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SHORT TITLE

CONFERENCES IN FAITH AND ORDER

Thesis presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Historical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the

AGREEMENTS IN FAITH AND ORDER

by
John George Fisher

June 1958

Approved by

G. A. Hill

[Signature]

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CONFERENCES ON FAITH AND ORDER

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Approved by:

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the areas of agreement which have been achieved by the three World Conferences on Faith and Order. Interest in this problem stems from two existential situations. The first lies in the fact that the church body with which the writer is affiliated, the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, is not an active participant in the so-called ecumenical movement, as that movement finds its expression in the World Council of Churches. The reasons for this position which are most frequently cited fall under the broad category of "doctrine." This Lutheran body, along with the other three member bodies in the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America, considers it "unionism" to engage in "church-fellowship with the adherents of false doctrine."¹ The second situation which has promoted interest in this subject is the writer's attendance at the recent North-American Conference on Faith and Order, held at Oberlin, Ohio.² At this Conference many basic Christian doctrines

¹"A Brief Statement," Doctrinal Declarations (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, n.d.), pp. 52f. Cf. John Theodore Mueller, "The Ecumenical Movement and the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod," The Lutheran Witness, LXXII (August 4-September 1, 1953), 266ff.

²John George Huber, "Ecumenical Diary: Faith and Order at Oberlin," Seminarian, IL (January, 1958), 46-50.

were discussed, such as, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and significant agreements (and disagreements) were registered in the final Report.³ In the light of these facts, plus the additional fact that the Faith and Order Commission is dedicated to a non-compromising study of divisive theological issues,⁴ thorough historical research in this field seems well-warranted. It is the goal of this thesis, then, to trace the development of the Faith and Order Movement, to examine its methods and approach, and to compare its agreements at the World Conference level.

Specifically, the major focus of this study will be on the First World Conference on Faith and Order, at Lausanne, Switzerland, 1927; the Second World Conference, at Edinburgh, Scotland, 1937; and the Third (and most recent) World Conference, at Lund, Sweden, 1952. The historical context, however, will include a span of forty-seven years, beginning with the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910, and ending with the regional Oberlin Conference in 1957. Some consideration will also be given to the relationship of Faith and Order to the World Council of Churches.

³Paul S. Minear, editor, The Nature of the Unity We Seek, Official Report of the North American Conference on Faith and Order, September 3-10, 1957, Oberlin, Ohio (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1958). Note that this event marked the first time that The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod sent an official observer to an ecumenical conference of the World Council: the Reverend Professor Paul M. Bretscher.

⁴Oliver S. Tomkins, editor, The Third World Conference on Faith and Order Held at Lund, August 15th to 28th, 1952 (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1953), pp. 359ff.

The thesis will follow a simple outline. Chapter II will treat the "History of Faith and Order"; Chapter III will explore "Methodology"; and Chapter IV will list and analyze "Agreements," under the headings of faith, order, and worship. The summary chapter, V, will pull together the major agreements, outline the significance of them and the Movement as a whole, point to areas of continued disagreement, and attempt some sort of prognosis for the future.

The major sources from which the data will be taken are actual Faith and Order documents, available at Pritzlaff Memorial Library on microfilm, and the three volumes of official Proceedings of the World Conferences. Other materials will play a minor role in filling gaps and supplying some aid in the way of evaluation. For the most part, however, the official records of Faith and Order will be presented to speak for themselves. It is for this reason that the thesis will carry a considerable number of quotations and footnotes.

As a preliminary summary, suffice it to say that the development of Faith and Order can be traced to a number of simultaneous factors, with the Missionary Movement playing no small part. From the start the Anglicans have assumed a leading role in ecumenical endeavors such as Faith and Order, but gradually other churches have found their place and are making extensive contributions. At each step of the way, the Eastern Orthodox Churches stand as a

formidable bulwark of opposition to any sort of compromise of their heritage. This extreme position on the liturgical-sacramental side of the ecumenical ledger is counter-balanced by the Salvation Army and the Society of Friends, Christian organizations without formal worship or sacraments. Among these and many other churches there are also conflicting politics--episcopal, presbyteral, and congregational--different views on the Holy Scriptures and the function of tradition, a host of opinions on the nature of the unity which the church should seek, and most baffling of all, the variety of interpretations as to the nature of the church itself.

Despite all of these seemingly impossible conflicts, and others, some measure of agreement has been reached at the World Conferences on Faith and Order. The most hopeful advance in agreement lies in the area of Christology, and yet, the paradox still remains which was so well expressed in the Faith and Order theme for the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches. We confess "Our Unity in Christ and Our Disunity as Churches."⁵ It is this paradox which Faith and Order is determined to resolve. The data presented in this thesis indicate the beginnings of achievement.

⁵W. A. Visser 't Hooft, editor, The Evanston Report: the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, 1954 (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1955), pp. 82ff.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORY OF FAITH AND ORDER

Edinburgh, 1910, to Lausanne, 1927

Historians of the ecumenical movement concur with Tatlow that "the origin of the proposal to hold a World Conference on Faith and Order is always and rightly associated with the World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh, 1910."¹ Recalling that this historic Conference brought together twelve hundred delegates from one hundred sixty missionary societies, Pache points out that:

It was there that Bishop Brent of the Episcopalian Church in America and the Lutheran Archbishop Soderblom from Uppsala, Sweden, were struck by the vision of the church universal, and from that time they became zealous apostles in the cause of church unity.²

Immediately after the Missionary Conference at Edinburgh, various churches took almost simultaneous action toward the attainment of greater unity. Slosser cites five specific instances:

On October 18th [1910], the Convention of the National Congregational Council in session in Boston, Massachusetts, passed an important resolution appointing a

¹Tissington Tatlow, "The World Conference on Faith and Order," A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948, edited by Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954), Chap. IX, p. 405.

²Rene Pache, "The Ecumenical Movement," Bibliotheca Sacra, CVII (July, 1950), 357.

special committee which should be ready to consider any overtures for union "in view of the possibility of fraternal discussion of Church unity suggested by the Lambeth Conference of Bishops in 1908." On the same day the Disciples of Christ in National Convention at Topeka, Kansas, passed a resolution calling for the creation of a similar committee. Almost simultaneously the Church of England in Australia appointed a Commission to seek Conferences on unity with the other Churches of that Continent. In the same year the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. appointed a permanent Committee on Church Co-operation and Union. In the very month, that is, October, certain doctors and clergy of the Orthodox Churches of the East, in session at Athens, took important action relative to the furtherance of general Christian re-union.³

But of all the churches which expressed interest in the cause of unity, it was the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America which took the lead in promoting what is generally called the Faith and Order Movement. At its General Convention held in Cincinnati in 1910, the following report was presented to the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies on October 19th:

Your Committee is of one mind. We believe that the time has now arrived when representatives of the whole family of Christ, led by the Holy Spirit, may be willing to come together for the consideration of questions of Faith and Order.⁴

³Gaius Jackson Slosser, Christian Unity: Its History and Challenge in All Communion in All Lands (New York: Dutton, 1929), p. 351.

⁴"Joint Commission Appointed to Arrange for a World Conference on Faith and Order," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 1, (1910), in Microfilm Series I (1910-1948), Official Pamphlets and Publications of the Commission on Faith and Order, prepared by A. T. De Groot (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University, July, 1954), p. 3.

The report propounded "the belief that the beginnings of unity are to be found in the clear statement and full consideration of those things in which we differ, as well as of those things in which we are one,"⁵ and included the following resolution:

Whereas, there is today among all Christian people a growing desire for the fulfillment of our Lord's prayer that all His disciples may be one, that the world may believe that God has sent Him:

Resolved, The House of Bishops concurring, That a Joint Commission be appointed to bring about a Conference for the consideration of questions touching Faith and Order, and that all Christian Communion throughout the world which confess our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour be asked to unite with us in arranging for and conducting such a Conference.⁶

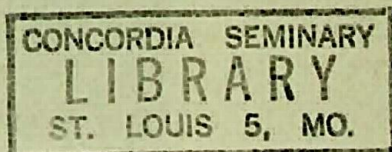
On that same day the resolution was adopted unanimously by both the House of Bishops and the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies. A Joint Commission of twenty-one men was appointed, including five who were to play significant roles in the future development of the Movement: the Rt. Rev. Charles H. Brent, Bishop of the Philippine Islands; the Rev. Alexander Mann, of Boston; J. Pierpont Morgan, of Wall Street, New York; Robert H. Gardiner, of Maine; and George Zabriskie, also of New York.⁷

The immediate goal of the proposed Conference was to

⁵Ibid., p. 4.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., pp. 5-6.



afford an opportunity for mutual sharing and conversation among the churches, but the report revealed an ultimate aim which included "the definite hope that it may help to prepare the way for the outward and visible reunion of all who confess our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour."⁸ Specific reference was also made to define "all" as "representatives of the whole Christian world, both Catholic and Protestant."⁹

By July 25, 1911, this report was amended to list eighteen denominations which had appointed commissions to help arrange a Faith and Order Conference.¹⁰

In the years which followed the Protestant Episcopal Church issued and distributed a series of pamphlets which further defined the objectives and methods of the proposed World Conference. Some of these, now listed as official Faith and Order documents, are "The World Conference and the Problem of Unity," by the Rev. Francis J. Hall, D. D.;¹¹ "An Official Statement by the Joint Commission of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U. S. A.";¹² "Prayer and

⁸"Report of the Committee on Plan and Scope," adopted April 20, 1911, Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 3, p. 3.

⁹Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 12-18.

¹¹Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 12.

¹²Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 14.

Unity, By a Layman";¹³ "Questions of Faith and Order For Consideration by the Proposed Conference," by the Rt. Rev. A. C. A. Hall, D. D.;¹⁴ "Unity or Union: Which?" by the Rt. Rev. P. M. Rhineland, D. D.;¹⁵ and "The Conference Spirit, By a Layman."¹⁶

The Joint Commission Appointed to Arrange for a World Conference on Faith and Order had corresponded with Christian Churches around the world so that by April 5, 1913, it was able to publish a "List of Commissions already Appointed," with a total of twenty-one church bodies represented.¹⁷ Then, in 1914, a deputation was sent to confer with thirty-one non-Anglican communions in the British Isles. Canon Bate reports that the ecumenical delegation was able "to secure promises from every Communion visited of a favorable consideration for the proposed Conference."¹⁸

With the arrival of World War I, communications were blocked for some four years, but work was resumed as soon as possible after the Armistice of November, 1918:

¹³Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 15.

¹⁴Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 16.

¹⁵Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 18.

¹⁶Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 19.

¹⁷Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 21.

¹⁸H. N. Bate, editor, Faith and Order: Proceedings of the World Conference, Lausanne, August 3-21, 1927 (Garden City and New York: Doubleday-Doran Co., 1928), p. ix.

The first adventure on a large scale was a deputation to Europe and the East, in spring and summer of 1919. . . . The results of the deputation have been manifest alike at Geneva and Lausanne, in the full and friendly co-operation which has been secured with the Orthodox Eastern Churches and with the Churches of Scandinavia.¹⁹

During this period the list of commissions appointed by the churches had grown from thirty-five in March, 1914, to seventy-two in October, 1919, which included representation in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, North and South America.²⁰

A preliminary meeting was held August 12-20, 1920, in Geneva, "to arrange for the further conduct of the movement."²¹ The delegates in attendance represented about forty nations and seventy autonomous churches, "including all the great families or groups of Trinitarian Churches, except the Church of Rome, which had declined to participate."²² A Continuation Committee of fifty-one people was appointed, representing the following communions: Anglican, Armenian, Baptist, Congregational, Brethren, Disciples, Eastern Orthodox, Society of Friends, German Evangelical, Lutheran, Methodist, Old Catholic, Presbyterian and Reformed.²³ Bishop Charles Brent (of Western New York) was elected Chairman;

¹⁹Ibid., pp. ix-x.

²⁰Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 21.

²¹"Report of the Preliminary Meeting at Geneva, Switzerland, August 12-20, 1920," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 33, p. 2.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., p. 83.

Dr. George Zabriskie, Treasurer; and Mr. Robert Gardiner, Secretary.²⁴

The Continuation Committee met on August 19 at Geneva just prior to the close of the preliminary meeting. Two major transactions were voted upon in preparation for the First World Conference on Faith and Order: The election of a Subjects Committee, and the drafting of four "Questions Concerning the Faith of the Reunited Church," to be circulated to all the commissions:

1. What degree of unity in Faith will be necessary in a reunited Church?
2. Is a statement of this one Faith in the form of a Creed necessary or desirable?
3. If so, what Creed should be used? or what other formulary would be desirable?
4. What are the proper uses of a Creed and a Confession of Faith?²⁵

Between the first Continuation Committee meeting in 1920 and the second in 1925, preparations for the World Conference took the form of sub-committee meetings, the circulation of publications and extensive correspondence. This activity is summarized by the Secretariat for the Continuation Committee in a list of "the most important meetings since Geneva 1920 in connection with the preparations:

- (a) Members of Commissions in North America, Kew Gardens, N. Y., April 3 and 4, 1923.

²⁴Ibid., p. 81.

²⁵Ibid., p. 88.

- (b) Subjects Committee, Oxford, England, September 10-13, 1923.
- (c) Members of the Commissions in North America, Buffalo, N. Y., November 7 and 8, 1923.
- (d) Members of the Commissions of the American Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., New York, November 6 and 7, 1924.
- (e) Archbishops of Canterbury and York's Committee, Lambeth, December 11, 1924, and at other times.
- (f) Subjects Committee, Oxford, June 30 ff., 1925.²⁶

A new series of preparatory publications was also listed--some in English, French, German, and Greek--one of which added four new topics to the original slate of questions on "Faith of the reunited Church": "The Ministry in the reunited Church," "The Church," "The Christian Moral Ideal," and "The Sacraments."²⁷

During this period of heightened anticipation of the First World Conference, members of the Faith and Order Movement were saddened by the death of Mr. Robert H. Gardiner, June 15, 1924, who had served as Secretary to the Continuation Committee.²⁸

The Continuation Committee held its second meeting from August 15 to 18, 1925, at Stockholm. Because the Hague proved unavailable, Lausanne, Switzerland, was voted as the place of meeting for the World Conference. The date

²⁶"Memoranda from the Secretariat for the Continuation Committee, Stockholm, August, 1925" (no number; follows Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 40 in Microfilm Series), p. 14.

²⁷"Five Series of Questions for Preliminary Discussion in Preparation for the World Conference on Faith and Order," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 39, (1925), pp. 3-7.

²⁸Tatlow, op. cit., p. 420.

set was August, 1927.²⁹ The Committee also outlined a "Method of Discussion"³⁰ and an agenda:

- I. The Call to Unity
- II. The Nature of the Church
- III. The Church's Common Confession of Faith in God
- IV. The Church's Ministry
- V. The Sacraments
- VI. The Unity of Christendom and the Place of Different Churches Within it
- VII. Arrangements for Continuing the Work of the Conference.³¹

By May 1, 1926, the list of Faith and Order commissions of the various churches had expanded to eighty-eight, although several communions were listed as "Report Awaited."³²

The third meeting of the Continuation Committee, held in Berne, Switzerland, August 23 to 25, 1926, elaborated its plans for the World Conference, and accepted an additional topic for the agenda: "The Church's Message to the World--the Gospel."³³

By July 27, 1927, one hundred and nine churches appeared

²⁹"Minutes of the Continuation Committee of the World Conference on Faith and Order, Stockholm, August 15 to 18, 1925," (no number; precedes Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 41), p. 14.

³⁰"Draft Agenda for the World Conference on Faith and Order," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 41, pp. 19-20.

³¹Ibid., pp. 8-18.

³²"List of Commissions Already Appointed," Faith and Order Document No. 21 (Revised, May 1, 1926), pp. 5-45.

³³"Minutes of the Continuation Committee of the World Conference on Faith and Order, Berne, Switzerland, August 23-25, 1926," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 45, pp. 6ff.

on the official membership list of the Lausanne Conference.³⁴

The First World Conference on Faith and Order was held at Lausanne, Switzerland, August 3 to 21, 1927.³⁵ Officers elected for the Conference were the following: Bishop Charles H. Brent, President; Dr. A. E. Garvie, Deputy-Chairman; Mr. Ralph W. Brown, General Secretary; and Mr. George Zabriskie, Treasurer.³⁶ A "Preamble" and "The Call to Unity" were unanimously adopted by the full Conference. The section reports were "received by the full Conference, nemine contradicente": II. "The Church's Message to the World--the Gospel"; III. "The Nature of the Church"; IV. "The Church's Common Confession of Faith"; V. "The Ministry of the Church"; and VI. "The Sacraments."³⁷ The Conference was attended by three hundred and ninety-four official delegates and observers from one hundred and eight churches of more than fifteen denominational families.³⁸ A Continuation Committee was appointed, retaining the same officers of the Lausanne Conference.³⁹

³⁴"Membership List of the Lausanne Conference, August 3-21, 1927" (8th edition; July 27, 1927), pp. 5-29.

