian life.

Whether or not one would agree with this, i.e., the position of the church in these matters, it is still incumbent upon him to at least formulate for himself the principles upon which he is to determine his decisions in economic matters. This may mean a careful consideration and positive formulation or merely an acquiescence in the status quo. But it must be done, for action springs from principle.

The principles upon which the National Council of Churches would have Christians base their decisions in economics are found in the section of its statement dealing with fundamental religious and ethical assumptions. This section of the statement is quoted in its entirety, although not all of it will be discussed.

I

"FUNDAMENTAL RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL ASSUMPTIONS"

God as we know him through Christ is the God of history, of nations and peoples, as well as of individual souls. It is his

¹ This right was a matter of considerable debate. A group known as the National Lay Committee—formed in 1950 to help finance the beginnings of the National Council—felt that economic life should lie outside the scope of the organized church. In support of its position this group presented an "Affirmation" and asked that this "Affirmation" be published with the statement proposed by the Department of the Church and Economic Life. The proposal was voted down.

will that his Kingdom be realized among men and that his lordship be acknowledged over all principalities and powers, over every department of life, including economic institutions and practices. The church is under a divine imperative to call all men—and especially its own members—to recognize the meaning of God's lordship over their economic activities. 'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth.'

All the resources of the earth—such as land and water and mineral deposits, which under the laws of men become private or public property—are gifts of God, and every form of ownership or use of such property should be kept under such scrutiny that it may not distort the purpose of God's creation. God is the only absolute owner. Every Christian particularly should look upon all of his possessions, as well as his talents, as a trustee, and should use them in the light of his understanding of God's purpose for him. 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof.'

All men are created in the image of God; and though they are in history sinful and rebellious as the slaves of their own self-will, God seeks to redeem them from their self-centeredness. Men experience freedom in the measure in which they are willing to become God's servants, and to allow God as revealed in Christ to become the center of their lives and the pattern of their living.

This teaching about man is the Christian basis for belief in the dignity and possibilities of all persons, whatever their status in the economic order. Persons uniquely combine body and spirit, and the needs of both should be emphasized in the Christian church. That the material needs of men be met through their economic institutions and activities is one condition of their spiritual growth. 'Give us this day our daily bread.'

Men were made to love one another, and to live as members of a community that transcends all barriers of race or nation or class. All economic institutions and practices that tend to divide men because they enhance false pride, covetousness and bitterness, or encourage laziness or the selfish use of power, stand under Christian moral judgment. The church should seek to influence the development of economic life in such a way that economic institutions, policies and practices are favorable to right relations between people. 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

Freedom is another basic value which enters into all human relations. Spiritual and cultural aspects of freedom are primary in society, and essential to its full development in accord with Christian principles. It is therefore important to consider the ways in which this freedom is influenced, for good or ill, by the institutions and practices of economic life. The basis of real freedom is expressed in the words: 'We must obey God rather than men.'

Economic institutions and activities should serve the whole man—body and spirit. A rising standard of living is desirable, but it may tend in a rich society to create wants and to over-emphasize the acquisition and enjoyment of material things in a way incompatible with Christian purpose. 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'

These fundamental principles should be represented and reflected in the working of any economic system. Economic institutions and activities should never become a law unto themselves. Their purpose is to serve human need. 'You will know them by their fruits.'

II

If we Calvinists who are forever giving voice to the fact that we have a "world and life view" are really sincere in that confession, we should be able to endorse with enthusiasm the Council's statement that "his lordship be acknowledged over all principalities and powers, over every department of life, including economic institutions and practices." Stated in other words, the first paragraph of the Council's religious and ethical assumptions is a simple recognition of the sovereignty of God, the cornerstone of the Calvinistic theological edifice.

The Council's paragraph dealing with stewardship also is worthy of endorsement. Who could dissent

from the statement that God is the only absolute owner and that everyone, a Christian particularly, should view his talents and possessions as gifts to be used according to God's purpose? Stewardship is the very essence of economics; for the foundation upon which economics is based is that resources are scarce and must be used with care. To economize means to choose, and every choice is made on the basis of some standard. For the Christian, choices are made in the light of God's revealed will.

The application of the principle of stewardship must be recognized on an even broader basis than that of individual responsibility. When individuals use their property in such a manner as to create obstacles to the realization of God's purpose, it becomes a concern of the community, expressed through the laws of the state, to alter or curb that use in such a way as to promote a use which is more in keeping with God's purpose. This need is recognized by the Council when it states that "every form of ownership or use of such property should be kept under scrutiny that it may not distort the purpose of God's creation." To those who see in this the possibility of increased government control of private property let it be said that property rights are always restricted: restricted, first of all, because only God is absolute owner and, secondly, because property rights are meaningful only because they are defined by the state.² A redefinition of property rights may well be called for at times.

