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## Revival Movement in the Hsin I Church

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der Schrift macht der Heilige Geist wahr und besiegelt damit durch sein inneres Zeugnis die göttliche Wahrheit und Autorität der Schrift. Dies innere Zeugnis ist aber selbst das gewisseste, und der Heilige Geist nimmt nun nicht erst aus der von ihm bezeugten und bestätigten Schrift das Zeugnis, daß er der göttliche Geist sei, sondern das ist sein unmittelbares Zeugnis von ihm selbst. Weil nun alle Wirkung des Geistes und sein zuletzt als höchste Autorität entscheidendes Zeugnis doch von vornherein für uns durch die Schrift vermittelt wurde, so ist die gegebene Erklärung fern von aller Schwärmgeisterei." Es ist durchaus zulässig, hier mit einer Analogie von Ereignissen in der Natur zu operieren. Bei einem Menschen, der das Licht der Sonne sieht und die Wärme der Sonnenstrahlen verspürt, bedarf es keiner Scharfsinnigkeit, das Dasein der Sonne zu beweisen. Ebenso genügt bei einem Christen die Wahrnehmung seines Geistes und Herzens, die das Zeugnis des Geistes spüren, eben diese Wahrnehmung, und eines weiteren Beweises bedarf es nicht.

B. E. R e k m a n n.

### Revival Movement of the Hsin I Church.\*

The following is the second part of a paper on "Buchmanism, with Special Reference to the Hsin I Church," written at the request of the Hankow Conference of our missionaries. All quotations from the literature of the Hsin I Church are translations from Chinese and have been checked by another missionary.

What connection has Buchmanism with the present revivals taking place in the Hsin I Church? I have discovered none, though there is much in common between the two movements. With this statement the task set for me by the Hankow Conference might be considered finished.

Yet it is of importance that all members of the mission become acquainted with the revival movement in the Hsin I Church and especially the unionism and the Reformed influence that is permeating these Lutherans in China, particularly in and through the revival movement, so as to forearm our own Chinese brethren.

Before taking up this matter, I wish to refer to the statements in the *China Christian Year-book*, 1933, regarding the Oxford Group in China. Page 176 we read: "The Oxford Group Movement has had considerable influence upon the missionaries and foreign business communities and is spreading rapidly throughout the country. It has not to any extent percolated through the rank and file of church-members." This is the substance of several brief references to the movement contained in this book. Chinese literature on the movement is also in preparation.

\* "Hsin I" is the name adopted in China by many Lutheran bodies. The two words mean faith, righteousness. The Missouri Synod and some others transliterate Lutheran with "Lu-deh" and use this name.

While my attention was first drawn to the Buchman Movement last year by the wife of one of the professors at the Shekow Hsin I Seminary (founded 1933, location near Hankow), I have not discovered a single reference to this movement in the literature of the Hsin I Church outside of a translation of the chapter "What Is Sin?" from the book *For Sinners Only*. Buchmanism and the Hsin I Church revival have many points in common, however, particularly the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit and the emphasis on "sharing," or public confession. But the revivals in China, so far as I have read, are all premeditated open meetings in churches, mostly conducted by visiting pastors and professors, sometimes by laymen and students.

What is the Hsin I Church? Hsin I Hui is the Chinese name for the United Lutheran Church in China. The U. L. C. in America is but a part of this union. The union was organized in 1920 by ten bodies or missions, the names of which and their headquarters are as follows: 1) The Board of Foreign Missions of the United Lutheran Church in America, Baltimore; 2) The Augustana Synod Mission, Minneapolis; 3) Berliner Missionsgesellschaft, Berlin; 4) The Danish Lutheran Mission, Copenhagen; 5) The Finnish Mission, Helsingfors; 6) The Board of Foreign Missions of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, Minneapolis; 7) The Norwegian Missionary Society, Norway; 8) Schleswig-Holsteinische Ev.-Luth. Missionsgesellschaft zu Breklum; 9) The Church of Sweden Mission; 10) Ostasien-Mission, Allgemeiner Evangelisch-Protestantischer Missionsverein (Weimar Mission), Berlin. Three of these ten bodies are the boards of Lutheran bodies in America (1, 2, and 6); but though they are united in China, they are not all united in America. The former Hauge Synod Mission is united with No. 6. We note this especially because "characteristic of this Norwegian body are revivalism and lay preaching" ("The Ghost of Pietism," by Dr. Theo. Graebner, CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, Vol. III, p. 241) and because the work of this Synod in China is located in Honan Province, where the present Lutheran revival movement is particularly active.