³⁵Bate, op. cit., pp. 1-541.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 33-35.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 459-473.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 508-530.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 531-533.

It was a disappointment for many of the delegates at Lausanne that the Roman Catholic Church was not represented at the Conference. Efforts to obtain participation from Rome were begun by Faith and Order as early as November 2, 1914, in the form of correspondence. In the summer of 1919 representatives of the Movement went to Rome for an interview with Benedict XV, well summarized by Tavad:

The delegates were given the impression that the Holy Father took a great personal interest in the venture although he was firmly decided not to join it. In May, 1921, the Archbishop of Canterbury forwarded to the Pope, through the Secretary of State, the text of the "Lambeth Quadrilateral," a resolution passed at the 1920 Lambeth Conference on the requirements of Christian unity according to the Anglican tradition. Finally, in the summer of 1926, Bishop Brent of the Philippines called on Pius XI. During all that time the decision not to take part in "ecumenical" organizations was repeatedly made clear. It was finally explained in the encyclical letter Mortalium Animos (January 6, 1928): in the light of the experiences of Stockholm and Lausanne, the Protestant movement toward unity was pronounced to be "subversive of the foundations of the Catholic faith."⁴⁰

But despite this and other failings, no one could deny that the Faith and Order Conference had been transferred from the realm of dream to the experience of reality at Lausanne.

⁴⁰George H. Tavard, The Catholic Approach to Protestantism (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), pp. 72-73. Cf. G. K. A. Bell, editor, "Encyclical Letter (Mortalium Animos) on fostering True Religious Union of Our Most Holy Lord, Pius XI, by Divine Providence Pope (January 6, 1928)," in Documents on Christian Unity 1920-30 (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. 188-200.

Post-Lausanne to Edinburgh, 1937

The first major step after the Lausanne Conference was a meeting of the Continuation Committee at Prague, Czechoslovakia, September 6 to 8, 1928. Dr. Garvie presided in Bishop Brent's absence, which was due to illness. The Rev. H. N. Bate was elected Convener of a Reference Committee to whom "all the subject-matter of the Lausanne Conference should be referred together with replies from the churches to the reports of the Lausanne Conference."⁴¹

Tatlow has commented on the death of Bishop Brent the following year:

On March 1929 Bishop Brent, who had been seriously ill for some time, died at Lausanne, and with his passing the movement lost the man who had been its leader for nineteen years.⁴²

The Continuation Committee met again from August 27 to 30, 1929, at Maloja, Engadine, Switzerland, and elected the Most Rev. the Archbishop of York (William Temple) as its new chairman.⁴³ As a means for studying the churches'

⁴¹"Records of the Continuation Committee of the World Conference on Faith and Order, Prague, Czechoslovakia, September 6-8, 1928," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 58, p. 12.

⁴²Tatlow, op. cit., p. 426.

⁴³"Records of the Continuation Committee of the World Council of Faith and Order, Maloja, Engadine, Switzerland, August 27-30, 1929," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 60, p. 5.

responses to the Lausanne reports, a Theological Committee was elected, with the Bishop of Gloucester (A. C. Headlam) as Chairman.⁴⁴

In the following year Mr. Ralph W. Brown, General Secretary, moved to Europe. "Until 1930 the central office of the movement was at Boston, U. S. A., but in 1930 premises were secured in Geneva, Switzerland, and Mr. Brown took up his residence there."⁴⁵ From August 26 to 29 of that same year the Continuation Committee met at Mürren, Switzerland, and scheduled the next World Conference for 1937, with the theme, "The Church in the Purpose of God."⁴⁶ Another invitation to Lausanne for the Second World Conference was accepted at the next Continuation Committee meeting held at High Leigh, Hoddeson, England, August 18 to 21, 1931.⁴⁷ It was also at this meeting that the Theological Committee presented its report on the Doctrine of Grace.⁴⁸

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 12-14.

⁴⁵Leonard Hodgson, editor, The Second World Conference on Faith and Order Held at Edinburgh, August 3-18, 1937 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), p. 5.

⁴⁶"Records of the Continuation Committee of the World Council on Faith and Order, Mürren, Switzerland, August 26-29, 1930," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 63, pp. 17-20.

⁴⁷"Records of the Continuation Committee of the World Conference on Faith and Order, High Leigh, Hoddeson, England, August 18-21, 1931," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 65, p. 23.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 14-15.

The serious economic crisis of this period prevented the Continuation Committee from meeting in 1932 and 1933. Because it also became impossible to maintain the Geneva office and a full-time Secretary, Mr. R. W. Brown resigned in 1933. The Executive Committee "asked the newly appointed Theological Secretary, Canon Hodgson, to act also as General Secretary until other arrangements could be made. He consented to do so, and the European office was moved from Geneva to Winchester."⁴⁹

When the Continuation Committee was again able to meet at Hertenstein, Switzerland, September 3 to 6, 1934, it resolved to retain the following topics as a basis for the 1937 Conference:

- The Church in the Purpose of God
- I. The Church and the Word
 - II. The Church and the World
 - III. The Meaning of Grace
 - IV. The Church's Fellowship in Life and Worship.⁵⁰

The Committee also appointed three study Commissions to replace the existing Committee of Theologians.

Another device for the preparation of the World Conference was the holding of "Little Lausannes," that is, local discussion groups, in Germany, France, the Channel Islands, South Africa, England, the United States, Norway,

⁴⁹Hodgson, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

⁵⁰"The 1934 Meeting of the Continuation Committee Held at Hertenstein, Switzerland, September 3-6," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 71, pp. 10-11.

Scotland, Wales, Sweden, and New Zealand. The topics included "Grace," "The Sacraments," and "The Church."⁵¹

The 1935 meeting of the Continuation Committee was held at Hindsgaul, Middelfart, Denmark, from August 4 to 7. The program for the World Conference was adopted, and Edinburgh was selected as the place of meeting, rather than the originally proposed Lausanne.⁵² The 1936 meeting of the Continuation Committee met from August 31 to September 3, at St. George's School, Clarens, Switzerland. A recommendation was passed to appoint a committee which would "review the work of ecumenical co-operation since the Stockholm and Lausanne Conferences, and to report to the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences regarding the future of the ecumenical movement."⁵³ This committee became known as the Committee of Thirty-Five.

From July 8 to 10, 1937, the Committee of Thirty-Five met at Westfield College, Hampstead, London, with Archbishop William Temple in the chair. The Committee unanimously recommended that "each of the two World Conferences at Oxford

⁵¹"Reports of Local Study Groups, 1933-1934," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 72, pp. 2-40.

⁵²"The 1935 Meeting of the Continuation Committee Held at Hindsgaul, Middelfart, Denmark, August 4-7," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 73, pp. 14-15.

⁵³"The 1936 Meeting of the Continuation Committee Held at St. George's School, Clarens, Switzerland, August 31 to September 3, 1936," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 79, p. 16.

(Life and Work) and Edinburgh (Faith and Order) should adopt certain proposals for the foundation of a World Council of Churches."⁵⁴

In the months prior to the World Conference of 1937, official Study Commission Reports were published and circulated, such as "The Theology of Grace,"⁵⁵ "The Ministry and the Sacraments,"⁵⁶ "The Non-Theological Factors in the Making and Unmaking of Church Union,"⁵⁷ and "The Church of Christ and the Word of God."⁵⁸

The Second World Conference on Faith and Order was held at Edinburgh, Scotland, August 3 to 18, 1937. The following officers were elected: the Archbishop of York (Dr. William Temple), President; the Right Rev. Gustav Aulen, Pastor Marc Boegner, the Rev. A. E. Garvie, the Most Rev. Archbishop Germanos, and the Rev. J. Ross Stevenson, Vice-Presidents; the Rev. Canon L. Hodgson, General Secretary; the Rev. F. W. Tomkins and Professor H. Clavier, Associate Secretaries; Miss J. Dundas, Office Secretary;

⁵⁴ Leonard Hodgson, The Ecumenical Movement (Sewanee, Tennessee: University Press, the University of the South, 1951), p. 28.

⁵⁵ Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 66.

⁵⁶ Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 81.

⁵⁷ Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 84.

⁵⁸ Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 87.

and the Rev. Canon T. Tatlow, Financial Secretary.⁵⁹ A report on the following topics was adopted by the Conference, nemine contradicente: "The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ," "The Church of Christ and the Word of God," "The Communion of Saints," "The Church of Christ: Ministry and Sacraments," and "The Church's Unity in Life and Worship."⁶⁰ An "Affirmation of Union in Allegiance to our Lord Jesus Christ" was also adopted by a standing vote, nemine contradicente.⁶¹

As a result of the recommendation of the Committee of Thirty-Five which had met at Westfield College, the Conference approved a plan to form a World Council of Churches, and appointed a committee of seven to "cooperate with a similar committee appointed by the Universal Christian Council on Life and Work to form a 'Consituent Committee' of fourteen."⁶²

A Continuation Committee was again approved, whose President and Vice-Presidents remained identical with the officers of the World Conference.⁶³

Although the Second World Conference brought together "four hundred and fourteen delegates from one hundred and

⁵⁹Hodgson, Report, pp. 28-30.

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 224-269.

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 275-276.

⁶²Ibid., pp. 270-274.

⁶³Ibid., pp. 216-217; 369-373.

twenty-two Christian communions in forty-three different countries,"⁶⁴ no Roman Catholic delegates were present.

Tavard has again pieced together the background; on September 11, 1936, Archbishop William Temple

wrote to the Catholic Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh to the effect that the previous invitations were still standing. . . . The Archbishop's answer arrived in February, 1937, after a second letter had urged the matter again; he had decided to leave the question aside. During the assembly, however, he sent to the delegates a courteous letter that was read in plenary session.⁶⁵

Thus, Faith and Order reached a second milestone. Its next major task was to participate in the formation of the World Council of Churches.

Post-Edinburgh to Amsterdam, 1948

Ten years before the World Council of Churches became an actuality, the groundwork was laid at Utrecht, May, 1938. There the Committee of Fourteen (appointed by the Edinburgh and Oxford Conferences of 1937) met to plan a constitution.⁶⁶ Then, from August 29 to September 1 of that same year, the Continuation Committee of Faith and Order met at Clarens, and accepted the Committee of Fourteen's proposed constitution, after amendments were passed to guarantee conformity

⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 275; 281-305.

⁶⁵Tavard, op. cit., p. 73.

⁶⁶Tatlow, op. cit., p. 435.

with the policies of the Edinburgh Conference.⁶⁷ A Provisional Committee was appointed

consisting of the members of the Committee of Fourteen . . . and three additional members to be appointed by each movement, to act for Faith and Order and for Life and Work in matters of common interest until the World Council is constituted.⁶⁸

Dr. R. Newton Flew and Dr. J. H. McCracken were appointed members of the Provisional Committee for Faith and Order. It was also Dr. Flew who was appointed chairman of a Commission "to study the subject of the Church."⁶⁹ The American Section of the Continuation Committee was asked to appoint a Theological Committee to cooperate with this Commission.⁷⁰

The Provisional Committee held one meeting at St. Germain-en-Laye, near Paris, in January, 1939. It was there that Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft

was appointed to be General Secretary of the "World Council of Churches in process of formation. . . ." Plans were confidently laid for the convening of the first Assembly of the World Council in 1941.⁷¹

At the meeting of the Continuation Committee held at Clarens, August 21 to 23, 1939, it was agreed to appoint

⁶⁷"The 1938 Meeting of the Continuation Committee Held at St. George's School, Clarens, Switzerland, August 29-September 1, 1938," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 91, p. 48.

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 48-49.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 50.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Hodgson, The Ecumenical Movement, p. 34.

a Commission to study "Ways of Worship" and another Commission to study "Intercommunion."⁷² The Committee had planned to discuss in greater detail the function of these Commissions.

But towards the close of the discussion on the Wednesday night news was brought that the European situation seemed so serious as to make it wise to conclude the Committee's business and enable members living in distant countries beyond possible war zones to start for home.⁷³

Although the war curtailed further meetings of the Continuation Committee for eight years, limited work was still maintained. In 1939 and 1940 official reactions to the Edinburgh Conference, voiced by fifteen churches, were published.⁷⁴ Canon Leonard Hodgson of England assembled data for the Commission on Ways of Worship, which were published in October, 1940. However, communication with the chairman of the Commission, Professor Van der Leeuw, of Holland, was cut off.⁷⁵

Meanwhile, the American Theological Commission went forward with its studies, as proposed by Dr. R. Newton Flew

⁷²"The 1939 Meeting of the Continuation Committee Held at St. George's School, Clarens, Switzerland, August 21-23, 1939," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 92, pp. 75-76.

⁷³Ibid., p. 74.

⁷⁴"Statements Received from Churches on the Report of the Edinburgh Conference," Faith and Order Pamphlets No. 93 and 94.

⁷⁵"Commission on Ways of Worship Provisional Programme of Work," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 95, pp. 3-4.

in August, 1938. After a series of meetings in 1940 and 1941, the American Committee on the Church published its report in 1945.⁷⁶ Similarly, a report on "Intercommunion" was published in 1942, after a series of meetings beginning in Philadelphia, in 1940.⁷⁷ As O. S. Tomkins has pointed out, "this extensive activity in the United States was to prove an invaluable contribution to the whole movement when it became possible once more to resume international work."⁷⁸

European research in Faith and Order during the late years of the war was limited to correspondence. In January of 1944 Dr. Hodgson published the results of a questionnaire on "Intercommunion and Open Communion," describing the distinctive rules and customs of the following church families: Anglican, Baptist, Congregational, Disciples and Churches of Christ, Methodist, Old Catholic, Orthodox, Presbyterian, Armenian, South India, Friends, and the Salvation Army.⁷⁹

World War II also saw the loss of two outstanding leaders of the Faith and Order Movement: William Temple, "who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1942 and died in 1944," and also Dr. A. E. Garvie who "had long been relied on not

⁷⁶Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 100.

⁷⁷Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 98.

⁷⁸Oliver S. Tomkins, The Church in the Purpose of God (New York: World Council of Churches, 1952), p. 71.

⁷⁹Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 99.

only as Vice-Chairman of Faith and Order but as a wise adviser."⁸⁰

In February, 1946, the Executive Committee of Faith and Order held its first post-war meeting in Geneva. The chair was taken by Pastor Marc Boegner, a Vice-Chairman. Dr. Hodgson reported that the Rev. Oliver S. Tomkins had been appointed as his Assistant Secretary (not to be confused with Dr. Floyd Tomkins, Associate Secretary in America). Professor Donald M. Baillie was asked to be chairman of the Commission on Intercommunion. The Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches voted to expand its ranks by up to six new members.⁸¹

The 1947 meeting of the Continuation Committee was again held at the St. George's School, in Clarens, August 28 to September 1. The Rt. Rev. Yngve T. Brilioth, D. D., Bishop of Växjö, Sweden, was invited to accept the office of Chairman in succession to the late Archbishop Temple, and the Rev. Dr. R. Newton Flew was appointed Vice-Chairman in place of the late Rev. Dr. A. E. Garvie.⁸² O. S. Tomkins gives a good summary of the business which was discussed:

⁸⁰Tatlow, op. cit., p. 436.

⁸¹"The Executive Committee at Geneva on February 20th, 1946," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 101, pp. 3-10.

⁸²"The 1947 Meeting of the Continuation Committee Held at St. George's School, Clarens, Switzerland, August 28-September 1, 1947," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 102, p. 79.

At this meeting further progress reports were made on the work of the three Commissions, and (as was the general practice at meetings of the Continuation Committee) theological papers were read as examples of the work that was being done in these fields. . . . The Committee ratified the proposals for fuller integration of Faith and Order within the World Council of Churches by coming into it as its Commission on Faith and Order from the time of the first Assembly.⁸³

On August 21, 1948, the Continuation Committee of the World Conference on Faith and Order held its last meeting at Amsterdam. Under the chairmanship of Dr. Brillioth, the Committee

took into consideration the draft, previously circulated, of a proposed constitution for the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. . . . Various amendments were made, and finally it was unanimously agreed that the constitution, as amended, be approved.⁸⁴

On August 22, 1948, the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches convened at Amsterdam, Holland. At the opening meeting Bishop Brillioth presented an address, tracing the history of the Faith and Order Movement, its significance for and contributions toward, the World Council of Churches.⁸⁵ Then came the culmination of some thirty-eight years of ecumenical endeavor:

⁸³Tomkins, op. cit., p. 74.

⁸⁴"World Council of Churches Commission on Faith and Order, Meetings Held at Amsterdam and Baarn, Holland, August-September, 1948," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 103, p. 10.

⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 12-16.

On the following morning the World Council was formally constituted, and the Continuation Committee of the Edinburgh Conference (1937) became the World Council's Commission on Faith and Order.⁸⁶

With a representation of one hundred forty-seven churches in forty-three countries,⁸⁷ the Assembly amended the constitution which was first drafted at Utrecht, and adopted it on August 30, 1948. Its Basis describes the Council as "a fellowship of churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour."⁸⁸

Under the Assembly theme, "Man's Disorder and God's Design,"⁸⁹ Section I "The Universal Church in God's Design" came closest to the interests of Faith and Order. As Tomkins has said:

Although, as has been indicated, this was not officially an activity of the Faith and Order Commission, its subject was wholly in the tradition of Faith and Order thought, and many of those who contributed to the formulation of the report had long been thinking together under the auspices of the Faith and Order movement.⁹⁰

As an integral part of the World Council of Churches, the Faith and Order Commission now looked forward to a Third World Conference.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 12.

⁸⁷W. A. Visser 't Hooft, The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches Held at Amsterdam August 22nd to September 4th, 1948 (London: SCM Press, LTD, 1949), pp. 230-234.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 197.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 32.

⁹⁰Tomkins, op. cit., p. 75.

Post-Amsterdam to Lund, 1952

Immediately following the World Council Assembly, the Council's Commission on Faith and Order held its first meeting at Baarn, Holland, from September 7 to 8, 1948. The three primary issues for discussion were the constitution of the Faith and Order Commission, the election of officers, and the reports of the Theological Commissions. "Certain amendments were agreed to and the Constitution, as amended, was approved for submission to the Council for its final adoption."⁹¹ This amended draft was adopted by a subsequent meeting of the Central Committee.⁹²

The Chairman reported that the World Council's Central Committee had appointed the Rev. Oliver S. Tomkins as Secretary of the Commission. Bishop Yngve T. Brilioth was re-elected as Chairman; Vice-Chairmen elected were Bishop Aulén, Pastor Marc Boegner, Dr. R. Newton Flew, Archbishop Germanos, and Dr. Douglas Horton; Canon L. Hodgson was elected as Theological Secretary, and Dr. Floyd W. Tomkins as Associate Secretary in America. One hundred fifty-six people were listed as members of the Commission.⁹³

The three Theological Commissions--the Church, Worship,

⁹¹Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 103, p. 21.

⁹²Tomkins, op. cit., p. 75.

⁹³Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 103, p. 21.

and Intercommunion--were to be continued.⁹⁴ Their respective chairmen then presented reports, in anticipation of the Third World Conference.⁹⁵

The Faith and Order Commission met again the following year, 1949, at Chichester, from July 16 to 20. Besides the usual reports on progress from the Secretariat and the three preparatory Commissions, there were two important developments: (a) An invitation was received from Dr. Nygren, Bishop of Lund, to hold the World Conference on Faith and Order at Lund in 1952; (b) A letter was read from C. H. Dodd, who urged the Commission to give more adequate attention to what he called "unavowed motives in ecumenical discussion," or "non-theological factors" in church union.⁹⁶ This letter was subsequently widely published.⁹⁷

The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches met at Toronto, Ontario, in July, 1950, and issued a precise statement on "The Ecclesiological Significance of the World Council of Churches,"⁹⁸ and gave consent to hold the

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵Ibid., pp. 27-65.

⁹⁶Tomkins, op. cit., pp. 79-82.

⁹⁷Ibid., pp. 76-77.

⁹⁸The Church, The Churches, and The World Council of Churches (New York: World Council of Churches, July, 1951), pp. 1-5.

Lund Conference on Faith and Order in the summer of 1952.⁹⁹
 The Executive Committee of the Faith and Order Commission also met in 1950, in September, at Bievres, near Paris, and drafted "the official letter of invitation to the Churches to send their representatives to a Third World Conference."¹⁰⁰

The last full meeting of the Commission before Lund was held at Clarens, from August 13 to 17, 1951. Two principal matters engaged its attention:

(a) the final drafting of the detailed programme for the Lund Conference itself, and (b) the drawing up of proposals for the structure of the Faith and Order Commission after the Lund Conference as a fully integrated part of the World Council of Churches.¹⁰¹

In November, 1951, a conference was held at the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council at the Chateau de Bossey in Switzerland, to discuss the non-theological factors of unity, as proposed by C. H. Dodd. Tomkins again fills in the details:

Three representatives of the American Committee were present at it, and a number of historians, economists, psychologists, etc., as well as a professional theologian, from many parts of Europe and from Britain. As a result of their conference one of the preparatory

⁹⁹Tomkins, op. cit., p. 24.

¹⁰⁰Oliver S. Tomkins, The Third World Conference on Faith and Order, Held at Lund August 15th to 28th, 1952 (London: SCM Press LTD, 1953), p. 77.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 79.

papers for the Lund Conference was published for circulation to all participants in the Lund Conference as well as for public sale.¹⁰²

The three preparatory Commissions on the Nature of the Church, Ways of Worship, and Intercommunion also held preliminary meetings, "and by the end of 1951 all three reports were completed and published as the main preparatory material sent to all participants in the Lund Conference."¹⁰³ In addition to these reports, three volumes of essays were published during the winter and spring of 1951-1952: The Church, edited by R. N. Flew; Intercommunion, edited by D. Baillie and John Marsh; Ways of Worship, edited by E. Hayman, P. Edwall and W. D. Maxwell.¹⁰⁴ Finally, in 1952, Stephen Neill produced a report, "Towards Church Union 1937-1952,"¹⁰⁵ which "brought to date the factual survey on church union negotiations which was begun by H. P. Douglas in 1937."¹⁰⁶

In 1952, the Faith and Order Executive Committee met at Lambeth Palace, London, and later at Lund on the day

¹⁰²Ibid., pp. 77-78.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 79.

¹⁰⁴Ibid.

¹⁰⁵Faith and Order Commission Paper (New Series) No. 11.

¹⁰⁶World Council of Churches The First Six Years 1948-1954, A Report of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches on the Activities of the Departments and Secretariats of the Council (Geneva: World Council of Churches, n.d.), p. 23.

preceding the opening of the Third World Conference, for final planning.¹⁰⁷ The World Conference at Lund was held from August 15 to August 28. Two hundred and twenty-five delegates from one hundred fourteen churches in at least forty-five countries were in attendance.¹⁰⁸ In a radical reversal of policy, the Roman Catholic Church found representation at Lund.

Before the Lund Conference on Faith and Order in 1952, Yngve Brilioth, Lutheran Archbishop of Uppsala, held an interview with the Vicar Apostolic in Sweden. As a result of this, four Catholic priests were officially designated by the Vicar Apostolic and were publicly received at the Assembly as "accredited visitors."¹⁰⁹

A six-part report was received by the Conference, nemine contradicente: I. "A Word to the Churches"; II. "Christ and His Church"; III. "Continuity and Unity"; IV. "Ways of Worship"; V. "Intercommunion"; and VI. "Where Do We Stand?"¹¹⁰ Two important amendments were made in the Faith and Order constitution:

(1) Membership was reduced to 100 persons, meeting normally every three years; (2) a Working Committee was authorized to meet annually with responsibility for administration, directing study and effecting cooperation with other World Council departments.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷Tomkins, Report, p. 80.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., pp. 326-333.

¹⁰⁹Tavard, op. cit., p. 74.

¹¹⁰Tomkins, Report, pp. 15-65.

¹¹¹The First Six Years, p. 21.

In addition, eighty-five nominations for Commission membership were approved, and a Working Committee was appointed. Archbishop Brilioth remained Chairman of the Commission, Dean C. T. Craig was elected Vice-Chairman, and Dr. O. S. Tomkins chairman of the Working Committee. As part of the permanent staff, Dr. J. Robert Nelson was appointed Secretary, with office in Geneva, and Dr. F. W. Tomkins remained Associate Secretary in America.¹¹²

In anticipation of the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, in 1954, Bishop Angus Dun proposed the Faith and Order theme, "Our Oneness in Christ and our Disunity as Churches." The theme was approved by the Conference,¹¹³ and thus served as a concrete illustration of the new role of Faith and Order within the structure of the World Council of Churches.

Post-Lund to Evanston, 1954

The Working Committee of the Faith and Order Commission met at the Chateau de Bossey in August, 1953,¹⁴⁴ and enacted the following business:

A theological commission on Christ and the Church was nominated, with Bishop Nygren and Prof. Calhoun as co-chairmen. Three enquiry groups on Worship were planned,

¹¹²Ibid.

¹¹³Tomkins, Report, pp. 304-305.

¹¹⁴Faith and Order Commission Paper No. 17.

one each in Asia, Europe, and North America. Two smaller groups were commissioned to study respectively the two questions of Proselytism and Tradition in ecumenical perspective. And extensive preliminary research on social and cultural factors was projected, to be done by separate scholars, in anticipation of a thorough study by a commission.

Much time was given as well to preparing the background survey and the working paper for the Faith and Order section at the Evanston Assembly.¹¹⁵

By January, 1954, the Faith and Order Commission was in a position to report on initial responses by the churches to the Lund Report.¹¹⁶

The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches was held at Evanston, Illinois, August 15 to 31, 1954, with one hundred thirty-two churches represented.¹¹⁷ Under the theme, "Christ the Hope of the World," the Faith and Order Commission presented its sectional report on "Our Oneness in Christ and our Disunity as Churches," which was "received by the Assembly and commended to the churches for study and appropriate action."¹¹⁸ The amended constitution of the Lund Conference was incorporated into the constitution of the World Council¹¹⁹ and reports were made on the five

¹¹⁵The First Six Years, p. 25.

¹¹⁶"Official Responses to the Lund Report," The Ecumenical Review, VI (January, 1954), 169-174.

¹¹⁷W. A. Visser 't Hooft, editor, The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1955), pp. 264-278.

¹¹⁸Ibid., pp. 82-91.

¹¹⁹Ibid., pp. 216-217.

areas of Faith and Order study, as formulated at Bossey, in 1953.¹²⁰

Post-Evanston to Oberlin, 1957

In the month following the Evanston Assembly the Commission on Faith and Order met in Chicago to examine its program of study and make further plans.¹²¹

Reports of the Theological Commission on Christ, the Spirit and the Church were presented by co-chairmen Bishop Anders Nygren and Professor R. L. Calhoun. After a year's preliminary work by enquiry groups, the following additional theological commissions were instituted: three commissions on worship, located in East Asia, Europe and North America, and led respectively by Principal J. R. Chandran, the Bishop of Durham (Dr. A. M. Ramsey) and Professor J. A. Sittler; a commission on Tradition and Traditions, with sections in Europe North America, chaired by Professor K. E. Skydsgaard and Professor A. C. Outler. The enquiry group on "Proselytism" was encouraged to continue its study, with Dr. Heinrich Meyer as its convener. The Faith and Order secretary, Dr. J. Robert Nelson, serving as ex officio secretary of each study commission, is responsible for coordinating their work and relating it to the total programme of the Division of Studies of the World Council.¹²²

In the years that follow the literature fails to list any significant Faith and Order activity, with the exception of Working Committee meetings in Davos, Switzerland, 1955,¹²³

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 309.

¹²¹Faith and Order Commission Paper No. 21.

¹²²"Two Important Meetings," The Ecumenical Review, VII (January, 1955), 179-180.

¹²³Faith and Order Commission Paper No. 22.

and Herrenalb, Germany, 1956.¹²⁴ Then, in 1957, it was announced that Archbishop Brilioth had decided to resign as Chairman of the Commission, and that Dr. J. Robert Nelson would leave his position as secretary, to assume his new duties as Dean of the Divinity School, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.¹²⁵

During the second half of July and the first six days of August, 1957, a meeting of "the full Commission on Faith and Order" was held on the campus of Yale Divinity School.¹²⁶ Dr. Douglas Horton was elected as the new Chairman, and Dr. Keith Bridston (Evangelical Lutheran Church) as secretary. In discussing the import of this meeting, the Ecumenical Review remarks: "Faith and Order has arrived at a crucial moment in its development," and adds:

The main question which arises is, however, not that of the leadership, but that of the role of Faith and Order and the WCC in regard to unity. How should the WCC and Faith and Order fulfil the task of "keeping the cause of unity before the member churches"? What are the essential issues to be found in this task? What specific programme of theological study and educational activity should be developed? No final answer was given to these questions, but the discussions will continue and should lead to definite conclusions by the time of the next Assembly.¹²⁷

¹²⁴Faith and Order Commission Paper No. 23.

¹²⁵"Changes in 'Faith and Order,'" The Ecumenical Review, IX (July, 1957), 462.

¹²⁶"Meetings at Yale Divinity School," The Ecumenical Review, X (October, 1957), 86.

¹²⁷Ibid.

A partial answer to these queries may have been given at the North American Study Conference held at Oberlin, Ohio, September 3 to 10, 1957. Attended by two hundred seventy-four representatives of thirty-eight different Christian bodies,¹²⁸ the Conference studied the theme, "The Nature of the Unity We Seek," as proposed by Dr. Franklin Clark Fry.¹²⁹ Treating the general areas of doctrine, organizational structure, and cultural pressures, the delegates focused attention on such knotty issues as "Baptism Into Christ," "The Table of the Lord," "The Variations in Denominational Politics," and "Racial and Economic Stratification."¹³⁰

Paul S. Minear, one of the chief planners of the event at Oberlin, has given a brief evaluation which may also point to the future worth of the whole Faith and Order Movement. He describes the one feature of the Conference which "most clearly indicated its dominant thrust into the future" as

the radical telescoping of the distance between the global and the local work of the church. . . . The unity which God gives thus becomes a living interdependence of ecumenicity and locality. It is the

¹²⁸ Paul S. Minear, editor, The Nature of the Unity We Seek, Official Report of the North American Conference on Faith and Order September 3-10, 1957, Oberlin, Ohio (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1958), p. 28.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 14.

¹³⁰ Ibid., pp. 145-272.

progressive discovery of this dimension which opens up vast horizons for future work.¹³¹

Thus, it appears that the labors of Faith and Order participants from Edinburgh, 1910, to Oberlin, 1957, have not been in vain.

¹³¹Paul S. Minear, "The Significance of the Oberlin Conference," The Ecumenical Review, X (January, 1958), 123.

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"Joint Commission appointed to Arrange for a World
 Conference on Faith and Order," Faith and Order, 1910-1957,
 ... (1910), in Historical Series I (1910-1957), ...
 ... of Publications of the Commission on Faith and
 Order, prepared by A. E. Lothrop (Fort Worth: Texas
 Christian University, July, 1958).

Edward Redmond, The Ecumenical Movement (London,
 ... The University Press, 1957), p. 28.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY OF FAITH AND ORDER

Guiding Principles

From its inception the Faith and Order Movement has operated with a distinct methodology and approach. The principles of ecumenical conversation which today have been crystallized in constitutional statements can be traced to that historic Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in 1910, where the Faith and Order idea was first proposed.¹ It was Bishop Charles Henry Brent who gave the Convention impetus to pass a resolution which would promote

a Conference following the general method of the World Missionary Conference, to be participated in by representatives of all Christian bodies throughout the world which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour, for the consideration of questions pertaining to the Faith and Order of the Church of Christ.²

The methods and goal were further defined by the Committee appointed to consider the proposal: "Such a conference for the purpose of study and discussion, without the

¹"Joint Commission Appointed to Arrange for a World Conference on Faith and Order," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 1, (1910), in Microfilm Series I (1910-1948), Official Pamphlets or Publications of the Commission on Faith and Order, prepared by A. T. De Groot (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University, July, 1954).

²Leonard Hodgson, The Ecumenical Movement (Sewanee, Tennessee: The University Press, 1951), p. 16.

power to legislate or adopt resolutions is the next step toward unity."³ Or, as Hodgson has expressed it:

Its method, consequently, was to invite Churches to confer on the understanding that nothing should be done which should make it necessary for any Church to choose between loyalty to its convictions and co-operation in the framing and passing of resolutions.⁴

Prior to the First World Conference on Faith and Order, held at Lausanne, 1927, literature of the growing Movement revealed further thinking and refinements on the subject of method. An example of this is found in a Faith and Order document published in 1915, which gives detailed suggestions as to the objects, membership, form, representation, discussion, and evaluation of such a Conference.⁵ An outline on scope and method, geared sepecifically for the Lausanne Conference, was prepared by Ralph W. Brown, which describes the principles of "conference":

The disagreements between the churches are to be studied and discussed in conference, not controversially, but in an effort for mutual understanding and appreciation.⁶

Then, at the First World Conference, Bishop Brent issued a classic definition of the principles of conference,

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵"The Object and Method of Conference, Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 28, (1915), passim.