The final principle enunciated by the Council is that economic institutions and activities should serve the whole man — body and spirit. How welcome this is in an age when the welfare of society is measured almost exclusively in terms of economic productivity. "How much?" and "How big?" are more important than "What kind of people?" — making things more important than developing persons. Unfortunately, to many Christians economic efficiency becomes the only criterion for judging an economic order.

There is no question that economic efficiency, i.e., the effectiveness of the system in providing for the satisfaction of man's wants, is an important criterion for judging an economic order, but it may not be the only one and, indeed, it must be qualified by the Christian even when accompanied by other criteria. According to the Christian man's wants must be satisfied to the end that he can glorify his Creator.

To this qualification of the criterion of economic efficiency must be added the criterion of human efficiency. Human efficiency may be defined as "the development of the personalities and capacities of those who take part in economic activity, to God's glory." The criterion of human efficiency asks the

² The notion that the government is "stealing" when it redefines property rights, e.g., makes the income tax more progressive, is based on the assumption that property rights as previously defined were God-ordained and therefore inviolable. This need not be true at all; the previous definition of property was itself a result of government formulation.

question of how the outward forms and inner motives of economic activity bear on the development of the personalities and capabilities of the people who are inescapably involved in them. It asks how the way in which people get their living helps or hinders them in becoming the sort of people God wants them to be.

Among other things, it would seem that men should be able to find in their work opportunity for creative activity, for creative powers are given to man by God and it must be that we are to use them in our work which occupies such a large part of our daily lives. A second important requisite of work is that it give opportunity for fellowship and cooperation. It was not intended that man live or work alone; he is a social being and must be able to give expression to

his social character in his work. He must be a person in community and not an individual in a crowd. It is good that the Council has called attention to the requirement that work serve the spirit as well as the body.

There can be no question but that man must take some stand on the economic order of which he is unavoidably a part. We can be grateful that the National Council challenges Christians to make their stand on the principles that they profess. To translate these principles into effective action in our daily living is not an easy task — we are so self-centered — but it must be done, if we are to be truly Christian. And it can be done, for Christ came into the world not only to redeem the individual but also the economic order of which he is a part.

From Our Correspondents

FROM CEYLON

66 Allan Avenue
Dehiwala, Ceylon
April 26, 1955

Dr. Cecil DeBoer,
Editor, *The Calvin Forum*

Dear Dr. DeBoer.

Bandung and the Afrasian Conference have hit the headlines of the world press. Declarations have been made and resolutions passed. International political and military tensions continue.

There are other tensions that exist in the Afrasian world. They are ecclesiastical. From New Zealand Rev. J. W. Deenik writes, "Everywhere in the Christian world the Reformed Presbyterian Churches are shipwrecked by the liberal movement and have lost their authority and influence in life. Laxity in church discipline, superficiality in preaching, and a worldly way of living caused the secularisation of vast portions of the Reformed, Presbyterian population. In these dreadful circumstances we have to expect nothing from compromising with any form of liberal theology. There is only one remedy: the unswerving return to the original Reformed faith and practice."

And from Australia Rev. J. Vanden Bom writes, "It is our fervent desire that the Lord may use this monthly to bring together all those in the Australian world who are concerned in the building up of a new nation upon the foundation we have indicated. "Reformed" in the 20th century still means the same as in the 16th century: back to the Bible, back to God. It has always been one of the marks of genuine Calvinism that godliness was believed to have the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. We are thankful that many believe it still today, and we feel hopeful that in many parts of the new world as of the old, a revival of the Reformed faith is visible."

The immigrants coming from the Netherlands in recent years were invited to join the Presbyterian Church of Australia. Only a short period of fellowship gave them to know that the Presbyterian Church had also been shipwrecked by the liberal movement. As a consequence they separated

themselves, and organized and established The Reformed Church of Australia, determined to set forth the faith of the historic Reformed Church. A similar movement took place in New Zealand and Tasmania. Congregations have been organized in number. *The Trowel and Sword* is the new Church publication which made its debut in October, 1954. An attempt is being made to send the *Trowel and Sword* into the whole of Australia. Ceylon's faithful have a vital interest in these developments. Many of our brethren have made their homes in Australasia in recent years, in view of the rising tides of nationalism in Ceylon.

The revival of the old Reformed faith is visible in Ceylon. Here too there was the organization of a new church and the beginning of the publication of a new church paper. *But in Ceylon it worked the other way.* Throughout history the faithful were called upon to separate in order to maintain and defend the faith. This was not necessary in Ceylon. Within the 313 year old Church God had preserved a faithful core. And when the spirits of liberalism made themselves known the Church was strong enough to withstand the tempest. The General Consistory of the Dutch Reformed Church dismissed the liberal member.