Now, what do we find after a perusal of the *Hsin I Pao*, official Chinese weekly of the Hsin I Church? Revival meetings have been held in the Hsin I Church all through 1933, some revivals dating back to 1931, and in the present year the movement has become so important that the *Hsin I Pao* of February 14, 1934, was a special number devoted entirely to Fen Hsin, revivalism.

The first mention of a revival in 1933 is a news report of a revival in Chekiang, where the Christian churches of three counties have the custom of holding an annual revival meeting. In the same number (Vol. XXI, 3, p. 2140) there is news of another such meeting conducted in Kiangsu Province by an elder of some church in Shantung.

In Shantung Province revivalism is very active. But apparently neither of these two articles refers to the Lutherans.

Next there is a news item of the Shekow Seminary by a Chinese professor, Hsieh Shou Ling, stating that on January 14, 1933, the Shekow Seminary board urged the faculty to emphasize the spiritual life of the students (XXI, 6, p. 2210). This suggestion bore fruit, as we shall see later. On January 21 there was a union revival meeting at Kaifeng, Honan, at the China Inland Mission headquarters, conducted by six pastors and twelve laymen. Here the Hsin I Church leaders united with the China Inland Mission, Baptists, and the American Free Methodist Mission. According to the 1934 *Directory of Protestant Missions in China* there are no Hsin I Hui missionaries in Kaifeng. The Hsin I Hui leader at this revival was a layman. Next a revival meeting is reported which took place at Hsin Yang, Honan, for a week in December, 1932 (XXI, 9, p. 2274). January 30 to February 12, 1933, the Laohoko, Hupeh, Lutheran Church experienced a revival and some seventy "newly saved" are counted as the fruits of the meeting (XXI, 11, p. 2324).

After the first two months of 1933 Professor Hsieh reports signs of a revival at the Shekow Seminary (XXI, 14, p. 2401): "Warm spiritual breezes have blown in our midst. . . . In this revival the most noteworthy thing is the feeling of sin. During these two months amongst our students and teachers there constantly has been the speech and attitude of confessing sin and repenting. In the public meetings there is mostly confession of sin and prayer, and in our lives there have appeared a number of good changes. But sanctification shows itself still to be in a period of words more than of life, and in the words there is constantly manifest a lack of Bible knowledge." In the same issue of the *Hsin I Pao* containing this report, Professor Korhonen advertises a book on revivalism called *The Fiery Heart* and says: "At present in the Shekow Seminary God is causing a shaking of the bones (Ezek. 37, 7), and every one gladly reads this book."

March 12—16, 1933, there was a series of revival meetings in the Hsu Chang, Honan, Hsin I Church, conducted by a Dr. Chia of Nanking, in which the China Inland Mission, the American Free Methodist Mission, the Baptists, and the Pentecostals united with the Hsin I Church (XXI, 15, p. 2420). (Remember, Hsin I means Lutheran.) News of this Hsu Chang revival is given also in later issues of the paper (XXI, 16 and 21), and henceforth the periodical carries many news articles on revivals in various parts of the Hsin I Church, and almost every issue to the present date contains such or other articles relative to the revival or to revivalism in general, and all favorable to the movement. It is true, we find that at least two letters have appeared in the periodical registering some criticism, but

these were preceded by the editor's note that "all responsibility for this department belong to the writers of the letters" (XXII, 13, p. 242 and 14, p. 260). We may note that on one occasion the editor briefly corrects a "revived" preacher who has fallen into doctrinal error, doubting the sufficiency of the doctrine of salvation by faith (XXI, 24, p. 2656). We are comforted to find a news report of one revival in Honan in which doctrine was of chief importance and in which there was no fanaticism, but simple preaching of justification and then sanctification in this their proper order (XXI, 44, p. 3130).

But as for the rest the impression produced by all these news reports and other articles is that of an un-Lutheran, Reformed spirit, a false emphasis in matters of doctrine, yes, even outright heresy, fanaticism in the matter of public confession of sins, as the general weeping and prostration of sinners before the congregation, and, finally, unionism. We regret that these things are corrupting the Hsin I Hui, a union of missions, which in their homeland still bear the name Lutheran and in which there still are many members who really are trying against odds to preserve to a degree God's Word and Luther's doctrine pure.