⁶"Twenty Paragraphs About the World Conference on Faith and Order," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 36, (February 11, 1925), p. 4.

as distinguished from controversy:

It is for conference, not controversy, that we are called. As God appeals to us sinners to reason together with Him, so we Christians mutually appeal to one another for a like fellowship. Conference is a measure of peace; controversy, a weapon of war. Conference is self-abasing; controversy exalts self. Conference in all lowliness strives to understand the view-point of others; controversy, to impose its views on all comers. Conference looks for unities; controversy exaggerates differences. Conference is a co-operative method for conflict; controversy, a divisive method.⁷

In 1933, when Dr. Leonard Hodgson became secretary of Faith and Order, he wrote "of the principles to which Faith and Order has tried to be faithful in the past and must continue to be faithful in the future":

Faith and Order is . . . a movement created in order to perish. . . . With that final reconciliation of disagreements, for which we work and pray, the Lausanne Movement will first sing Laus Deo and the Nunc Dimittis. Hence the determination to explore and frankly to face disagreements (which is a distinctive characteristic of the Movement) must always be coupled with an equally resolute determination to explore every possible way of their reconciliation.⁸

Hodgson also pointed to the need for Faith and Order to work "in the Reunion Movement as a whole," rather than "in isolation from other bodies."⁹

⁷H. N. Bate, editor, Faith and Order Proceedings of the World Conference, Lausanne, August 3-21, 1927 (Garden City and New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928), pp. 4-5.

⁸Leonard Hodgson, "Faith and Order, 1937-1947," Christendom, XII (Summer, 1947), 288-289.

⁹Ibid., p. 289.

Four fundamental principles of the Faith and Order Movement, later to be incorporated into its constitution as a Commission of the World Council, were issued by the Executive Committee in February, 1937:

(i) Its main work is to draw churches out of isolation into conference, in which none is to be asked to be disloyal to or to compromise its convictions, but to seek to explain them to others while seeking to understand their points of view. Irreconcilable differences are to be recorded as honestly as agreements; (ii) its conferences are to be conferences of delegates officially appointed by the churches to represent them; (iii) invitations to take part in these conferences are to be issued to "all Christian bodies throughout the world which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour"; (iv) only churches themselves are competent to take actual steps towards reunion by entering into negotiations with one another. The work of the movement is not to formulate schemes and tell the churches what they ought to do, but to act as the handmaid of the churches in the preparatory work of clearing away misunderstandings, discussing obstacles to reunion, and issuing reports which are submitted to the churches for their approval.¹⁰

At the opening service of the Second World Conference at Edinburgh, 1937, Archbishop William Temple called for a spirit of love, which he defined as "an ardent longing for closer fellowship, and a readiness both to share our own spiritual treasures and to participate in those of others."¹¹ Elaborating further, he spelled out the principle of mutual learning implied by such love:

¹⁰ Leonard Hodgson, editor, The Second World Conference on Faith and Order Held at Edinburgh, August 3-18, 1937 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), p. 5.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 20.

Our churches sent us here to confer about our differences with a view to overcoming them. As representatives of these churches each of us must be ready to learn from others where his own tradition is erroneous or defective as to show to others its truth and strength. We meet as fellow-pupils in a school of mutual discipleship. The churches desire, through us, to learn from one another. That is the humility of love as it must be active among us here.¹²

Possibly one of the most concise statements on Faith and Order Methodology has been given by Dr. Hodgson:

1. The World Conference discovers what measure of agreement can be reached on matters divisive of Church unity, and at what points irreconcilable disagreements call for further study. These reports are submitted to the Churches.

2. The Continuation Committee receives from the Churches statements of their judgments on the Reports of the World Conference, and refers outstanding points of disagreement to small international commissions of theologians for their consideration.

3. When, in the judgment of the Continuation Committee, the time is ripe for the calling of another World Conference, this is done, and the reports of the Commissions on the subjects entrusted to them form the basis of its discussions.¹³

Tomkins has neatly summarized the thinking and concerns which lie behind the Faith and Order method of adopting official reports:

Since the raison d'etre of the Movement was to draw churches out of isolation into conference with one another, care had to be taken to avoid anything which might lead a church to withdraw from these conversations. This might easily happen if the Movement were to allow

¹²Ibid., p. 21.

¹³Hodgson, "Faith and Order, 1937-1947," p. 282.

itself to endorse by a majority vote a statement on some disputed question of faith or order. A church in the minority might be put into the unenviable position of appearing to be an obstacle in the way of Christian unity, or might think that continued participation in the Movement would be disloyal to its own convictions.¹⁴

Hence, the following system was adopted as a solution to this possibility:

It was laid down as one of the fundamental principles of the Movement that no Conference should adopt any statement on a matter of faith and order unless it were approved unanimously, or at any rate without dissentient vote. The duty of the Conference was to report to the churches on the measure of agreement discovered. Disagreements were to be honestly and impartially recorded equally with agreements. The Reports were to take the form of findings presented to the churches for their information, not of recommendations.¹⁵

The program of the Faith and Order Movement found its ultimate crystallization as an integral part of the World Council of Churches. Its relationship to the Council, along with the Life and Work Movement, was set forth in constitutional form at Utrecht, May, 1938,¹⁶ amended and adopted at the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches in

¹⁴Oliver S. Tomkins, The Church in the Purpose of God (New York: World Council of Churches, 1952), p. 20.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶The Ten Formative Years 1938-1948, Report on the Activities of the World Council of Churches during its period of formation (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1948), p. 21.

1948.¹⁷ The following guarantee was appended to the list of functions.

In matters of common interest to all the churches and pertaining to Faith and Order, the Council shall always proceed in accordance with the basis on which the Lausanne (1927) and Edinburgh (1937) Conferences were called and conducted.¹⁸

Under Section VI, "Appointment of Commissions," Faith and Order was incorporated as a Commission of the Council, with the requirement to "report annually to the Central Committee which shall exercise supervision over them."¹⁹ It was further stipulated:

(i) That the World Council's Commission on Faith and Order shall, in the first instance, be the Continuation Committee appointed by this Conference.

(ii) In any further appointments made by the Council to membership of the Commission on Faith and Order, the persons appointed shall always be members of the churches which fall within the terms of the Faith and Order invitations as addressed to "all Christian bodies throughout the world which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour."

(iii) The work of the Commission on Faith and Order shall be carried on under the general care of a Theological Secretariat appointed by the Commission in consultation with the Council and acting in close cooperation with other secretariats of the Council. The Council shall make adequate financial provision for the work of the Commission after consultation with the Commission.²⁰

¹⁷W. A. Visser 't Hooft, editor, World Council of Churches: First Assembly, Official Report, 1948 (London: S. C. M. Press, 1949), pp. 197ff.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 198.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 200.

²⁰Ibid.

These three constitutional provisions were later dropped at the Second Assembly of the World Council at Evanston, 1954, and replaced with the following stipulations:

There shall be a Faith and Order Commission of which the following shall be the functions:

(i) To proclaim the essential oneness of the Church of Christ and to keep prominently before the World Council and the churches the obligation to manifest that unity and its urgency for the work of evangelism;

(ii) to study questions of faith, order and worship, with the relevant social, cultural, political, racial, and other factors in their bearing on the unity of the churches;

(iii) to study the theological implications of the existence of the ecumenical movement;

(iv) to study matters of the present relationships of the churches to one another which cause difficulties and need theological clarification;

(v) to provide information concerning actual steps taken by the churches towards reunion.

The Commission shall discharge these functions in accordance with a constitution approved by the Central Committee.

In invitations to World Conferences on Faith and Order, it shall be specified that such conferences are to be composed of official delegates of churches which accept Jesus Christ as God and Saviour.²¹

The Evanston Assembly also altered the basic organizational structure of the World Council of Churches and placed the Faith and Order Commission under one of the three major

²¹W. A. Visser 't Hooft, editor, The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1955), pp. 340-341.

"Divisions," the Division of Studies.²² An amended constitution for the Faith and Order Commission was adopted, which includes the five functions listed above²³ and the four basic principles issued by the Executive Committee in 1937.²⁴ This document is the best-defined statement on Faith and Order methodology, as the following excerpts and summaries indicate.

Regarding the "Organization" of the Faith and Order Commission, the constitution requires that it "consist of 85 members appointed by the Assembly of the World Council," but it may also include "members of Churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour but are not members of the World Council."²⁵ The Commission normally meets every three years, "but may be called together at any time when major theological commission reports need to be reviewed by a larger body than the Working Committee."²⁶ The Working Committee is composed of "not more than 22 members," and is responsible "(a) for administration, (b) for directing the study work and other activities of Faith and Order

²²"New Program," Ecumenical Courier, XIII (September-October, 1954), 4.

²³Supra, p. 47.

²⁴Supra, p. 47.

²⁵Oliver S. Tomkins, editor, The Third World Conference on Faith and Order Held at Lund August 15th to 28th, 1952 (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1953), pp. 360-361.

²⁶Ibid., p. 361.

and (c) for co-operation with other agencies of the World Council."²⁷ One final aspect of the organizational structure consists of "various theological commissions set up by the Commission or Working Committee,"²⁸ whose functions are "to prepare reports which may serve as the basis for discussion in the Commission, at the Assemblies of the World Council, or at Conferences on Faith and Order, on the subjects referred to them. . . ."²⁹ The members of these smaller Commissions are "chosen for their special competence in the particular field of study," and represent "as wide a variety as possible of ecclesiastical traditions."³⁰

There are three major officers, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, elected by the Commission for a three-year term, and also the Secretary, who is a "member of the staff of the Council employed for the work of the Commission on a full-time basis."³¹ The Secretary maintains "full consultation and co-operation with the General Secretary and with other Departments of the Council, and particularly with the Study Department."³²

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid., p. 364.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid., pp. 362-363.

³²Ibid., p. 363.

The World Council's Faith and Order "Department" is comprised of the "Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretaries, Chairman of the Working Committee and the Chairmen of Theological Commissions."³³ The Department is responsible for carrying on the work of the Commission between meetings of the Commission and the Working Committee, by

(i) promoting the studies of the Theological Commissions and (ii) following all developments in the matter of the union of Churches and keeping all the Churches informed of these developments. It shall maintain full consultation and co-operation with the Study Department of the Council.³⁴

The long-held policy of not dictating a particular doctrinal persuasion to member churches is given constitutional force:

On questions of Faith and Order the Commission shall not adopt any resolutions, but shall confine itself to recording for the information of the Churches such agreements and disagreements as are discovered.³⁵

These are the guiding principles of Faith and Order in terms of the abstract. Further illumination and understanding is possible only in terms of the concrete situations presented by the three World Conferences.

³³Ibid., pp. 363-364.

³⁴Ibid., p. 364.

³⁵Ibid., p. 362.

Methodology in Practice

An analysis of methodology in practice will be made by comparing four facets of each World Conference on Faith and Order: (a) preparation, (b) representation, (c) discussion procedure, and (d) worship. In order to facilitate comparison, brief overviews of these four subjects are given. More detailed data appear in Chapter II, "The History of Faith and Order."

Preparation

Preparation for the First World Conference at Lausanne, 1927, began at a preliminary conference at Geneva, 1920. There a Continuation Committee was appointed, with power to make all arrangements, which met in 1925, 1926, and 1927. Two sub-committees on Business and Program contributed to the formulation of the necessary details.³⁶ Contact was established with churches around the world through correspondence and through a wide circulation of pamphlets, many written in various languages, treating the anticipated topics of discussion.³⁷ Personal contact and solicitation of interest among Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, Lutheran,

³⁶Francis Joseph Hall, Christian Reunion in Ecumenical Light (New York: Macmillan Company, 1930), p. 32.

³⁷Bate, op. cit., pp. ix; 36-39.

and Roman Catholic Churches was carried out through deputations to Europe and Asia.³⁸ These efforts resulted in securing one hundred and nine churches as members of the proposed Conference, by July, 1927.³⁹ The University buildings in the Palais de Rumine, provided by the authorities of the Canton of Vaud, served as the major facilities for the Conference, and, in the descriptive words of Bate

proved to be even more admirably adapted to the purposes of the Conference than had at first been expected, or than the less robust delegates, faced by its vast staircases, were at first inclined to believe.⁴⁰

Full sessions of the Conference were held in the Aula of the University.⁴¹

Preparations for the Second World Conference at Edinburgh, 1937, were also effected through the Continuation Committee. Hodgson's detailed description of its activity⁴² has been summarized by Tatlow.⁴³ A special Theological Committee was appointed to study the replies

³⁸Ibid., pp. vii-x.

³⁹Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 48, pp. 5-29.

⁴⁰Bate, op. cit., p. xiii.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 43.

⁴²Hodgson, Report, pp. 4-14.

⁴³Tissington Tatlow, The World Conference on Faith and Order, Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill, editors, History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948 (London: SPCK, 1954), Chap. IX, pp. 427-431.

from the churches regarding the Lausanne Conference, and to prepare discussion material for the next World Conference. Their work led to the circulation of study papers on the doctrine of Grace, and later, the publication of a more comprehensive volume on the subject.⁴⁴ As a result of the responses from the various churches, the Executive Committee drafted and circulated a series of questions on the doctrine of Grace, the Sacraments, and the nature and purpose of the Church.⁴⁵ In addition, study groups were promoted in Europe, South Africa, and the United States.⁴⁶ Later, three Commissions were appointed: the Church and the Word, the Ministry and the Sacraments, and the Church's Unity in Life and Worship. Their studies were published and circulated.⁴⁷ Tatlow has cited this type of preparation as "a new development in the life of the movement since Lausanne," and as "a definite advance" over the First World Conference.⁴⁸ Further contact with the churches was maintained through the appointment of a Travelling Secretary, Professor Henri Clavier, whose journeys throughout Europe and the Near East stimulated interest in the Faith and Order

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 427-428.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 429.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 430.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 432; 433.

Movement.⁴⁹ The facilities secured for business sessions were the auditorium of the Assembly Hall of the Church of Scotland. Leiper describes this setting with a note of commendation:

The seating in the hall is so arranged that even on the main floor everyone faces the center, which is occupied by a large raised dais and an enclosed area for speakers, secretaries, translators and reporters. Thanks to the arrangement and the construction of the hall everything that is said, at whatever place, can be heard without amplifiers throughout the room, although it seats nearly two thousand persons. It is without question one of the finest rooms for a large deliberative assembly to be found anywhere in the world.⁵⁰

The preparations for the Edinburgh Conference, then, had the distinct advantage of better organization, the opportunity to build on the results of the previous Conference, and wider contact and interest among the churches.

Preparations for the Third World Conference at Lund, 1952, are described in detail by Oliver S. Tomkins, in the official report,⁵¹ but a short summary appears in the "Report of the Central Committee" of the World Council of Churches.⁵² Following decisions made at Edinburgh, the

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 430.

⁵⁰Henry Smith Leiper, World Chaos or World Christianity: a Popular Interpretation of Oxford and Edinburgh, 1937 (Chicago: Willett, Clark and Company, 1937), pp. 102-103.

⁵¹Tomkins, Report, pp. 69-80; 102-104; 111-113.

⁵²World Council of Churches: The First Six Years 1948-1954, A Report of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches on the Activities of the Departments and Secretariats of the Council (Geneva: World Council of Churches, n.d.), pp. 20-23.

Continuation Committee established three theological commissions to pursue intensive study on: (a) The Nature of the Church, (b) Ways of Worship and (c) Intercommunion.⁵³ Reports on these respective topics were published just prior to the World Conference.⁵⁴ Three other studies preceded the Conference: (a) "The Church in the Purpose of God," by Oliver S. Tomkins; (b) "Social and Cultural Factors in Church Division," by C. H. Dodd, G. R. Cragg, and Jacques Ellul; and (c) "Towards Church Union 1937-1952," by Bishop S. C. Neill.⁵⁵ The Central Committee Report praises these preparatory materials as "excellent," but also notes that

many delegates were poorly prepared for the serious theological discussions. This was partly due to the fact that . . . the preliminary material was available for too brief a period before the conference.⁵⁶

Facilities were secured at the University and the Cathedral of Lund, but even the official report is lacking in descriptive detail. On the whole, preparations for Lund exceeded Lausanne and Edinburgh in organization and in the caliber of theological materials, but little is mentioned of the more personal, individual types of contact which were so characteristic of the first two Conferences. There is some

⁵³Ibid., p. 21.

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 22-23.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 23.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 26.

possibility, too, that preparations for the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam detracted some of the attention which would have been devoted to Lund.