A brief history of the revival in Ceylon will prove interesting to our readers. In February, 1949 Rev. John O. Schuring arrived. He was loaned to the General Consistory of the Dutch Reformed Church by the Christian Reformed Church of America. At his arrival the Church in Ceylon was seriously engaged in working out a Church Union scheme. It soon became evident that a church seriously concerned about the truth could not join such an organic union. As a consequence the liberal spirits began to speak. And in doing so it became evident that the youthful and promising Rev. Dr. Bryan deKretser was not in agreement with the doctrinal position of the Church. The disagreement became concrete when deKretser openly denied the doctrine of Limited Atonement.

On the 26th September, 1951 Rev. Schuring requested that his ministerial duties be terminated on the 30th September, 1951. The General Consistory reluctantly granted

this request and immediately requested that the Christian Reformed Church loan them another minister.

In the meantime the church here continued to experience great tension and trial. The advice of the Reformed churches from abroad was sought. The General Consistory inquired of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, South Africa, and the United States of America what the official position of the church was in respect to the Confession of Faith of the Reformed Dutch Church (as revised in the National Synod of Dordrecht, in the years 1618 and 1619), the Canons of Dort, and the Heidelberg Catechism. She inquired further of the churches what they understood by Limited Atonement and whether the church's official stand in respect to the standards committed them to accept and believe the Doctrine of Limited Atonement.

Replies were received from the Reformed Church in America, the Generale Synode Der Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk, the Gereformeerde Kerken, the Christian Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, and the Christian Reformed Church in America. In addition the views of Dr. Cornelius Van Til, Westminster Theological Seminary; Dr. F. W. Grosheide and Dr. Pieter Prins of the Netherlands; Prof. J. L. M. Haire, Presbyterian Church, Ireland; Prof. H. H. Farmer, University of Cambridge; Rev. S. F. Skeen, Nederduitse Gerformeerde Sendinggemeente, Johannesburg, South Africa; and the Rev. F. S. Leahy, Belfast, N. I., were published.

After a consideration of these replies the General Consistory at its meeting held on 3rd July, 1952 passed the following resolution: "That Rev. Dr. B. deKretser's open denial of Limited Atonement which is a doctrine of the Bible, taught in Calvinism, upheld by the Canons of Dort and reaffirmed by the General Consistory renders it impossible for us to continue him as a Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in Ceylon."

Consequently a new church and a new church publication came into existence. The first issue of *The Presbyterian* appeared in November, 1953. Prior to this some twenty two issues of a leaflet entitled *Reformation* made its appearance from the pen of the dismissed minister. The dismissed minister and his followers found ready fellowship with the Scots Kirk, Kandy, Ceylon and today are represented as the Colombo Congregation of the Scots Kirk, Kandy. (Kandy is located 75 miles inland) These two groups have organized themselves into the Presbytery of Lanka. The January, 1954 issue of *The Presbyterian* Vol. 1, No. 3, began a series of articles on Karl Barth under the sub-title: "A Biblical Theologian for Our Time." The opening sentence of the introductory article reads: "We shall try to give a picture of the greatest living Reformed (Presbyterian) theologian, Professor KARL BARTH, and to make that picture as objective as is possible."

The 313-year-old Dutch Reformed Church of Ceylon, the oldest form of Protestantism in South East Asia, continues in the traditions of the fathers. Increasingly the clear sound of the gospel is being heard. That "sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees" is heard. "God is gone forth before. . ."

On 22 November, 1952 Brother Clarence and I arrived in Ceylon. And on 22 June, 1954 Rev. John O. Schuring returned for a second term. And now the General Consistory is asking that the Christian Reformed Church loan them one more man. It is well to note that the first condition under which the minister abroad comes to Ceylon is that

while he is here he is under the control and jurisdiction of the General Consistory of the Dutch Reformed Church in Ceylon. It is the Reformed Church of Ceylon that moves forward. This militant band strives diligently to defend and propagate the truth. We covet the prayers and fellowship of the saints around the world.

Cordially yours.

John Van Ens

FROM SOUTH AFRICA

Potchefstroom, South Africa

Dr. C. De Boer

Editor, *The Calvin Forum*

Dear Dr. De Boer,

Quite a time has elapsed since my last letter to you. I must apologise for the delay and hope to make amends in the future. In this letter I want to draw the attention of your readers to some of the outstanding events in our country during recent months.