The un-Lutheran, unbiblical, Reformed language of Prof. Kalle Korhonen (of Finland) of the Shekow Seminary, who is a leader in this revival movement, is to be noted. In a tract on his spiritual experiences he says: "I recall that, when I was a child, people said that I was very obstinate. As a youth, I remember, I was very lazy, and at the age of sixteen in confirmation class I lacked concentration, so much so that I caused my pastor to sigh for me; yet there is one thing, I liked to read books and sought real benefit. . . . Amongst my brothers and sisters I was the first to obtain God's grace (of course, we had early received infant baptism). At that time a zealous pastor forcefully preached God's Word, but I received the Lord's call of grace not in the church, not at home, and not in the midst of men, but directly before the face of God. At this point I wish to say to all parents, *It is not enough for your children to receive infant baptism, but they must later receive anew the baptism of the Holy Spirit before they can be called true disciples of Jesus.*" Here the writer brings Holy Baptism as a means of grace into contempt amongst Chinese Christians and directly denies the efficacy of Baptism. He plainly leaves the reader to infer that he did not obtain grace by Baptism and says Baptism alone does not make true disciples of Christ. He does not couple the baptism with the Holy Ghost with the baptism with water, as Christ does, John 3. Likewise, the Rev. V. E. Swenson, and many with him, ignores the efficacy of Baptism when he admits: "According to the testimony of many of our leaders, *they were not regenerate persons before this revival movement, but at this time God first gave them repentant hearts and true faith, and they now are*

leading people into the abundant life of our Lord" (Hsin I Pao, XXII, 6/7, 118).

The constant emphasis on feeling and experience and the false teaching of immediate communication of the Holy Ghost without the means of grace, fundamental and dangerous errors of sectarian revivalism, come to the front in the present revivalism in the Hsin I Church and lead to unsober judgment and fanaticism.

For example, the theme of a revival sermon at Laohoko was: "The Norm of Sanctification. It is Christ as the perfect Model, the *work of the Holy Spirit in man's heart*, and all doctrines in the Bible." This is similar to the "guidance" and the reliance on guided persons in Buchmanism. Again, in the following account of revival meetings conducted by the Shekow Seminary revival band, when the emotions of the people were aroused to a high pitch, on which all emphasis is laid, this was regarded as a successful revival and a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit. "Professor Korhonen in June, 1933, organized a preaching band of students. Their preaching trip lasted fifty days, including Changsha and other places in Honan and the Chi Kung Shan summer resort, and also two days at the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Changteh. The fruits were: confessors of sin with weeping, prostrations on the ground, some were regenerated and saved, some thoroughly repented, some determined to zealously follow after. The inspired were Chinese and foreign leaders, pastors, officers, members, male and female, teachers, and pupils. What causes us to especially thank the marvelous power of the Lord is, first, the I Yang Girls' Bible-school teachers and pupils all fell down, and later many were regenerated; secondly, Tz'u Li Church was the coldest and most opposed to our revival movement; yet by the power of the Lord many men and women of the Church definitely confessed sin, and also the Chinese and foreign leaders confessed that their faith experience was not strong. In summary, our work at all places from beginning to end was mostly successful; yet at several places where we began work we either met with opposition or the results were only ordinary. Yet by the Lord's power the devil was defeated, the Lord's work was victorious, fruits bountiful; we cannot but thank the Lord's grace" (XXI, 36, p. 2931). There are many articles telling of such prostrations.

In the defense of the movement against criticism there is an evident lack of sane judgment and sober exegesis, and in a rather feverish article entitled "Does the Revival's Emphasis on Sin Conflict with the Principle of Justification by Faith?" the writer, a 1910 graduate of the Shekow Seminary, slips into rank heresy, saying at one place: "Therefore obedience is the root source of justification" (XXII, 6/7, 125). This article is really quite fanatical, yet not more so than what has come from the pen of a Shekow professor.

We proceed to some exegesis of Prof. K. Korhonen's. "Christ uses the words 'new wine' to represent the 'new Spirit.' Wine in the Bible represents Spirit and new wine the new Spirit, God's Spirit, as in Acts 2, 13 in reference to conditions at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came down in great measure and completely renewed the believers, and unbelievers said: 'They are filled with new wine,' and Eph. 5, 18" (XXII, 6/7, 127). No comment is necessary.

In his booklet *Spiritual Revival of the Churches* Professor Korhonen attempts to answer various criticisms of the movement and says, p. 10: "Some say, 'Those who repent act in an extraordinary way, yelling, weeping, and prostrating themselves.' But the ancient Church was like this, as Saul, the persecutor of the Church, the hypocritical Ananias, and John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, all fell to the ground before the Lord (Acts 9, 4; 5, 5; Rev. 1, 17). And this also happened in the Church at Corinth (1 Cor. 14, 25)." None of these cases is an analogy to the present general prostration of sinners in the Hsin I Church; for in the cases of Paul and John there was an extraordinary revelation, perceptible to the senses; the citation of Ananias is most absurd (as we take it, the Holy Ghost made a warning example of him and Sapphira, not an example to follow, for Ananias did not fall down in confession); and, finally, the case mentioned in Corinthians is mentioned as a possibility. It certainly may still happen that the Holy Ghost causes a convicted sinner to fall prostrate. We should daily prostrate ourselves, if not physically, in contrition and repentance. But to say on the basis of this text that "the ancient Church was like *this*," that is, like the "yelling, weeping, and prostrating" of the present Hsin I Hui revival, is false.