Representation

One hundred and eight churches from the following denominational groups were represented at Lausanne in 1927: Anglican, Baptist, Brethren, Christian, Congregational, Disciples, Eastern Churches, Evangelical Churches of Germany, Friends, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Moravian, Old Catholic, Presbyterian and Reformed, and seven denominations listed as "other."⁵⁷ Hall is emphatic in evaluating the significance of this representation, noting that

it was the first instance, since the breakup of the sixteenth century, of representatives of all types of Christians except Roman meeting, with friendly intent, to reckon frankly with their differences. That fact alone gives the Conference important historical significance, and reveals a new spirit.⁵⁸

The Second World Conference "brought together four hundred and twenty-two Christian communions in forty-three different countries."⁵⁹ Representation of the various denominational families remained essentially the same, except for new additions, such as, "Reformed Catholic," "United," and others listed as "Unclassified." Conspicuous

⁵⁷Bate, op. cit., pp. 527-530.

⁵⁸Hall, op. cit., p. 38.

⁵⁹Hodgson, Report, p. 275.

by their absence were delegates from the Brethren, Moravian, and the German Evangelical Church.⁶⁰ Tatlow attributes the cause of the missing Germans to "the growing strength and intolerance of the National Socialist Movement," and adds: "The Conference suffered not a little from the absence of the Germans. It lacked the distinctive German Lutheran contribution to the theological discussions."⁶¹ On the positive side of the ledger, this same source notes an advantage over the Lausanne Conference:

There were present ninety-five persons who had been at Lausanne in 1927. This meant that many of different countries and Churches met as old friends who through contact and friendship had grown in understanding of confessions other than their own.⁶²

Leiper points to the Oxford Conference on Life and Work, held just prior to the Edinburgh Conference, as an additional factor which contributed to the friendly atmosphere. Many of the Edinburgh delegates had already become well-acquainted at Oxford.⁶³ This personal acquaintance, then, helped to counterbalance the deficit in the loss of the German delegates.

At the Lund Conference in 1952, two hundred and twenty-five delegates assembled from one hundred and fourteen

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 281-284.

⁶¹Tatlow, op. cit., p. 431.

⁶²Ibid., p. 433.

⁶³Leiper, op. cit., p. 96.

churches,⁶⁴ representing the same basic denominational families as in the past two Conferences.⁶⁵ In his opening address President Brillioth noted that the World Council's plan to hold a full assembly every five years would make it impracticable for Faith and Order to hold conferences on the same scale as Lausanne and Edinburgh, asserting that even the number of delegates at the Lund Conference "has had to be kept within narrow limits, which has raised difficult problems with regard to the allocation of places."⁶⁶ Then he commented on the "lamentable blanks in our list of membership," and pointed to the absence of the "young Churches in China," and a large number of Orthodox Churches.⁶⁷ On the other hand, he was able to greet the German Evangelical Churches which were absent at Edinburgh, and to welcome for the first time in Faith and Order history several Roman Catholic observers, appointed by the Vicar Apostolic of Stockholm.⁶⁸ The World Council Central Committee cites as one "positive value" of the Third World Conference

⁶⁴Tomkins, Report, pp. 326-333.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 357.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 104.

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 104-105.

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 105-106.

the fact that Lund brought many persons into active participation in the ecumenical movement for the first time, and thus widened the scope of those personal relationships which are indispensable.⁶⁹

Evaluation of the representation at the three Conferences, then, seems to be a very relative thing. Little can be inferred from statistics, except to note that the number of communions represented did not grow in proportion to all of the efforts in preparation. The ultimate criterion of "good" or "poor" in these four areas lies in the next chapter, "Areas of Agreement."

Discussion Procedure

As pioneering an effort at ecumenical conversation as it was, the Lausanne Conference was no mere theological tea party. A specific system of discussion was carried out from beginning to end. The rules of procedure are given in detail in the Proceedings,⁷⁰ but are more compactly summarized in the Preamble,⁷¹ in Tatlow,⁷² and Hall.⁷³ The Conference focused on a total of seven subjects: Subject I. "The Call to Unity," II. "The Church's Message to the World--the Gospel," III. "The Nature of the Church," IV. "The

⁶⁹The First Six Years, 1948-1954, p. 26.

⁷⁰Bate, op. cit., pp. 39-42.

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 459-460.

⁷²Tatlow, op. cit., p. 421.

⁷³Hall, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

Church's Common Confession of Faith," V. "The Ministry of the Church," VI. "The Sacraments," and VII. "The Unity of Christendom in Relation to Existing Churches."⁷⁴

Each topic was discussed on successive days in major addresses, followed by impromptu speeches, then sectional discussions of one hundred members, and sub-sections of about twenty members each. Drafting committees prepared the reports which were then voted on by the whole Conference. The Preamble and Subject I were "unanimously adopted" by the full Conference, while reports on Subjects II-VI were "nemine contradicente" by the full Conference. The report on Subject VII was received "for transmission to the Continuation Committee," where it was to be reconsidered. Hall attributes the failure to adopt this report to a lack of time, and "the Conference wished to avoid breaking the record of nem. con. voting."⁷⁵ It is interesting to note that the Eastern Orthodox Churches refused to vote for Reports III-VI because of "their miscellaneous contents," but they also refused to vote against them, "thus enabling them to receive nemine contradicente."⁷⁶ In addition to the regular Conference sessions, a series of four evening meetings

⁷⁴Bate, op. cit. pp. 460-475.

⁷⁵Hall, op. cit., p. 38.

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 39-40.

on the "Necessity of Christian Unity" were held in the Cathedral.⁷⁷

Both praise and blame have been hurled at the Lausanne Conference and its discussion procedure. Archbishop Brillioth, in reviewing various stages in the Faith and Order Movement, has claimed that the Conference of 1927 was "to a large extent . . . characterized by a certain minimizing of the differences."⁷⁸ Brillioth finds company with Thiele, who writes of an "apparently superficial treatment of the differences," but also calls attention to the fact that "Lausanne was a convention of gropers in a new land of Christian endeavor."⁷⁹ Hall, a delegate to the Lausanne Conference, has taken a completely positive view on this point:

the spirit of compromise for the sake of peace, with its accompaniment of diplomatic ambiguities and make-believe agreements, was excluded with the utmost determination by Catholic and Protestant alike. Ambiguities did unavoidably appear in the Reports; but, as I have shown, the Conference took pain not to "adopt" them.⁸⁰

Observations at least concur on the fact that Lausanne was a bold beginning.

⁷⁷Bate, op. cit., pp. 476-507.

⁷⁸Tomkins, Report, p. 101.

⁷⁹Gilbert A. Thiele, "The World Council of Churches," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVII (May, 1956), 353.

⁸⁰Hall, op. cit., p. 39.

The Edinburgh Conference proceeded much like the World Conference held ten years earlier. One basic difference, however, is noted in comparing the agendas and rules of order.⁸¹ While Lausanne relied on many addresses in full session as a point of preliminary information, Edinburgh assembled in sectional and sub-sectional groups almost from the start. One reason for this, perhaps, is the simple fact that the delegates at Edinburgh had better access to the views of various communions on the issues at hand because of the results of the Lausanne Conference⁸² and the wide distribution of preparatory materials.⁸³ Another point of difference is that Edinburgh focused on fewer topics, a total of four: I. "The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ," II. "The Church of Christ and the Word of God," III. "The Church of Christ: Ministry and Sacraments," and IV. "The Church's Unity in Life and Worship."⁸⁴ However, by the time the Conference adjourned, two additional reports were accepted, as the others--nemine contradicente--on "The

⁸¹Hodgson, Report, pp. 35-36; 59-61; 76-77; 289.

⁸²Leonard Hodgson, editor, Convictions, A Selection From the Responses of the Churches to the Report of the World Conference on Faith and Order, Held at Lausanne in 1927 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934), 256 pp.

⁸³Supra, pp. 52-53.

⁸⁴Hodgson, Report, pp. 35-36.

Communion of Saints,"⁸⁵ and an "Affirmation of Union."⁸⁶

Father George Florovsky, however, hints that the Orthodox delegates behaved as they had at Lausanne:

There were some, however, who kept themselves away from the vote silently, respecting the unanimity of the vast majority of their brethren, with whom they felt themselves unable to stand.⁸⁷

One criticism of Edinburgh methodology has been voiced by O. S. Tomkins, who notes that the "Non-Theological Factors" which were of special interest to C. H. Dodd, "never received adequate attention at the Edinburgh Conference."⁸⁸ Actual discussion technique, on the other hand, is seen as an improvement over Lausanne, by Thiele: "The results were more solid discussions and far greater readiness to join forces in work,"⁸⁹ and the Conference "came up with statements less vague, more pointed, and possibly more New Testamental than the well-meant but much too broad generalizations of Lausanne."⁹⁰ One of Tatlow's main commendations lies in the fact that the Edinburgh report was

⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 236-238.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 275.

⁸⁷George Florovsky, "The Ecumenical Movement," Christendom, II (Autumn, 1937), 557.

⁸⁸Charles Harold Dodd, Social and Cultural Factors in Church Division (New York: World Council of Churches, 1952), p. 5.

⁸⁹Thiele, op. cit., p. 354.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 355.

"fuller and richer; it is a document of some 14,000 words."⁹¹

Edinburgh had at least discovered a workable procedure, certainly on an equal with, and in some cases better than, that of Lausanne. But the fact that the over-all discussion program remained so similar to that of Lausanne is indicative also of the ingenuity of that First World Conference.

The organizational procedure followed at Lund was much the same as that of Edinburgh, with discussion channelled through an arrangement of full sessions and sectional meetings.⁹² The focus of attention concerned only three main topics: "The Church," "Ways of Worship," and "Intercommunion," but the final report also included three other subjects: "A Word to the Churches," "Continuity in Unity," and "Where do we Stand?"⁹³ These reports, much longer than those of Lausanne or Edinburgh, were received as a whole, nemine contradicente, but the Orthodox delegation announced "we did not vote for any resolutions taken here."⁹⁴

There are three techniques employed in the deliberations at the Lund Conference which show a marked improvement over the first two Conferences. First, the Lund Conference did

⁹¹Tatlow, op. cit., pp. 432-433.

⁹²Tomkins, Report, pp. 321-325.

⁹³Ibid., pp. 15-68.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 312.

not merely record agreements and differences, but attempted "to explore the underlying theological problem" with a strong Christological approach.⁹⁵ This has been called the "method of depth," and is defined as going "behind our differences in conceptions of the Church to our concept of Christ as the living word."⁹⁶ The second advantage of Lund is the rich use of Biblical terminology, especially in Part II. Nicholls points to this fact as one further stage in ecumenical progress:

It shows clearly that a growing number of theologians have now learned to converse with one another, and having passed through the stage of learning to understand one another's theological language and to state one another's convictions with fairness and accuracy, are now in a position to do theological work together in a common Biblical language.⁹⁷

And finally, while the Lund Conference did not devote a whole section of study to the "Social and Cultural Factors in Church Division,"⁹⁸ the widely-circulated report on this topic influenced the emphasis of the final report received by the Conference.⁹⁹

The Lund Conference, then, made decided strides in the

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 12.

⁹⁶James W. Kennedy, Evanston Scrapbook (Lebanon, Pa.: Sowers Printing Company, 1954), p. 41.

⁹⁷William Nicholls, "The Present and Future of Faith and Order," Theology, LV (November, 1952), 402-403.

⁹⁸Supra, p. 63.

⁹⁹Tomkins, Report, p. 12.

improvement of discussion procedure. However, it is only fair to include the one negative observation voiced by the World Council Central Committee:

The procedure of the conference, being much like that of other large conferences, was criticized for its inefficiency. Working in large sections, often under great pressure to write reports in a short time, the delegates could not enjoy that truly ecumenical conversation which is a basic need for all Faith and Order work.¹⁰⁰

Worship

While "worship" may not strictly fall under the category of "Methodology," its obvious purpose at an ecumenical gathering--as a spiritual means for achieving what cannot be achieved through mere discussion and debate--warrants a brief comparison of the three Conferences.

At Lausanne, worship was accepted as a part of the rules of procedure: Besides opening devotions, "every session shall begin and close with devotion."¹⁰¹ The Cathedral was used for worship on the first and last day of the Conference. Elements of the opening service give some idea of the approach: the overture to the "Messiah" was played on the organ; the Pastor of the Cathedral conducted the introductory devotions; a hymn was sung from the quadrilingual hymnal, Communion; the Apostles' Creed was recited in the respective

¹⁰⁰The First Six Years, p. 27.

¹⁰¹Bate, op. cit., p. 40.

languages of the delegates; silent prayer; the sermon was preached by Bishop Brent; another hymn; the Lord's Prayer said in unison; the benediction.¹⁰² Nothing is said of the celebration of the Eucharist.

At Edinburgh, a special Committee on Devotions was in charge of preparations for worship. It drew up a collection of psalms, prayers and forms for devotion which were printed in English, French, and German.¹⁰³ Morning and evening prayers were usually held in the Assembly Hall, but on the days of sectional meetings, they were held in St. Giles' Cathedral. Worship was an accepted part of the rules of procedure, as at Lausanne.¹⁰⁴ No meetings or services were arranged by the Conference on Sundays so that members would be free to worship at local churches of their choosing.¹⁰⁵ The following are some of the major elements of worship taken from the opening service at the High Kirk of St. Giles: singing of the hundredth Psalm; prayer by the Dean of the Thistle; Lord's Prayer; singing the one hundred and twenty-second Psalm; lessons read from Isaiah 40 and Ephesians 4, by Archbishop Germanos and Dean Brillioth; recitation of the Apostles' Creed; the reading of the Lausanne Message ("The

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 59.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 77.

Gospel"), the hymn, "Come Holy Ghost, our Souls Inspire"; the sermon preached by the Archbishop of York; the blessing by the Moderator of the Second Assembly of the Church of Scotland.¹⁰⁶

Worship was even more elaborately planned and executed at Lund. Morning and evening devotions (often including Compline) were held daily in the Cathedral.¹⁰⁷ Services were again printed in the three languages. Frequent resources were the service book of the World's Student Christian Federation, Venite Adoremus, and the hymn book, Cantate Domino, also published by the W. S. C. F.¹⁰⁸ Elements of the opening service again give a sample pattern of procedure: the singing of "Ein Feste Burg"; the service was led by Bishop Ivan Lee Holt (in Dean C. T. Craig's absence); portions of Isaiah 40 and Ephesians 4 read by Professor d'Espine and Bishop Lilje; the Gloria Patri; Apostles' Creed; prayers of confession, thanksgiving, and intercession; two hymns; two sermons; benediction.¹⁰⁹

One definite point of departure from worship at Lausanne and Edinburgh was the celebration of Holy Communion. The "Handbook" contained the following announcement:

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁰⁷Tomkins, Report, p. 93.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 94.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 84.

The authorities of the Church of Sweden have announced that all members of the Conference will be welcome at the SERVICE OF HIGH MASS WITH COMMUNION in the Cathedral at 10.00 hrs. and may receive the Sacrament at that service if they so desire. The Bishop of Lund, Dr. Anders Nygren, will preach.¹¹⁰

Regarding this unique step, Tomkins reports:

It is clear from subsequent comments that the service made a deep impression, and for all present, whether conscientiously able to be communicants or not, it became one of the supreme memories of the conference period.¹¹¹

From all indications in the recommendations of the report on "Intercommunion," this was the only time that open Communion had been held at a major ecumenical gathering, with the exception of Tambaram, 1938, and Amsterdam, 1948.¹¹²

It is important to note, however, that the celebration of the Sacrament was in each case sponsored by a local church, and not by an ecumenical conference, such as Faith and Order or the World Council.

In this study of methodology it is seen that the initial principles of "discussion without compromise" and "frankly acknowledging differences" were retained in the final constitutional developments of Faith and Order. In reviewing these principles as they were actually practiced in preparation, representation, discussion procedure, and worship at the three World Conferences, two facts are observed:

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 144.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 145.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 58.

fidelity to the principles of Faith and Order and the consciences of the delegates, and also a gradual evolution of greater organizational complexity. The acid test of the worth of these phenomena is to trace progress, if any, in the specific areas of agreement, which is the task of the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

AREAS OF AGREEMENT

Against the backdrop of their history and methodology, this chapter lists and compares the areas of agreement reached at the three World Conferences on Faith and Order. Precisely what did the three respective reports say, and how did they say it? Are there any significant trends from one Conference to the next? In what area is there the greatest consensus of agreement? Specifically, the following broad areas will serve as the structure for this analysis: (1) faith, (2) order, and (3) worship. Under "Faith," the topics (a) Christology, (b) soteriology, (c) Scripture, and (d) creeds and tradition will be discussed. The area of "order" will treat (a) the nature of the church, (b) polity and the nature of the ministry, and (c) the nature of unity. "Worship" will focus on (a) worship and the sacraments in general, (b) Baptism, (c) Eucharist, and (d) intercommunion. It is to be noted that only a positive study of the agreements will be made. The disagreements and issues still unresolved will be noted in the final chapter. For the sake of convenience and ease of handling, the extracted Reports

of the Lausanne,¹ Edinburgh,² and Lund³ Conferences will be used instead of the more inclusive volumes of official proceedings, edited by Bate,⁴ Hodgson,⁵ and Tomkins,⁶ respectively, which served as primary sources in the two previous chapters.⁷

Faith

Christology

The First World Conference at Lausanne defined Jesus Christ in terms of the Johannine "Word," the "Gospel," and as

¹"Reports of the World Conference on Faith and Order Lausanne, Switzerland, August 3 to 21, 1927," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 55 (January, 1928). Hereafter this Report will be referred to as Lausanne.