The New Prime Minister

As you know, Dr. D. F. Malan resigned on account of advancing age and was succeeded by Dr. J. G. Strydom. Personally, I am convinced that no better choice could have been made. Strydom is a man of principle who has had a long and sometimes lonely fight. Under his leadership the National Party of the Transvaal has become a strong body, the strongest in the country. This is one reason why the new prime minister was elected from among the several Transvaal leaders. Although he was educated in a "neutral" university, he is a professing Christian and is well versed in Calvinistic principles, although he will not be so outspoken as Paul Kruger was. In any case, I think that we are now nearer to the principles of that staunch Calvinist than we have been since the beginning of the century. Mrs. Strydom is a daughter of the late Rev. W. J. de Klerk who served for years as the registrar of Potchefstroom University College. She has lived up to the Reformed standards of her home and is a strong support to her husband.

As far as our ideal of a Christian Republic is concerned, we have in Prime Minister Strydom the most outspoken leader of recent decades. In some quarters he is labelled an "extremist," but he has made it very clear that the Republic must be based on the support of a safe majority of the people and that there be no isolationism. In this dangerous world no country can afford to remain isolated, and it is in the interest of all Western nations, the U.S. included, not to hand South Africa over to the communists. Before he became prime minister Dr. Strydom expressed the hope that the Republic may become a reality during his lifetime.

In some quarters a major upheaval was expected when he took office, but the transition proceeded very smoothly. Even the share market showed no appreciable signs of nervousness. In his first speech Strydom promised justice to all, and the people know that his word is good. I am sure that we have entered upon a new era. The Republic may come sooner than we expect. Calvinists hope that it will be accompanied by a renaissance of our people in the sense that in all realms of life Christian principles may be seen in operation.

Growing Appreciation of Governmental Racial Policy

It seems that the natives are growing more and more accustomed to the idea of separate development of the different races. The able and energetic minister of native affairs, Dr.

H. F. Verwoerd, is doing his utmost to show the natives that the Nationalist government means what it says and that it seeks the welfare of the coloured peoples—propaganda to the contrary.

One element of the policy of "apartheid" is that of separate residential areas. In Johannesburg natives are gradually being moved from the slum areas to specially erected towns with comfortable and tidy houses. Agitators have tried to make this a *casus belli*, and a large police force had to be on duty when the operation started. Nothing extraordinary happened. In fact the natives sang heartily, knowing that they are going to live under better conditions. An influential man appealed to all whites to donate what they could spare in the line of furniture. To this there was a spontaneous reaction.

The whole system of native education has been recently revolutionized. The state now has control over all education of natives. And private schools, e.g., church schools will no longer be acknowledged. Although the Calvinist favours education in which the parents control at least the principles, in the case of the natives in their uneducated state, this is the best measure to save them from the influences of agitators. Natives are elected to school committees and school boards, and they seem to appreciate this way of influencing the education of their children. When they have reached maturity, we hope they may receive the same system of education which we cherish as ideal for our children—a system in which parents can be sure that their children are educated in harmony with the promise made at the time of baptism.

New Moves Toward Christian Schools

During January the "Afrikaanse Calvinistiese Beweging," an organization on the same lines as your Calvin Foundation, which has its members mostly among supporters of our University, organized a conference on Christian Education, which was attended by about two hundred enthusiastic Calvinists. The main aim was to bridge some differences of opinion which had become recently noticeable.

The main point of difference is this: Should we keep on trying to reform the present state system of education until

our ideal is reached (the "long road"), or has the time come to start private Christian schools in the hope that in time the government will provide subsidy. Adherents of the latter view contend that we have been trying for fifty years to reform the present system with very little progress, except in so far that religious education has steadily improved. There is no guarantee, however, that children may not be educated by a convinced liberal or evolutionist.

The majority of the conference gave preference to the "long road." It contends that under the present circumstances, where parents show little interest in Christian education, private schools will be doomed to failure. Moreover, the existing schools are not definitely anti-Christian. They try to be Christian, although in a very broad sense. The time may come that it will be imperative to start private schools, but then the main body of the nation will have been given over to a process of secularization.

The conference appointed a committee to draft a memorandum. This was written recently, and I think that the document speaks plain language. It stresses the necessity for action and the hope that the following generation may be educated in truly Christian schools. I hope to send you a copy of this memorandum by sea post. Perhaps you may publish extracts from it in the *Forum*.

Annotations to the Afrikaans Bible

The United Protestant Publishers undertook the publication of annotations to the Bible in Afrikaans, more or less on the basis of the "Kantteekeningen" to the Statenbijbel. The three Afrikaans-speaking churches work in harmony on this project, and it is hoped that the work will be completed at the end of next year. Every effort is made to produce work of a high standard and at the same time to keep in line with Reformed tradition. We hope that this work will increase knowledge of the Bible in our nation and that it will contribute toward a really Christian Republic.