Another answer of a criticism: "Some say, 'This is not Martin Luther's doctrine; it is false doctrine and corrupt speaking.' But Martin Luther during his whole life was constantly in fear and trembling, and he also spoke plainly of the fear and trembling of conscience (*terrores et pavores*). Therefore he was able also to speak comforting words of grace (2 Cor. 1, 3, 4)." Then, after merely quoting Phil. 2, 12, the Lutheran professor winds up his answer to the above criticism by citing 1 Pet. 1, 17: "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear." Thus he confuses the fear of God with the terror of conscience.

Such confusion explains to me how the students at the Shekow Seminary could fall down and loudly lament their sins throughout the services at the seminary and afterwards, evidently without being comforted by the Gospel for a long time, if at all. Why should not the terror of conscience continue as long as physically possible, since, according to the professor, this was the life-long example of Luther and is the admonition of St. Peter. On a recent visit to the

Shekow Seminary by several of us a professor pointed out to us the room of a certain student and said: "There is where one of our best students lives, that is, not so much in studies, but in earnestness. He prays so loudly in his room that he often disturbs the other students." O Hsin I Hui, consider your name—Righteousness by Faith—and look under your own seminary roof to see whether there are not grievous sins being done in the name of revivalism and called the work of the Holy Ghost! "Comfort, comfort, ye My people!"

Does the Hsin I Church support Professor Korhonen's statement (p. 23 of the above-mentioned booklet): "If any man opposes me *with or without reason*, that is not important; for I am already dead, and Christ lives in me (Gal. 2, 20). Therefore all that oppose me oppose my Lord, and He takes full responsibility; I should not worry or fear"? Did Professor Korhonen never read: "Blessed are ye when . . . men shall say all manner of evil against you *falsely* for My name's sake"? How can the following printed statement of Professor Korhonen be passed without any correction or protest from the Lutheran Church? On page 112 of his booklet he swears: "In the name of God I say the truth: if you have not the Holy Ghost, you cannot reach the heavenly city. If you render perfect obedience, then first can you receive the Holy Spirit." No; this is speaking a lie in the name of the devil; this is a grievous sin against the Second Commandment.

But is there no protest in the Hsin I Church? The president of the Shekow Seminary (until recently), Dr. Sten Bugge, has an article on the revival movement, but no word of warning against its dangers and errors. He says of criticisms that are made (XXI, 50, p. 3249): "This kind of criticism comes too late and ought not appear at this day. The last few years we have constantly prayed before God: 'God, revive Thy Church, beginning with me.' I have not heard of any member of the Reformation Church opposing this prayer. God answered this prayer and many say: 'This is not my wish; I do not want you to answer in this way.'"

We do find an earnest warning against certain evils of the movement in the *Hsin I Shen Hsueh Chih* (Hsin I Theological Quarterly), Vol. 4, No. 4, by Prof. Erik Sovik, entitled "The Responsibility of the Leaders of the Lutheran Church of China for the Successful Progress and Results of the Present Revival in the Spirit of the Lutheran Faith." He speaks of dangers, of the devil's being busy and stirring up fanaticism, pride, and jealousy, but dwells particularly on false doctrine and unionism. Professor Sovik says (p. 223): "But amongst the things to be feared, what causes me most fear is heresy. . . . At present there are various revival leaders who, although they are noted men, yet can only preach this sort of doctrine: The baptism of the Holy Spirit consists in a Christian's turning in the wink of an eye