²"Report of the Second World Conference on Faith And Order, Edinburgh, August 3-18, 1937," Faith and Order Pamphlet No. 90 (November, 1937). Hereafter this Report will be referred to as Edinburgh.

³"The Report of the Third World Conference at Lund, Sweden, August 15-28, 1952," Faith and Order (London: SCM Press Ltd., November, 1952). Hereafter this Report will be referred to as Lund.

⁴H. N. Bate, editor, Faith and Order Proceedings of the World Conference Lausanne, August 3-21, 1927 (Garden City and New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928).

⁵Leonard Hodgson, editor, The Second World Conference on Faith and Order Held at Edinburgh, August 3-18, 1937 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938).

⁶Oliver S. Tomkins, The Third World Conference on Faith and Order Held at Lund, August 15th to 28th, 1952 (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1953).

⁷Chapter II, "History of Faith and Order," pp. 5-39; Chapter III, "Methodology of Faith and Order," pp. 40-70.

a Person in the Trinity. Under topic II, "The Church's Message to the World--the Gospel," He is called "the eternal Word of God" who "became incarnate, and was made man, Jesus Christ, the son of God and the son of Man, full of grace and truth."⁸ Identifying Him with the church's message, the Report affirms:

Jesus Christ, as the crucified and the living One, as Saviour and Lord, is also the centre of the world-wide Gospel of the Apostles and the Church. Because He Himself is the Gospel, the Gospel is the message of the Church to the world.⁹

Under Section III, "The Nature of the Church," the Report briefly refers to Jesus Christ as the "Head" of the church, and notes that there is "but one Christ, and one life in Him."¹⁰ The Trinitarian formulation occurs in Section IV, "The Church's Common Confession of Faith," in which the members of the Conference express gratitude to God for having found a unity "in God our heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ, our Saviour, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit."¹¹

The Edinburgh Conference on Faith and Order spoke of Christ in similar terms as Lausanne, but placed a new accent on His relation to "Grace" and the "church." In

⁸Lausanne, p. 5.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 7.

¹¹Ibid., p. 10.

Chapter II of the Report, "The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ," it is made clear that, "When we speak of God's grace, we think of God Himself as revealed in His Son Jesus Christ."¹² The Johannine imagery is again used to summarize His person and work in the third chapter, "The Church of Christ and the Word of God":

In the fullness of time the Word, the Eternal Son of God, is manifested in Christ our Lord, the Incarnate Word, and his redeeming work, that is, in his words and deeds, in his life and character, in his suffering, death, and resurrection, culminating in the gift of the Spirit and in the life which he gives to the church which is his body.¹³

In the same chapter, His function in the church is described:

We all agree that Christ is present in his church through the Holy Spirit as Prophet Priest and King. As Prophet he reveals the divine will and purpose to the church; as Priest he ever liveth to make intercession for us, and through the eternal sacrifice once offered for us on Calvary, he continually draws his people to the Most High; and as King he rules his church and is ever establishing and extending his kingdom.¹⁴

✓ The "Affirmation of Union" adds the expressions, "Head of the church," "King of Kings and Lord of Lords."¹⁵

At the Third World Conference at Lund there was less of a tendency to treat Christology in isolation, and a strong emphasis to display the close interrelationship between Christ and the church. The title of the second chapter

¹²Edinburgh, p. 2.

¹³Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 25.

of the Report, "Christ and His Church," is indicative of this emphasis. The words used to describe the person and work of Christ are more varied and Biblical than those employed at Lausanne and Edinburgh. He is called God's "only begotten Son," "Saviour and Redeemer," "the mighty Victor," "a new Lord," "our Lord," "the king of the new People of God," "the chief cornerstone," and the "head of the Church which is His body."¹⁶ Other terms are: "God and man," "the risen Christ,"¹⁷ "Prophet, Priest, and King."¹⁸ It is noted in the third chapter that "Faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, the original simple New Testament affirmation, is confessed by all the communions here represented."¹⁹

The inseparable relationship of Christ to the church is conveyed in such statements as: "Because we believe in Jesus Christ we believe also in the Church as the Body of Christ."²⁰ "Christ lives in His Church and the Church lives in Christ. Christ is never without His Church; the Church is never without Christ. Both belong inseparably together."²¹

¹⁶ Lund, p. 7.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 19.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 7.

²¹ Ibid.

This relationship is also expressed in terms of the Trinity: "In His eternal love the Father has sent His Son to redeem creation from sin and death. . . . Through the indwelling of His Spirit Jesus Christ dwells in the midst of His Church."²² The statement is then concluded with a strong eschatological note, another new emphasis at Lund: "As Lord and King He will come again to judge the quick and the dead and to consummate the eternal kingdom of God in the whole creation."²³

On the whole, Lund says more about Christ and says it more Biblically and relatedly than Lausanne and Edinburgh. Only one emphasis is missing, and that is the concept of Christ as the "Word," used at the other Conferences.

Soteriology

At Lausanne, soteriology, or God's plan and act of salvation, was expressed in terms of the "Gospel," "redemption," "repentance," "forgiveness," "victory," "justification and sanctification." Section II is especially rich in these concepts: "The Gospel is the joyful message of redemption, both here and hereafter, the gift of God to sinful man in Jesus Christ."²⁴ The significance of the cross

²²Ibid., p. 8.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Lausanne, p. 5.

is then presented against the background of the Trinity:

Through His life and teaching, His call to repentance, His proclamation of the coming of the Kingdom of God and of judgment, His suffering and death, His resurrection and exaltation to the right hand of the Father, and by the mission of the Holy Spirit, He has brought to us forgiveness of sins, and has revealed the fulness of the living God, and His boundless love toward us. By the appeal of that love, shown in its completeness on the Cross, He summons us to the new life of faith, self sacrifice, and devotion to His service and the service of men.²⁵

The Gospel is then defined as "the prophetic call to sinful man to turn to God, the joyful tidings of justification and of sanctification to those who believe in Christ" which "brings peace and joy to the heart."²⁶ It is accepted as "the only way of salvation,"²⁷ and is also briefly related to the work of the church: "God . . . has appointed His Church to witness by life and word to its redeeming power."²⁸ The soteriological role of the church is also seen in the fact that it is "God's chosen instrument by which Christ, through the Holy Spirit, reconciles men to God through faith."²⁹

The Edinburgh Conference retained much of the same terminology, adding "grace," but gave more elaborate

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 5-6.

²⁷Ibid., p. 6.

²⁸Ibid., p. 7.

²⁹Ibid.

definitions. Divine grace "is truly known only to those who know that God is love," and is manifested "above all in our redemption through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ."³⁰ Man's salvation has its source "in God alone, who is moved to his gracious activity towards man not by any merit on man's part, but solely by his free, outgoing love."³¹ Justification and sanctification are said to be "two inseparable aspects of God's gracious action," but the former is then defined as

the act of God, whereby he forgives our sins and brings us into fellowship with himself, who in Jesus Christ, and by his death upon the cross, has condemned sin and manifested his love to sinners, reconciling the world to himself.³²

Sanctification is defined as

the work of God, whereby through the Holy Spirit he continually renews us and the whole church, delivering us from the power of sin, giving us increase in holiness, and transforming us into the likeness of his Son through participation in his death and in his risen life.³³

Justification and sanctification are held to be manifestations of God's grace, which "is appropriated by faith, which itself is the gift of God."³⁴ Faith is recognized as "more than intellectual acceptance of the revelation in

³⁰Edinburgh, p. 2.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid., pp. 2-3.

³³Ibid., p. 3.

³⁴Ibid., p. 2.

Jesus Christ; it is wholehearted trust in God and his promises, and committal of ourselves to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord."³⁵ Edinburgh, then, moved into a heavier accent on confessional and dogmatic formulations, treating soteriology with very limited reference to the role of the church.

Lund makes two advances over Lausanne and Edinburgh in regard to soteriology, drawing again on the language of the New Testament: (1) soteriology is closely related to the church, and (2) it is expressed in a great variety of terms. Chapter II is again the crucial one: "We believe in Jesus Christ our Lord, who loved the Church and gave Himself for it, and has brought the Church into an abiding union with Himself."³⁶ "What has happened to Christ uniquely in His once-and-for-all death and resurrection on our behalf, happens also to the Church in its way as His Body."³⁷ Speaking eschatologically again, the Report maintains that "At the end of its pilgrimage Jesus Christ, the Crucified and Risen, will come again to meet His Church in order to complete His work of redemption and judgment."³⁸

The Christus Victor theory of the atonement receives considerable prominence:

³⁵Ibid., p. 3.

³⁶Lund, p. 7.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 7-8.

³⁸Ibid., p. 9.

We confess that without Christ we are lost, and without Him we are subject to the powers of sin and death, but that God has not abandoned us to the powers of destruction. . . . Through His life, His suffering, His death and His resurrection Jesus Christ as the mighty Victor has overcome sin and death, brought the ungodly powers to nought, and has given us freedom. When we believe in Jesus Christ these powers can no longer exercise lordship over us.³⁹

But the language of 2 Corinthians 5 and Romans 6 also shines through:

For He, in His incarnation, death and resurrection, has entered into oneness with man in his estrangement and in His existence under the judgment of God, and by making atonement for man's guilt has consecrated a new way in which man, reconciled with God, may live in union with Jesus Christ. Through Him God has given to lost humanity a new beginning, for in that Jesus Christ died and rose again, all who believe in Him die and rise again to a new life.⁴⁰

It is further affirmed that Christ was sent "to redeem creation from sin and death," and that He "bore away the sins of the world on the Cross."⁴¹ Unexpectedly, the chapter on "Ways of Worship" repeats the Victory theme of soteriology, and then adds three additional metaphors:

In His one perfect and sufficient sacrifice on Calvary He offered perfect obedience to the Father in atonement for the sin of the whole world. This was an act of expiation made once and for all and is unrepeatable. In His risen and ascended life He ever makes intercession for us.⁴²

³⁹Ibid., p. 7.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 8.

⁴²Ibid., p. 30.

In brief, Lund departed from Lausanne and Edinburgh, not in areas of agreement, but in the manner of expression; it traded dogmatics for exegesis.

Scripture

No specific definition of the Scriptures is given at Lausanne, although they are acknowledged as a basis of faith: "Notwithstanding the differences in doctrine among us, we are united in a common Christian Faith which is proclaimed in the Holy Scriptures. . . ." ⁴³ The "Word of God" is not equated with Scripture, but is held to be "given in Holy Scripture." ⁴⁴ The Report also speaks of the world having been prepared for the coming of Christ "through the activities of God's Spirit in all humanity, but especially in His revelation as given in the Old Testament." ⁴⁵

Edinburgh approached the problem of Scripture head-on by treating a specific section on "The Word of God" and another on "Holy Scripture and Tradition." ⁴⁶ It begins: "We concur in affirming that the Word of God is ever living and dynamic and inseparable from God's activity," and then relates this "Word" to the Logos of St. John. ⁴⁷ The

⁴³Lausanne, p. 10.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 7.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 5.

⁴⁶Edinburgh, pp. 4-5.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 4.

revelation uttered by this Word is called "a testimony in words" which is "given in Holy Scripture, which thus affords the primary norm for the Church's teaching, worship and life."⁴⁸ A parallel is then made between the inspiration of Scripture and the incarnation of the Word in Jesus Christ: "in each there is a union, effected by the Holy Spirit, between the divine and the human, and an acceptance, for God's saving purpose, of human limitations."⁴⁹ The conviction is then made that "this conception of the revelation cannot be shaken by scientific Bible research."⁵⁰ Two practical uses are made of the Scriptures in the Edinburgh Report: (1) They are used as a basis of agreement on some of the issues, e.g., to support "the relation of God's grace and man's freedom";⁵¹ and (2) as a suggested expression of unity in faith for some of the churches, specifically, the formula: "We accept as the supreme standard of faith the revelation of God contained in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and summed up in Jesus Christ."⁵²

At Lund, all attempts to define the Scriptures were dropped, and the emphasis was placed on the normative

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 3.

⁵²Ibid., p. 16.

function which they serve in the various churches, and more immediately, in reaching specific agreements at the Lund Conference. The normative function is especially clear in this statement: "All accept the Holy Scriptures as either the sole authority for doctrine or the primary and decisive part of those authorities to which they would appeal."⁵³

It is further said that "we believe that the revelation of God in Jesus Christ and the scriptural witness to it are unique and normative for all ages."⁵⁴ This view is given concrete demonstration in the study of "Christ and His Church": "To these convictions about the Church we are led by our faith in Jesus Christ and by our shared acceptance of the authority of the Holy Scriptures."⁵⁵

One attempt at definition is in terms of "revelation" and is restricted to the New Testament: "all these various testimonies of faith in Christ found in the New Testament express one and the same faith, and all of them together belong to the revelation of God."⁵⁶ And finally, the fresh appreciation of Biblical study among the churches is seen as an opening for furthering ecumenical relations:

⁵³Lund, p. 19.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 47.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 10.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 12.

Our understanding of the Scriptures to which the Reformers made their primary appeal has greatly advanced. Whereas this in itself has brought new problems it has also given a new expression to the Biblical revelation in its greatness and transcendence. As examples we may cite developments in the study of Biblical estimates of man, Biblical forms of communication and Biblical methods of interpretation. This Biblical study cuts across denominational lines and often provides a fresh starting-point for re-thinking denominational relationships.⁵⁷

Creeds and Tradition

At Lausanne, a concise statement was issued on the use of creeds, but there was relative silence on the subject of tradition. The delegates affirmed that their "common Christian Faith" is not only proclaimed in the Holy Scriptures, but is also

witnessed to and safeguarded in the Ecumenical Creed, commonly called the Nicene, and in the Apostles' Creed, which Faith is continuously confirmed in the spiritual experience of the Church of Christ.⁵⁸

Referring to these Creeds as "our common heritage from the ancient Church," it was declared that the Holy Spirit may enable the church "to express the truths of revelation in such other forms as new problems may from time to time demand."⁵⁹ It was finally left on record that "no external and written standards can suffice without an inward and personal experience of union with God in Christ."⁶⁰

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 47-48.

⁵⁸Lausanne, p. 10.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid.

The Conference at Edinburgh made use of the creedal insights of Lausanne, and incorporated them into a formula which might be used to express "essential unity in faith" among the churches represented there.

We acknowledge the Apostles' Creed and the creed commonly called the Nicene, as witnessing to and safeguarding that faith, which is continuously verified in the spiritual experience of the church and its members--remembering that these documents are sacred symbols and witnesses of the Christian faith rather than legalistic standards.⁶¹

It was also stated that the title for Chapter IV, "The Communion of Saints," "occurs as a phrase of the Apostles' Creed, and gives expression to a precious truth for all Christians."⁶²

Edinburgh actually defined the concept of tradition, "the living stream of the church's life," and then issued a fuller statement in terms of an ideal expression of unity:

We further affirm that the guidance of God's Holy Spirit did not cease with the closing of the canon of the Scripture, or with the formulation of the creeds cited, but that there has been in the church through the centuries, and still is, a divinely sustained consciousness of the presence of the living Christ. (Note: Known in the Orthodox Church as the Holy Tradition.)⁶³

The fact that these confessional formulations are suggested

⁶¹ Edinburgh, p. 16.

⁶² Ibid., p. 7.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 16.

by the Edinburgh Conference as a basis for "essential unity" is additional proof of this particular Conference's concern for creeds and tradition.

The Lund Conference was extremely non-committal on this point, and settled for this formulation: "Most accept the Ecumenical Creeds as an interpretation of the truth of the Bible or as marking a distinctive stage in the working-out of the orthodox faith."⁶⁴ This minimal treatment was an expected outcome of the strong reliance on a Christological and Biblical approach at Lund.