May the Lord's blessing rest on your work as well as ours.

Yours in Him,

S. du Toit

Book Reviews

Berkhouwer, C. G., *DE TRIOMF DER GENADE IN DE THEOLOGIE VAN KARL BARTH*. (Kampen: J. H. Kok; 1954). 397 pp. fl. 12.50

AS THE title of this masterpiece indicates, Professor Berkhouwer holds that one has not understood Karl Barth's theology until one has seen it as a theology of triumphant grace. Barth's theology is a crisis theology in order that it may be a fully triumphant theology. God's "Yes" is not merely a compensating force to the "No" of human existence. It is the singular, final triumph over the crisis. Forgiveness and justification are extended to the *ungodly*, and the proclamation of the crisis only serves to shut off all other supposed roads to salvation and to direct attention to the only salvation in God's hand. Professor Berkhouwer's book is wholly dedicated to an analysis of this triumph-motif in Barth's theology and to the criticism of the nature of this triumph in the light of the Bible's triumph of grace.

This review could direct the reader's attention to countless, excellent, clarifying insights into Barth's theology. Suffice it to say that this work serves as an excellent introduction to Barth's thought. Berkhouwer has taken into account all of Barth's major writings, and he quotes repeatedly and extensively from *Romans* and *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik* through volume IV, 1. The quotations and footnotes bear testimony to Berkhouwer's acquaintance with what Barth *actually* says.

Berkhouwer begins his task by pointing to the continuing interest which Barth's theology commands in modern theological and philosophical thought. He then proceeds to an analysis of Barth's teaching and discovers the theme of triumphant grace in Barth's treatment of creation, election, reconciliation, and eschatology. Since Barth's theology is most radically a theology of grace, it is sharply antithetical to Romanism. Berkhouwer treats this antithesis in Chapter VII, and reflects on Barth's thought against the background

of Heim's philosophy, Marcion's heresy, and the errors of antinomianism, perfectionism, and universalism in Chapter VIII. It is typical of Berkhouwer's carefulness in his dogmatic labors that he closes this chapter with a warning against reacting to Barth's triumph idea in such a way that injustice is done to the truly biblical, Protestant emphasis on salvation *sola gratia, sola fide*.

The second part of the book contains an evaluation of Barth's thought in the light of Scripture. Here Berkhouwer considers successively the nature of the triumph of grace, the universality of this triumph, the divine triumph, the eschatological triumph, and the triumph in relationship to the kingdom.

At the risk of seeming arbitrary, I shall present a brief survey of that section of this work which seems at once to summarize Barth's thought and to give us the thrust of Berkhouwer's criticism. Chapter IX is the longest chapter in the book, and it deals with the nature of the triumph of grace in Barth's thought. Berkhouwer also offers here his criticism of that triumph.

Barth maintains that sin can be known only by way of the reality and frightfulness of the cross of Jesus Christ. God's act of creation was good and, since creation is creation in Jesus of Nazareth, it was gracious. It defies explanation that men should rebel against this grace of God. There is no possibility of sinning in God's good creation. Man was created free, but he was free *for God*, not free to go in the direction of good *or* evil. But when Barth declares that sin cannot be explained, he does not intend to agree with the classic Christian idea that sin is a riddle which cannot be rationally squared with God's goodness in creation and which must be spoken of in connection with God's decree and government with utmost care. For the actuality of "the nothingness" (*das Nichtige*) receives concrete form in sin and this actuality is directly related by Barth to election, which always implies reprobation and rejection. The mysteriousness of sin is certainly lessened when we hear from Barth that nothingness has its real ground in God's not-willing, in his rejection of "*das Nichtige*." Berkhouwer had shown in Chapter III that this election and reprobation were *prefigured* in creation. The chaos of Genesis 1:2 is not disordered raw material for a good and ordered creation. It is nothingness over which God speaks His angry "NO!" Nor will Barth posit an eternal nothingness eternally rejected, for the act of rejecting and reprobating the chaos, to which act the chaos owes its reality, is a work of God's "left hand." It ceases to be performed when once the electing love of God has achieved its triumph over it. Barth seeks to go back to an eternal act of self-distinction in God. God is ever confronted with not-God and what He does not will. While God does not *will* evil, sin and the fall, He has determined to reveal His glory by confronting man with the impossible possibility of that which He does not will. Man must see himself threatened and helpless over against this power and must be shown God's triumph over this threat to his existence. Thus sin receives an explanation. It is used by God to demonstrate that which is never in doubt in God's act of self-distinction from not-God. In the area of creation God testifies to the triumph of light over darkness. If one objects to the reality thus given to that which God does not will, Barth replies that God's not-willing is also powerful and must come to suitable and real expression. Berkhouwer sharply criticizes this unbiblical idea of a self-distinction in God which operates by way of a confrontation for God with that which is not-God.