to a special degree of spirituality, completely different from his previous life, the Old Adam being almost completely obliterated; and from this point onward the Christian can live forever in this condition, very much like a mountain that has changed its appearance. Dare we invite these men to our various Hsin I Hui churches to lead revivals? When they say: 'Once a Christian, always a Christian'; 'Once filled with the Holy Ghost, always filled with the Holy Ghost'; 'When a man is baptized with water, that connotes nothing more than that he enters the visible Church'; 'The baptism mentioned in Rom. 6, 3 does not refer to the baptism with water, but the baptism with the Holy Ghost,' do we Lutheran Christians think that this sort of doctrine does not matter? Dare we use them just because they are very sincere and in other points of doctrine are completely in accord with the Gospel and because those beautiful fruits seem to follow them and without doubt they truly do follow them? I dare say that, if our churches use them, before long our Church may be divided and the division come faster than we can imagine." After appealing for faithfulness to our Lutheran Confessions, Professor Sovik makes an earnest plea, which, we are very sorry, he weakened somewhat and by which he betrayed that his opposition to unionism does not go deep enough. He pleads: "Therefore I propose, I most earnestly propose, that we use only Lutherans as revival leaders." Then he adds: "If we had not such men, I could not make this proposal. But, thank God, we truly have such men." But why the "if"? Even should such a circumstance prevail as he mentions, why not make this proposal nevertheless and work and pray that it be adopted and carried out, since unionism is displeasing to God? For God's Word expressly bids us: "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them," Rom. 16, 17.

Brethren, the time is at hand when we must raise our voices in the Chinese language in warning and protest against the errors that are being disseminated under the name Lutheran to the shame of Christ's name and to the confusion and damnation of many souls, possibly also the souls of our own members. Our duty now calls us into the field to fight against the far-flung and advancing lines of unionism, to fight for unity of doctrine and practise within the Lutheran Church in China on the basis of God's Word and in accordance with our old and tried Lutheran Confessions. We shall have to launch forth into polemics.

God, grant us a humble spirit; guide us by Thy Holy Spirit that we err not to the right nor to the left from the inspired written Word, but hew to the mark. Cause our Church in China to remain steadfast, and move Thou many others to obey the command to "avoid them" who teach error. Let all be said and done in love and to the glory of Thy name and the everlasting welfare of Thy Church. If Thy Word

and Sacraments are permitted free course, we know that Thy Spirit and power will not be lacking, but will teach men to say: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth"; then also obedience and newness of life will follow after and Thy name be glorified among the heathen.

Hankow, June 28, 1934.

MAX ZSCHIEGNER.

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### Gal. 3, 24.

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Es gibt wohl keinen in unserer Mitte, der sich in bezug auf die Wahrheit, die in diesem Schriftwort ausgesprochen wird, groben Irrtums schuldig machte; aber man stößt gelegentlich auf eine solch bedauernswerte Unklarheit im Ausdruck, daß es sich der Mühe lohnt, diese Stelle wieder einmal etwas genauer zu befehen, und das um so mehr, weil eine solche Unklarheit eventuell großen Schaden anrichten könnte.

In gewaltigen Worten lehrt der heilige Apostel in unserm Kapitel, daß die Gerechtigkeit nicht aus dem Gesetz, nicht aus den Werken, sondern aus dem Glauben an das Evangelium kommt. Diejenigen, die sich auf ihre Werke verlassen, belegt er mit dem Fluch, B. 10. Er sagt ihnen in klaren Worten: „Daß aber durchs Gesetz niemand gerecht wird vor Gott, ist offenbar; denn der Gerechte wird seines Glaubens leben“, B. 11. Wenn der Mensch das Gesetz vollkommen halten könnte, so würde er zwar dadurch leben. Aber das ist ganz und gar ausgeschlossen, und deshalb bleibt der Mensch unter dem Fluch, bis er das Heil in Christo annimmt, der ihn von dem Fluch erlöst hat. Und das kann nur durch den Glauben geschehen, den Gott der Heilige Geist in dem Menschen wirkt. Der Apostel fährt dann fort und zeigt, daß die Verheißung, durch die Gott dem Abraham das Erbe frei geschenkt hat, durch das Gesetz nicht aufgehoben worden ist, das ja über vierhundert- unddreißig Jahre hernach gegeben worden ist. Dann stellt er die Frage: „Was soll denn das Gesetz? Ist es denn ohne Nutzen, wohl gar überflüssig?“ Ach nein, sagt er, „es ist dazukommen um der Sünde willen, bis der Same käme“, die Erfüllung der Verheißung, nämlich Christus.

Und dann folgen die Worte, die für das rechte Verständnis unserer Stelle ganz unentbehrlich sind. Sie lauten: „Aber die Schrift hat es alles beschlossen unter die Sünde, auf daß die Verheißung käme durch den Glauben an Jesum Christum, gegeben denen, die da glauben. Ehe denn aber der Glaube kam, wurden wir unter dem Gesetz verwahrt und verschlossen auf den Glauben, der da sollte offenbart werden“, B. 22, 23.

Der Apostel bedient sich hier einer Metonymie und nennt das Verfaßte anstatt des Verfassers. Die Schrift ist die Schrift Alten Testaments, und zwar der Teil, der alle Menschen zu Sündern macht,