Order

Nature of the Church

"The Church" has been an issue which has plagued the ecumenical movement perhaps more than any other. And yet, Faith and Order has discovered areas of agreement here, too, Lausanne set the stage for much intense future study in its brief report on this very topic. Three categories might describe Lausanne's attempt to define the church: (1) Biblical, (2) creedal, and (3) functional. Describing the church as "the communion of believers in Christ Jesus," the Report lists several concepts from the New Testament:

⁶⁴Lund, p. 19.

the people of the New Covenant; the Body of Christ; and the Temple of God, built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone.⁶⁵

Using the words of the Nicene Creed, the terms "one church, holy, catholic, and apostolic," are listed.⁶⁶ In a functional sense, the church is seen as an instrument of witness "by life and word" "by which Christ, through the Holy Spirit, reconciles men to God through faith."⁶⁷ A list of six characteristics is presented as a means for identifying the church: (1) the Word of God as given in Holy Scripture, (2) faith in God incarnate and revealed in Christ, (3) Christ's commission to preach the Gospel, (4) observance of the Sacraments, (5) the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, and (6) "A fellowship in prayer, in worship, in all the means of grace, in the pursuit of holiness, and in the service of man."⁶⁸

The Edinburgh Conference made little advance over Lausanne on the subject of the church, except to relate it to a wider range of areas. Using the categories mentioned above, Edinburgh is on a par with Lausanne in defining the church Biblically as "the Body of Christ."⁶⁹ It is further

⁶⁵Lausanne, p. 7.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 7-8.

⁶⁹Edinburgh, pp. 3, 5.

identified as a "visible body" which, before the Lord came, was "found in Israel and . . . is found now in the new Israel to which is entrusted the ministry of reconciliation. To this visible body the word 'Ecclesia' is normally applied in the New Testament. . . ."70 The creedal terms "holy, catholic"71 appear again, as well as the "communion of saints . . . meaning that all who are 'in Christ' are knit together in one fellowship through the Holy Spirit."72 The function of the church is

to glorify God in its life and worship, to proclaim the gospel to every creature, and to build up in the fellowship and life of the Spirit all believing people, of every race and nation.73

The means to this end is "the ministry of the Word and the sacraments, and through Christian education."74 The problem of "visibility" as opposed to "invisibility," which was not discussed at Lausanne, is settled at Edinburgh to some extent by stating that the number of those called into the church "has limits hidden from human vision and known only to God."75

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 5.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid., p. 7.

⁷³Ibid., p. 3.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 6.

⁷⁵Ibid.

The Lund Conference, on the other hand, made both a qualitative and quantitative advance in its treatment of the nature of the church. Its Report goes beyond a simple Biblical, creedal, and functional description, and adds new categories and approaches, relating them to a Christological core. Beginning with the Report's Biblical terminology, it is seen that the Pauline image of the Church as the Body of Christ is given more precise definition than at the two former Conferences. At Lund, this term is called "no mere metaphor, but expresses a living reality."⁷⁶ More specifically,

Christ is the Head and He unites all believers in Himself. By the indwelling of the Holy Spirit the redeemed are united into a body, in the world but not of it, as a "People of God's own possession," who share in common the gifts of the one Spirit.⁷⁷

Creedal statements are again taken from both the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds: "We confess our faith in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church,"⁷⁸ and "We are agreed in believing in the Communion of Saints as the fellowship of the whole company of believers on earth and in heaven."⁷⁹ This latter term is also defined as a communio sanctorum,

⁷⁶Lund, p. 13.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 12.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 46.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 31.

a company of the sanctified--forgiven, justified by faith, and born anew in Christ."⁸⁰

There is a heavy accent on the function of the Church at Lund: "The Church by its very nature is an evangelizing fellowship with an inescapable missionary obligation."⁸¹

Relating this function to Christology, the Report maintains that "the Church is called to continue the mission of Jesus Christ to the world, so that the way of Christ is the way of His Church."⁸² In greater detail, it is said that Christ

gives His Church to participate in His ministry of reconciliation, constraining it by His love to enter into His passion for the redemption of the world, and empowering it by His Spirit to proclaim the Gospel of Salvation to all nations. . . .⁸³

Two other statements reinforce this function quite forcefully: "The Church witnesses to Jesus Christ as the Lord of all life, in its worship, in its order, and in its life,"⁸⁴ and:

The Church's vocation is to glorify God in adoration and in self-sacrificing service to mankind, bearing witness in its corporate life to God's redeeming grace in Jesus Christ, proclaiming the Good News to every creature, making disciples of all nations, and bringing Christ's commandments to communities as well as individuals.⁸⁵

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 12.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 19.

⁸²Ibid., p. 8.

⁸³Ibid., p. 9.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 12.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 46.

In the study of Christology in this same chapter,⁸⁶ it has already been pointed out that Lund sees Christ and the Church as inseparable. This Christocentric stress is exemplified in the statement that

because Christ is the Head and Lord of the Church, His way is the Church's way. He calls, He sends, He judges. The shape of His life is the shape of the Church's life. The mystery of His life is the mystery of the Church's life.⁸⁷

Three more sample statements further illustrate this approach which permeates the entire Report: "the Church continues to live and work by the power of Jesus Christ";⁸⁸ "the saving acts of God in Christ brought it into being";⁸⁹ "it is in the Church under the Cross that the fullness of Christ is realized."⁹⁰

There are several new perspectives of the church presented at Lund which did not appear at Lausanne or Edinburgh. One of these was to speak of the church in terms of "a double movement (its being called from the world and its being sent into the world)."⁹¹ The church was also viewed as

⁸⁶Supra, pp. 72-76.

⁸⁷Lund, p. 11.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 9.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 13.

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 8.

the new creation, which, while it continues to live on earth as a community of forgiven sinners, expecting the redemption of the body, is already given to participate in the new life of the risen Christ.⁹²

The delicate topic of the church's continuity was also discussed:

All agree not only upon the continuity assured by the constant action of the risen Lord through the Holy Spirit, but also upon the value of some form of continuity in history, assured by some means under the action of the Holy Spirit. All would emphasize the apostolic continuity of Christian life within the Christian community of men and women, redeemed by the one Cross of Christ. . . . Most would also regard the preaching of the Gospel and the ministrations of the sacraments as essential means of continuity.⁹³

While this statement is decidedly vague, it at least marks a brave beginning. Finally, a new explanation of the visibility-invisibility paradox mentioned at Edinburgh was given: "We are agreed that there are not two Churches, one visible and the other invisible, but one Church which must find visible expression on earth. . . ." ⁹⁴ Once again, then, Lund seems to have made the greatest contribution in depth, breadth and height of agreement.

Polity and the Nature of the Ministry

The Faith and Order Conference at Lausanne spoke of church polity from the standpoint of what Van Dusen has

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³Ibid., p. 14.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 21.

called, "the principle of comprehension."⁹⁵ That is, recognition was given to the value of all three types of governments: episcopal, presbyteral and congregational. Because these three forms (1) appeared in the early church, (2) are still accepted today, and (3) contribute to good order, the Lausanne Report concluded:

we therefore recognise that these several elements must all, under conditions which require further study, have an appropriate place in the order of life of a reunited Church, and that each separate communion, recalling the abundant blessing of God vouchsafed to its ministry in the past, should gladly bring to the common life of the united Church its own spiritual treasures.⁹⁶

All of Section V was devoted to "The Ministry of the Church," and summed up specific agreements in five propositions. They describe the ministry in terms of (1) the church, (2) source of authority, (3) purpose, (4) government, and (5) ordination:

1. The ministry is a gift of God through Christ to His Church and is essential to the being and well-being of the Church.
2. The ministry is perpetually authorised and made effective through Christ and His Spirit.
3. The purpose of the ministry is to impart to men the saving and sanctifying benefits of Christ through pastoral service, the preaching of the Gospel, and the administration of the sacraments, to be made effective by faith.

⁹⁵Henry P. Van Dusen, World Christianity, Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947), pp. 215; 226.

⁹⁶Lausanne, p. 12.

4. The ministry is entrusted with the government and discipline of the Church, in whole or in part.
5. Men gifted for the work of the ministry, called by the Spirit and accepted by the Church are commissioned through an act of ordination by prayer and the laying on of hands to exercise the function of this ministry.⁹⁷

At Edinburgh, the Lausanne statement on polity was repeated, with the additional stipulation that in a united church the "intimate association of the presbyters in council with the bishop, and of the laity with both, in the government of the church, should be conserved or restored," and that the episcopate should be "both constitutional and representative of the whole church."⁹⁸

Approximately the same ground is covered at Edinburgh in regard to the nature of the ministry as was covered at Lausanne, in four major points.⁹⁹ The only new emphasis is the recognition given to the role of the laity:

The call to bear witness to the gospel and to declare God's will does not come to the ordained ministry alone; the church greatly needs, and should both expect and welcome, the exercise of gifts of prophecy and teaching by laity, both men and women.¹⁰⁰

Discussion on this point, then, had remained at a virtual standstill.

Surprisingly enough, the least agreement on this topic

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Edinburgh, p. 13.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 7.

of ministry and polity was reached at the Lund Conference. All statements which approach some degree of agreement are qualified with "most," "the vast majority," or "nearly all" communions. . . .¹⁰¹ This situation is especially ironic in light of the statement that "recent biblical study has . . . led to a considerable growth together on the whole question."¹⁰² All that can be said in Lund's favor is that it gave the sharpest definitions of differences and disagreements in this area,¹⁰³ and thus progressed only negatively over Lausanne and Edinburgh. It is only fair to note, however, that the topic in question was given no explicit attention on the Lund agenda, as opposed to the situation at the first two Conferences.

Nature of Unity

In attempting to define the nature of the unity they sought, the three World Conferences on Faith and Order covered at least six basic categories: (1) motives, (2) faith, (3) worship, (4) sacraments, (5) polity and ministry, and (6) cooperative service. Again, Lausanne laid the groundwork by listing "God's will" and "mission" as the primary motives for unity, declaring: "More than half the

¹⁰¹Lund, pp. 14; 15.

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³Ibid., pp. 14-15; 29.

world is waiting for the Gospel."¹⁰⁴ In the area of faith, the delegates were able to confess their unity in the Triune God.¹⁰⁵ Unity in worship was expressed simply as being "united in common prayer."¹⁰⁶ Desire for sacramental unity is expressed negatively in that its impossibility causes "the distress and wounding of faithful souls," especially in the mission field.¹⁰⁷ On the ministerial level, "the provision of a ministry acknowledged in every part of the Church as possessing the sanction of the whole Church is an urgent need."¹⁰⁸ It is also affirmed that, even before all disagreements are resolved, "it is possible for us, not simply as individuals but as Churches, to unite in the activities of brotherly service which Christ has committed to His disciples."¹⁰⁹ The more detailed description of unity in the report on "The Unity of Christendom and the Relation Thereto of Existing Churches," was not approved, but referred to the Continuation Committee.¹¹⁰

Edinburgh treated the same basic areas in defining unity,

¹⁰⁴ Lausanne, pp. 4; 8.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 13.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 17-24.

but gave them fuller treatment, and then added several new concepts. The cause of Christian unity is stated to be "implicit in God's word, and should be treated by the Christian conscience as an urgent call from God."¹¹¹ It is repeatedly affirmed that unity is found in a relationship to Jesus Christ as Son of God, Lord, and Saviour.¹¹² This more dynamic aspect of faith is emphasized, rather than the doctrinal aspect. In regard to worship, it is stated:

We are all united, in such worship, in the use of the Holy Scriptures. We are further united in common prayer, which may be expressed in the spoken word, through silence, or by employment of the sacred treasures of Christian literature, art, and music.¹¹³

A plea is made for sacramental unity in that "every sacrament should be so ordered that all may recognize in it an act performed on behalf of the universal Church."¹¹⁴ It is further agreed that "the united church will observe the rule that all members of the visible church are admitted by baptism."¹¹⁵ Hand in hand with this is the need for a "ministry universally recognized."¹¹⁶ While the value of cooperative action in service projects is admitted, it is

¹¹¹Edinburgh, p. 7.

¹¹²Ibid., pp. 7; 25.

¹¹³Ibid., p. 16.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 11.

¹¹⁵Ibid.

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 12.

declared that it "is not our goal, since cooperative action in itself fails to manifest to the world the true character of the church as one community of faith and worship."¹¹⁷

Several new ideas on unity appear for the first time at Edinburgh. One is a careful definition of three concepts of church unity: (1) cooperative action, (2) intercommunion, and (3) corporate union.¹¹⁸ Another insight is to see the church as the body of Christ which is "in principle and ideal, one."¹¹⁹ Unity is also expressed as a "unity in diversity" and as a "unity which is deeper than our divisions."¹²⁰

The most comprehensive treatment of this issue is again found at Lund, where the peculiar accent is typically Christological. The mission imperative marks the primary motive for unity at Lund, as it did at Lausanne and Edinburgh.¹²¹ Unity based on Christ receives its expected emphasis:

But once again it has been proved true that as we seek to draw closer to Christ we come closer to one another. We need, therefore, to penetrate behind our divisions to a deeper and richer understanding of the mystery of the God-given union of Christ with His Church.¹²²

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 15.

¹¹⁸Ibid., pp. 14-15.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 14.

¹²⁰Ibid., pp. 15; 25.

¹²¹Lund, pp. 6; 12; 13.

¹²²Ibid., p. 5.

Still speaking of Christ, the Report declares: "As members of His Body we are made one with Him in the fellowship of His life, death and resurrection, of His suffering and His glory."¹²³ It is further maintained that "throughout Christendom there is, despite divisions, a unity already given by God in Christ."¹²⁴ The revelation of unity and worship is described very concisely:

While there are indications of diversity in worship in the New Testament, nevertheless the preaching of the Word and the administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper were everywhere marks of the Church's unity.¹²⁵

The need for full unity at the Lord's Table is affirmed,¹²⁶ and "the extension of the practice of intercommunion, with all its difficulties," is seen as "a valuable way forward" to "full visible unity."¹²⁷ Omitting the relationship of unity and the ministry, Lund points to the church's unity "in a rich diversity of works of mercy, moral and social witness, and prophetic insight into human affairs."¹²⁸

In addition to its Christological approach and an attempt to relate the problem of unity to every aspect of

¹²³Ibid., p. 7.

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 21.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 12.

¹²⁶Ibid., pp. 22; 37.

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 41.

¹²⁸Ibid., p. 12.

the church's life, the Lund Conference presented the following unique advances over Lausanne and Edinburgh: (1) There is a note of penitence in regard to disunity;¹²⁹ (2) a fresh attempt is made to define schism, apostasy, and heresy;¹³⁰ (3) unity is denied to be an institutional uniformity;¹³¹ (4) eschatological unity is described as an "eternal union" with Christ;¹³² and (5) the dilemma is recognized "of a proper confessional loyalty and obedience to the richer unity of the One Church to which Christ points us."¹³³ And finally, the ability of the Lund Report to synthesize its insights on the nature of unity is well-illustrated in this concise statement:

In summary, the nature of the unity towards which we are striving is that of a visible fellowship in which all members acknowledging Jesus Christ as living Lord and Saviour, shall recognize each other as belonging fully to His Body, to the end that the world may believe.¹³⁴

¹²⁹Ibid., p. 6.

¹³⁰Ibid., pp. 16-19.

¹³¹Ibid., p. 22.

¹³²Ibid., p. 25.

¹³³Ibid., p. 47.

¹³⁴Ibid., p. 25.

Worship

Worship and the Sacraments in General

No major statement was made at the Lausanne Conference on the subject of worship, but Section VI of the Report expressed broad areas of agreement on the significance of the sacraments. Stress is laid on the two sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper "because they are the Sacraments which are generally acknowledged by the members of this Conference."¹³⁵ The most definite statement is:

We hold that in the Sacraments there is an outward sign and an inward grace, and that the Sacraments are means of grace through which God works invisibly in us. We recognise also that in the gifts of His grace God is not limited by His own Sacraments.¹³⁶

It is also affirmed that the sacraments are related to the corporate life and fellowship of the church, and that "grace is conveyed by the Holy Spirit, taking of the things of Christ and applying them to the soul through Faith."¹³⁷

The Edinburgh Conference also gave considerable attention to the sacraments, noting especially that "baptism and the Lord's Supper occupied from the beginning a central position in the church's common life."¹³⁸ It is further

¹³⁵Lausanne, p. 15.

¹³⁶Ibid.

¹³⁷Ibid.

¹³⁸Edinburgh, p. 9.

maintained that the sacraments "were instituted by Christ himself," "are Christ's gifts to His church," and are "outward and visible signs of his invisible grace."¹³⁹ It is denied that they are "bare symbols," but rather, "pledges and seals of grace, and means whereby it is received."¹⁴⁰ As at Lausanne, Edinburgh concurs that "God's gracious action is not limited by his sacraments."¹⁴¹ Thus, the two Conferences retained approximately the same positions.

"Ways of Worship" was a key topic at Lund, and therefore receives more elaborate treatment than at Lausanne or Edinburgh. Acknowledging that there is a place and value for both "liturgical" and "non-liturgical" forms of worship,¹⁴² a concise list of six major agreements is given: (1) that the object of worship is "one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Triune God"; (2) that "God Himself creates the faith by which we respond to Him in worship"; (3) that "God's encounter with us, and the response to Him in worship, involves the whole man"; (4) that the response in worship involves "adoration, confession, hearing the Word of God, intercession, invocation, oblation, praise, supplication and thanksgiving"; (5) that the Word and sacraments are both

¹³⁹Ibid.