The mystery of sin is clarified. It is not a mystery for the *understanding*. Yet, sin is a mystery ontologically, for in sin that occurs which really cannot occur. Sin is ontologically impossible!

This impossibility is grounded Christologically. Jesus is *the man*, and every man is fellow-man with Jesus. Being human is being with God. Man may and man does rebel against this grace, but this human attempt is an attempt to deny the undeniable. Man tries to fall from grace, but this is attempting the impossible since God continues faithful to His covenant of grace, the only covenant which ever existed between God and man. Sin is absurdity. As an ontological impossibility it is impossible to explain.

Berkhouwer points out that this construction leaves no room for a passing from wrath and guilt to grace and righteousness in history. One can almost say that the triumph of grace is identical with the ontological impossibility of sin. Ritschl held that God's wrath was really a misunderstanding on man's part. Barth scores this idea and asserts that God's wrath is real and is something other than His burning love. But in God's wrath His grace is manifest, for the powerlessness of sin over against triumphant grace is exposed by that wrath. In Jesus Christ the decision has been reached and, since "It is finished," the threat of "*das Nichtige*" is illusory. Berkhouwer stresses the conflict here with the New Testament idea of the conclusiveness of Christ's work. In the New Testament the believer is ever urged to be on guard against the effort of the demons to close his eyes to the fact of Christ's victory. Satan's battle with believers has assumed an intensely real character precisely because Satan knows that his hour is short. But Barth's failure to deal justly with the New Testament teaching is easily understood when one learns his idea of the demonic. Barth claims to find his demonology only in John 8:44. In Barth's opinion, Satan is not a creature. The teaching of 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6 is simply ignored since Barth is convinced that a real angel just does not do the things attributed to fallen angels in these passages. Barth's thought is controlled from beginning to end by the conviction that creation is threatened by "*das Nichtige*" and that man — already in creation — can live only by the saving grace of God. *For Barth, all grace is saving grace.*

Berkhouwer firmly criticizes Barth's "ontology of nothingness." The Bible knows nothing of this. It is evident that Barth is struggling to overcome the anxiety of the Existentialist in the "boundary situation." Man is not really ultimately threatened by nothingness. In creation and especially in Jesus Christ God's triumphant grace has decisively and finally *rejected* chaos, nothingness, sin, and evil. The world is created in Jesus of Nazareth and exists only in His saving grace. Berkhouwer sounds a timely warning at this point concerning the perpetual dangers to theology from dualism and monism. Dualism is strong because it accents human autonomy. Monism feels that it is truly God-glorifying because it precludes any human autonomy. But — and this is Berkhouwer's warning to Barth — a theology in which that which is self-evident to God is merely demonstrated to man cannot hold to the *decisive* significance of history.

Barth prefers supralapsarianism to infralapsarianism because the supralapsarian type of thought keeps creation and reconciliation together. Of course, Barth rejects an absolute decree of double predestination, but the idea of an eternally overcome chaos and evil moves him to present his "corrected" supralapsarianism, corrected, that is, from the evils of an absolute double decree. Guilt and sin are robbed of real

fearfulness, since both fall under the grace of God, and this is evident already in creation. The goodness of creation is Christological goodness. At no point in the progression from God's plan to Calvary is the grace of God anything but totally and radically triumphant.

It is immediately apparent in the book that Karl Barth is not a modernist. It is equally apparent that Karl Barth is not orthodox. In some footnotes Berkhouwer criticizes Prof. C. Van Til's constructions on Barth's theology. He is of the opinion that Van Til's criticism of Barth should be based on a more thorough analysis of what Barth actually says. However, Berkhouwer does not deny that the criticism of any theology's basic philosophical presuppositions is a legitimate endeavor. He pleads for two things in this connection: First, Berkhouwer insists that one must ever be alert to the power of the Word of God to break through the reasoning of any theologian operating with wrong philosophical presuppositions. Second, Berkhouwer warns against an appeal to something called "classical Reformed theology" which does not really represent "classical Reformed theology" but the critic's own theological construction. Accuracy and effectiveness demand that these things be kept in constant view by those criticizing Barth or any other theologian.

At times this reviewer wished for a more detailed statement of Berkhouwer's own solution to the problems raised by Barth. There is much excellent use of Scripture to counter Barth's heresy, but theological reconstruction is not always presented. In fairness, however, one should add that Berkhouwer is also giving us the fruits of his own theological thinking in other publications right along.