¹⁴⁰Ibid.

¹⁴¹Ibid.

¹⁴²Lund, p. 29.

"the gifts of God," through which "God offers us His grace, imparts saving knowledge of Himself and draws us into communion with Himself"; and (6) that all worship is "by and within the family of God's people, alike in heaven and on earth."¹⁴³ Again, it is seen that Lund has taken a more "functional" approach, while Lausanne and Edinburgh continue to give stress to dogmatic formulations.

Baptism

A fairly clear statement on the meaning of Baptism appears in the Lausanne Report: "We believe that in Baptism administered with water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, for the remission of sins, we are baptised by one Spirit into one body."¹⁴⁴

A similar definition appears at Edinburgh, but the Nicene "for the remission of sins" is dropped:

Baptism is a gift of God's redeeming love to the church; and, administered with water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, is a sign and seal of Christian discipleship in obedience to our Lord's command.¹⁴⁵

Lack of agreement on this subject is made especially evident at Lund, where no major statement appears in the entire Report.

¹⁴³Ibid., pp. 27-28.

¹⁴⁴Lausanne, p. 15.

¹⁴⁵Edinburgh, p. 11.

Eucharist

The Eucharist receives fuller treatment at Lausanne than Baptism, in the following single paragraph:

We believe that in the Holy Communion our Lord is present, that we have fellowship with God our Father in Jesus Christ His Son, our Living Lord, who is our one Bread, given for the life of the world, sustaining the life of all His people, and that we are in fellowship with all others who are united to Him. We agree that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is the Church's most sacred act of worship in which the Lord's atoning death is commemorated and proclaimed, and that it is a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving and an act of solemn self-oblation.¹⁴⁶

The Edinburgh Report is similar in content, but less concise in form. The "presence" is further defined in the statement that "Christ is truly present in the Eucharist,"¹⁴⁷ and that it is a "spiritual presence,"¹⁴⁸ The Eucharist is also considered a proclamation of Christ's sacrifice, a "supreme moment of prayer," a "giving of thanks," and a verbum visibile of the divine grace,¹⁴⁹ It is also called the "church's most sacred act of worship,"¹⁵⁰ but agreement "as to its essential and spiritual meaning" is considered "the important thing."¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁶Lausanne, p. 16.

¹⁴⁷Edinburgh, p. 11.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 11; 12.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁵¹Ibid., p. 11.

Also on the Eucharist, Lund surpasses Lausanne and Edinburgh in giving a precise definition:

This dominical sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, controlled by the words of institution, with the use of the appointed elements of bread and wine, is: (a) a memorial of Christ's incarnation and earthly ministry, of His death and resurrection; (b) a sacrament in which He is truly present to give Himself to us, uniting us to Himself, to His eternal Sacrifice, and to one another; and (c) eschatologically, an anticipation of our fellowship with Christ in His eternal kingdom.¹⁵²

Stepping far ahead of Lausanne and Edinburgh, the Lund Report also mentions the responsibility the church has "to warn her members that if they 'eat and drink unworthily, not discerning the Lord's Body' they bring themselves under judgment."¹⁵³ This sacrament is also acknowledged as "a real means of grace through which Christ gives Himself to those who in faith receive the appointed elements of bread and wine."¹⁵⁴

Intercommunion

The only statement on intercommunion which appears in the Lausanne Report is that, because of different points of view on such issues as ordination and apostolic succession, "the difficulties of inter-communion have been accentuated."¹⁵⁵

¹⁵²Lund, p. 40.

¹⁵³Ibid.

¹⁵⁴Ibid.

¹⁵⁵Lausanne, p. 12.

At Edinburgh, intercommunion is reviewed as "the fullest expression of a mutual recognition between two or more churches," and the primary approach is to make subtle distinctions between "intercommunion," "open communion," and "joint celebration."¹⁵⁶ Beyond these basic steps, agreement is practically nil.

Lund picks up where Edinburgh leaves off, by devoting a whole chapter of its Report to this problem, and setting up seven precise definitions of (1) full communion, (2) intercommunion and intercelebration, (3) intercommunion, (4) open communion, (5) mutual open communion, (6) limited open communion, and (7) closed communion.¹⁵⁷ The churches agree that no theological principles should be compromised in seeking intercommunion, but that

all unions find their basis in the teaching of Scripture and be tested by conformity to the Word of God. There should be no move toward intercommunion which would treat our differences superficially or would use intercommunion as a means of by-passing difficulties.¹⁵⁸

On the other hand, it is pointed out that three factors give cause for restudying the churches' divisions at the Lord's Table: (1) membership in the World Council of Churches, (2) missionary opportunities in Asia and Africa,

¹⁵⁶Edinburgh, p. 15.

¹⁵⁷Lund, pp. 38-39.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p. 37.

and (3) "our Lord's call to us."¹⁵⁹ As can be seen the agreements on this topic have merely opened up new questions which Lausanne and Edinburgh had not dared to raise.

By way of summary, it is observed that the areas of agreement discussed under faith, order and worship usually become more sharply defined, more precisely stated, and more amply studied as one progresses from Lausanne to Edinburgh to Lund. There are some notable exceptions, of course, for example, in the doctrine of Baptism. It is also seen that the Lausanne and Edinburgh Conferences confined themselves pretty well to creedal, confessional, and dogmatic formulations, while Lund's distinctive contribution was a more Biblical, Christological, eschatological and inter-related orientation.

The next chapter attempts to summarize the major agreements of Faith and Order, evaluate their significance, list major disagreements, and establish some prognosis for the future.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 36-37.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Agreements

Specific agreements have been reached at the three World Conferences on Faith and Order. Of that there can be no doubt. Some may question the validity and genuineness of these agreements, despite the repeated affirmations of such authorities as Tatlow: "These agreements have not been reached by any subtle process of compromise, or the adoption of ambiguous formulas under which deep differences of conviction might lie concealed."¹ On the contrary, disagreements have been identified as frankly as agreements, as the data below display. Of the three general areas of faith, order, and worship, it is seen that greatest agreement has been found in the area of faith, and the least agreement in order. Specifically, the most promising point of contact for all the churches engaged in ecumenical conversation is in Christology and soteriology. The three World Conferences have produced three successive documents which have become classic in this regard. At Lausanne it

¹Tissington Tatlow, "The World Conference on Faith and Order," in Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill, editors, A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948 (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954), Chap. IX, p. 439.

was the statement on "The Church's Message to the World--the Gospel";² at Edinburgh it was the statement on "The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ";³ and at Lund it was the statement on "Christ and His Church."⁴ Despite their differences in liturgical, organizational, and sacramental interpretation, the churches are one in proclaiming Jesus Christ to be God and Saviour and in acknowledging His redemptive work on the cross and eschatological promise to come again. The richest measure of this agreement was seen at Lund, where every topic was related to Christology, and a deliberate attempt was made to break loose from confessional and creedal formulations and find common ground in the terminology of Sacred Scripture.

The most problematic area, order, is heavy-laden with ecclesiastical baggage which has accumulated through the centuries. Agreement in this area is largely confined to the churches' growing ability to define their various positions. Again, Lund's Biblical approach offered the most productive degree of consensus on the nature of the

²H. N. Bate, editor, Faith and Order Proceedings of the World Conference, Lausanne, August 3-21, 1927 (Garden City and New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928), pp. 461-463.

³Leonard Hodgson, editor, The Second World Conference on Faith and Order Held at Edinburgh, August 3-18, 1937 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), pp. 224-227.

⁴Oliver S. Tomkins, editor, The Third World Conference on Faith and Order Held at Lund, August 15th to 28th, 1952 (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1953), pp. 17-22.

church and the nature of unity. There is new understanding in the use of the expression, "Body of Christ," which shows definite progress since Lausanne and Edinburgh. The growing interest in the functional aspect of the church has also opened new areas of agreement, notably in a fuller recognition of the mission imperative. There is wide agreement as to the desirability of a mutually recognized ministry and the retention of a variety of polities, but beyond this basic goal, differences of opinion are in greater abundance than similarities.

In the area of worship, the Word and sacraments are called means of grace, whose function is the building up of the Body of Christ. Through mutual study and actual worship together, the churches have grown to accept one another's peculiar liturgical or non-liturgical emphases. The sacrament of Baptism, at the minimum, is accepted as divinely ordained by God and as the rite of admission to the church. It is agreed that Jesus Christ is present in the Eucharist and that this sacrament is also an act of commemoration, proclamation, and thanksgiving. Full intercommunion among the churches is seen as a goal, but there is mutual respect for one another's inability to achieve this goal fully at this time.

It is clear, however, that a sketchy summary such as this cannot do justice to the full extent and depth of agreement which have been attained by the churches. These

agreements are not merely quantitative and subject to statistical tabulation. There is a qualitative factor which can best be appreciated by studying the Faith and Order Reports themselves.

Significance

Many viewpoints have been expressed regarding the value and significance of the three World Conferences on Faith and Order, their agreements, and the contribution of the Movement as a whole, but Tatlow again provides the most all-inclusive summary on this point:⁵

1. The fact that the churches regard it as natural to meet in conference is in itself a measure of success;
2. Participation in the World Conferences has been proved "a profound spiritual experience" for the participants, and has evoked a new awareness of the Church;
3. The churches have developed "a steadily deepening sense of the wrongness of division" in a spirit of "unforced penitence";
4. There has been a "real discovery or rediscovery of one another by the Churches";
5. There are areas of doctrinal consensus "which can now be taken for granted, but which would have astonished the early pioneers of the movement";
6. The churches have found it easier to define agreements than differences, but they are deeply aware that the latter exist among them;

⁵Tatlow, op. cit., pp. 438-441.

7. The totality of each Christian body has been more fully realized, in which doctrine, worship, organization, and practical activity are "inseparably joined together";
8. There has been an increasing awareness that divisions have been created and are still maintained by "many factors other than those of difference in theological convictions and their expression";
9. Faith and Order has helped to "create the atmosphere in which the problems of disunity were constantly kept before the Churches," and has influenced at least one church union;
10. A new and closer relationship has been created between Christian scholars and leaders;
11. Faith and Order has revealed "the fluidity of the situation in which the separated Churches find themselves," so that "on no major theological question do the dividing lines exactly correspond with denominational allegiance."

Finally, it should be noted that Faith and Order has made a unique contribution to the World Council of Churches, in keeping the theological issues before the member churches, and in preserving their confessional integrity. A recent concrete example of the Faith and Order Commission's role within the World Council is seen in its report at the Evanston Assembly,⁶ and more indirectly, in the Message to the Churches.⁷

⁶W. A. Visser 't Hooft, editor, The Evanston Report: The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, 1954 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), pp. 82-98.

⁷Ibid., pp. 1-3.

Disagreements

While this thesis has concentrated on the areas of agreement in Faith and Order, it is not denied that the churches still face very serious areas of disagreement. Walter Marshall Horton has described this difficult and paradoxical situation in three sentences:

At all three of the world conferences on Faith and Order--Lausanne, Edinburgh, Lund--it was discovered that the major differences holding the Christian churches apart clustered around the doctrine of the nature of the Church itself, more especially around the doctrines of the ministry and the Sacraments. . . . There is, frankly, no immediate hope whatsoever of their being resolved. Yet it is the central paradox of the Ecumenical Movement that in the very act of noting these deep and seemingly insoluble differences, we have become aware of a "given unity" that underlies them and holds us together in spite of them.⁸

A more accurate idea of what these unresolved issues are like is seen in the following representative list, also compiled by Horton:

Infant baptism and adult baptism, open and close communion, apostolic succession, possibility of salvation outside the Church, possibility of more than one organized Church, necessity of having bishops, necessity of having seven sacraments, foot-washing as an extra sacrament, unimportance or basic importance of correct church government and church discipline. . . .⁹

⁸Walter Marshall Horton, Christian Theology: An Ecumenical Approach (Revised edition; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), pp. 207-208.

⁹Ibid., p. 219.

Even at the Lund Conference, where such significant agreement was reached, there were repeated references to clashing positions of the various communions on such fundamental questions as ministerial order and apostolic succession,¹⁰ the place of creeds and confessions,¹¹ the nature of the church,¹² the nature of unity,¹³ worship,¹⁴ the meaning of the Eucharist,¹⁵ and the many dilemmas of intercommunion.¹⁶ To put it mildly, the task of Faith and Order has only begun.

Future

Since the Third World Conference at Lund, ecumenical leaders have been looking to the future of Faith and Order. By and large, some hope is seen in a new approach. Albert Outler, for example, has candidly concluded:

¹⁰Faith and Order, The Report of the Third World Conference at Lund, Sweden, August 15-28, 1952 (London: SCM Press, Ltd., November, 1952), pp. 14-15; 29-30.

¹¹Ibid., p. 19.

¹²Ibid., pp. 19-21; 31.

¹³Ibid., pp. 20-21; 25-26.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 28-31.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 30-31.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 36-42.

As things now stand, our existing disagreements on the doctrines of church, ministry, and sacraments are "insoluble." It would, of course, be no solution at all to press for a "majority vote," or to propose a minimal formula from which none could dissent. . . .¹⁷

Rather, Outler reminds ecumenists:

it is God who "persuades" us as we seek to be obedient to Him and open one to another. Thus, what matters most is the atmosphere and temper in which we propose to live with each other while we go on working with these "insoluble" problems that confront us.¹⁸

Bishop Anders Nygren has sided with Outler in calling Lund "an important turning point in the development of Faith and Order discussions,"¹⁹ noting the new focus on Christ and His Spirit as a move from the periphery to the center.

Nicholls, too, has reinforced the growing conviction that the churches must seek unity at a deeper level than simply listing agreements and disagreements:

The future of Faith and Order . . . lies in corporate theological meditation upon the mysteries of Christ and the Holy Spirit, carried out, of necessity, in a context of worship and the study of worship, and of evangelism and the study of evangelism.²⁰

¹⁷Albert C. Outler, The Christian Tradition and the Unity We Seek (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 8.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 8-9.

¹⁹W. A. Visser 't Hooft, op. cit., p. 32.

²⁰William Nicholls, "The Present and Future of Faith and Order," Theology, LV (November, 1952), 406.

In addition to suggestions like these, the Lund Report has issued six essential recommendations for ways and means of future study,²¹ all of which find some guarantee of definite action in the areas of study proposed by the Working Committee: (a) the nature of the Church in the light of the doctrines of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit; (b) tradition and the common history of churches; (c) ways and meanings of worship; (d) "proselytism" among member churches of the World Council, and (e) social and cultural factors affecting church unity.²²

At the regional Faith and Order Conference held at Oberlin, Ohio, in September of 1957, outgoing Secretary J. Robert Nelson disclosed new possibilities for the Movement:

Finally, this conference in North America should be seen as one among several efforts to bring the discussion of Christian unity down from the awesome level of world-wide representation to regional, national and local soil. It has not yet been determined when or whether there will be held a Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order, in succession to Lund. Meanwhile we are asking the churches to wrestle with these problems in their own back yards. In 1955 an exceedingly fruitful conference was held in New Zealand; in May of this year a smaller, yet important, one, in India.

²¹Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, "The First Six Years: 1948-1954," A Report on the Activities of the Departments and Secretariats of the World Council (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1954), p. 24.

²²K. E. Skydsgaard, "Faith and Order - Our Oneness in Christ and Our Disunity as Churches," The Ecumenical Review, VI (October, 1953), 12.

Since 1955 studies have been progressing in Europe in anticipation of a major consultation involving only the Lutheran and Reformed confessions. And plans are now being made for a conference in Australia in 1959. You may all be sure that our brethren in these other lands are watching with keen interest and expectation what we do here at Oberlin. And the fruits of this conference will become a part of the resources of the whole ecumenical movement in the years ahead.²³

With a record of sound achievements in the past, and with an ongoing concern and promising program of action in the present, the future looks bright for Faith and Order. William Adams Brown, a veteran of the early ecumenical movement, has rightly identified the ultimate reason for such hope:

The most important lesson that the Church historian can learn from the past is the lesson of expectancy. Things may move slowly, but they move. We are not alone in this enterprise of Christian unity. We have a Partner and there are no limits to what He can accomplish. When His hour strikes, God will act. It is for us to be ready.²⁴

²³Paul S. Minear, editor, The Nature of the Unity We Seek, Official Report of the North American Conference on Faith and Order, September 3-10, 1957, Oberlin, Ohio (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1958), pp. 50-51.

²⁴William Adams Brown, Toward a United Church: Three Decades of Ecumenical Christianity (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), p. 179.

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