Karl Barth is not Reformed. He is not orthodox. But he wrestles with the great classic problems of Christian theology, and he does so in such a way that he has caught the attention of many younger theologians who were reared on the husks of liberal theology. We could wish that these men had been awakened by Kuyper, Bavinck, Hodge, Warfield or someone truly Reformed. But this is not the fact of the matter and we must reckon with this in our theological witness. If we are to talk so that our day can understand us, we shall have to know Barthian theology thoroughly, for Barth has made a major contribution to the tone of theological discussion in our day. Only by thrusting the theological thinkers of our day back upon the whole counsel of God in Scripture by way of a Scriptural critique of recent thought can we serve our generation with the truth. And we may well discover in the conflict with Barth that even we who have the truth have not escaped one-sided emphases which rob God's history of its decisiveness and threaten the acute righteousness of God's judgments. Only if we speak to men in the responsible tones of Sacred Scripture will we fulfill God's demand that His church not only have a sound theology but also present a challenging proclamation to sinners.

Carl Kromminga

W. K. Hobart, *THE MEDICAL LANGUAGE OF LUKE* (Grand Rapids: Baker; 1954). Reprint. 305 pages. \$3.60.

THIS work made its first appearance in 1882, when the author was a scholar at Trinity College, Dublin.

The purpose was to furnish an argument for the traditional position that both the Third Gospel and The Acts were written by Luke, the Beloved Physician. This was denied by some of the leading scholars of the 19th century. Hobart planned to furnish his proof by showing that the writer of these two biblical books was fully acquainted with

the language of the Greek medical schools. Even though this method of studying the problem was suggested some time before Hobart, he was the first to attempt it. With remarkable industry he collected parallels to Luke from the writings of Hippocrates (430 B.C.), Dioscorides (75 A.D.), Aretaeus and Galen (160 A.D.).

The book is a word study, and cannot be appreciated except by those who know the Greek language.

The author classifies his selected words in eight groups. A brief survey of the groups will indicate the author's method: (1) Words that are distinctly technical, medical terms or those commonly employed in medical language; (2) compound forms used by Luke, made up of simple terms and commonly employed in medical language; (3) a list of words used by the medical fraternity to indicate the distribution of food, blood and nerves throughout the body; (4) a list of unusual combinations of terms common in medical language; (5) a list of unusual words to express the impartation of strength and to indicate reproduction; (6) a list of words rarely given the meaning that Luke gives, except by the medical profession; (7) a list of words habitually employed by physicians and wellnigh indispensable in a doctor's vocabulary; (8) a list containing the interesting compounds of Luke, which have a double prefix consisting of two prepositions, and repeatedly found in medical language.

How shall we estimate this work? Hobart himself grants that in estimating his argument, we must remember that the weight of his argument is accumulative. Hobart's argument was very favorably received by such men as Zahn, Ramsey, Hayes and Harnack. It was regarded as a real and necessary argument in the defense of the Lukan authorship of the two books in question. However, since the cogent argumentation of Harnack in his *Luke, the Physician* (pp. 175-198) the Lukan authorship has in general been regarded as so well established that the Hobartian argument has been regarded as a bit superfluous. Moreover, a great deal of unfavorable comment has been hurled against Hobart's argument by Dr. Cadbury of Harvard, in his "The Style and Literary Method of Luke," *Harvard Theological Review*, VI, 39ff. Cadbury avers that 90% of the medical terms (400 of them) can be found in such non-medical literature as Josephus and the Septuagint. Furthermore, Cadbury calls attention to the claim of both Hippocrates and Galen that they deliberately used language that could be understood by the common people.

S. H. Cartledge, in his *A Conservative Introduction to the N. T.*, judges that Cadbury has "completely wrecked Hobart's evidence on this point" (p. 82). I am rather inclined to believe that Cartledge has overstated his case and am agreed with H. C. Thiessen (p. 161 of his *Intro. to the N. T.*) that "Cadbury somewhat weakened Hobart's evidence on this point, but has by no means destroyed it." Hobart's argument, though not so necessary as in the days before Harnack's defense of the Lukan authorship of the books concerned, is still a potent argument. It identifies the author, reveals the integrity of the books, and indicates one of their more distinctive characteristics. HENRY SCHULTZE

Venture, Winter 1955. (Privately published: Grand Rapids, Michigan).

IT IS presumptuous to review a periodical like *Venture* because (1) it is very uneven in quality, and so whatever is said about it must be hedged with a great many reservations; and (2) since a great deal of the writing is highly imaginative, it is not always easy at this distance

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to determine what an author is trying to do in any specific piece of work. Therefore, I own to an uneasy sense that most of what I shall say may actually be quite irrelevant. Nevertheless, I shall chance it.

First of all, I should make a few observations about the prose. There are two short stories, or sketches—one called "Beyond This," by Robert Staal; and one entitled "Reflections in Grey," by Jim Rensenbrink. Of the two, the second is (in my judgment) much the better piece of work; but the first interests me more, for reasons which will be explained.

"Beyond This" fascinates me simply because I can't tell, after several readings, whether it is a serious piece of work or a leg-pull. As serious fiction, or even as serious writing of any sort, it is pretty awful. As a satire on Micky Spillane or the Hard-Boiled Literary Gentry in general, it is a bit too broad perhaps, but it is not entirely without merit. Even as burlesque, however, it lacks subtlety. It is very heavy-handed melodrama of the classic nineteenth century type, done up in twentieth century pocket-book style: *Nellie, the Beautiful Sewing-Machine Girl* with muscles.

"Reflection in Grey" is a much superior piece of work, simply because it is more serious and more consistent. It is, of course, also highly melodramatic. The hero is sitting in a university class, taught by an English professor who is a sort of lifeless caricature of all the English professors I have ever known (I am one myself), and he is obsessed — as who would not be — by the fact that his child has been burned to death and that he is in some way responsible. Certainly it would be difficult to find a more untypical or more melodramatic situation. The problem the author sets himself is to enter into the consciousness of the hero and tell us what he is thinking, or feeling, or half-thinking and half-feeling.

The problem is one that would appeal to Faulkner. There is, of course, only one Faulkner and he is (in spite of everything) a very great literary technician. It is no unkindness to Rensenbrink to suggest that he is no Faulkner, but the nature of his problem — the melodrama, the sadism, the frankly biological naturalism — invites the comparison.

I don't like "Reflection in Grey," because for all its pretentiousness, it actually tells us nothing about life that we did not already know and its main character is only a small fragment of a human being. Nevertheless, there is evidence here of high intent and serious effort, and this I must applaud.

In any event, anyone who can write a paragraph like this one should be encouraged to keep on writing:

"He tried to listen, of course he did, but somehow there was that wall, and then he wanted to close his eyes, and the sound, that lump of noise, went over his head and out where the snow lodged on the window sill, and even further than that, disintegrating somewhere beyond the medical buildings where the black-armed ugly trees waved their impotent branches at the grey, and darker grey, and almost black rolling over that, sky."

Now let us turn to the verse.

The four poems by Calvin Seerveld are charming and evocative. They are also somewhat obvious, but there is enough freshness in them to make them attractive. My preference is for the third poem, which begins like this:

"A homely unobtrusive sun
is fondling tousled tree-tops now
where birds are proudly feeding young,
lie quietly, my love."

The two poems by Byrna Dehn, while technically adequate, seem to be inspired by a sort of early nineteenth century romanticism. There is an emotional anachronism here: in the century of revolutions and possible extinction it seems cruelly superficial to urge the lark or the goldfinch to "fill the world to brimming full with love."

Mr. Rensenbrink's poems are, like his story, very uneven in quality. They are called "Lines . . . to a Lady" and "Poem." There are some really splendid flashes in them amidst a good deal of rather pedestrian or (to be blunt) frankly awkward material. Let me quote, as an example, the first two stanzas of "Lines Composed to a Lady," so that the reader may judge for himself whether I am right in calling the first stanza a fine example of poetic description and the second a glaring instance of the poetic cliché:

"Out in the garden,
I hear
(above the sleepy madrigal
of muddy pond frogs)
the wind,
arising from the swampland;
and I wait for the rain
to speak in slight sweet whispers,
upon rooftops.
"What will the rain say?
Will it speak of you
as all things do?"

Miss Elizabeth van Kluyve's poem is a quite charming example of polite light verse. It is based upon a line in *Othello*: "And if I love thee not, chaos is come again." Mr. Rubingh's "Cradle Song" is pretty lurid for a slumber song, but it gives evidence of power in certain lines; as, for example,

". . . could you but know
we are the silent ones,
the children, the aged embryos."

Finally, there is a poem by Mr. John Pastoor, called "Barbs for Suburbia." Intended as a scathing satire on Big Business and Big Business Culture, it never quite comes off.

A few general observations, in conclusion. As I have tried to indicate, there is a good deal of vitality here and some real promise. There is nothing in the current issue of *Venture* than can be called distinguished writing; on the other hand, except for some pretty sloppy writing in isolated cases, the general level is high. There is, in some pieces, a sort of militant insistence upon the author's right to say anything he pleases, as though he were going to write some of it on a sidewalk or a wooden fence. Literary honesty, I submit at the risk of being pompous, is made of sterner stuff.

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