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Fighting Liberalism with Blunted Weapons

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ture, for it takes the very heart out of the Bible and prevents us from believing its divine message.

We close with this prayer on our lips: May the Lord guard and defend the Church, the dearly bought communion of saints, in this new fatherland of ours against the inane theory which at the present time is a cancerous sore in the theology and the Church of our former fatherland and which, if it gained ground here, would gnaw at the root of the freshly budding tree of our American Church and cause it to wither away again! A general acceptance of this principle would indeed establish peace in the Church, but a syncretistic peace, of which the sainted Dannhauer said: *Foris eiq̄vñ, intus eiq̄vñwç* (externally peace, internally discord).

Oak Glen, Ill.

ALEX WM. C. GUEBERT

Fighting Liberalism with Blunted Weapons

The Faith We Declare. By Edwin Lewis, Professor of Systematic Theology in Drew Theological Seminary (Methodist). Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. 236 pages, 5½×7¾. Price, \$2.00.

The Modernists will not like certain sections of this book. *The Christian Century* says: "This is a great book, greatly written,— and greatly needed. Liberal Christians will find it hard to believe this. They still have in their mouths the bad taste of *A Christian Manifesto*, which was hailed with glee by the foes of spiritual freedom. They are through with Lewis. But here Lewis goes Christian again, and with a will." The reviewer himself does not like certain things in the book. "There is still too generous an adherence to the shibboleths and slogans of Fundamentalism. . . . Lewis is all the while injecting phrases that seem to be concessions to the reactionaries. And his judgments on occasion are petulant. 'Is it that they (the Modernists) want the old terms dropped because they have ceased to believe what the old terms represent? (P. 111.)'" Indeed, Lewis deals roughly with the radical Modernists. He charges them with dishonesty. He goes on to say on page 111: "When they say that the old terms can no longer be made meaningful, is it that they do not want them to be made meaningful? Is it that, when they propose the creation of a new framework for Christianity, what they really have in mind is a radical change in what the framework is designed to support?" He tells them plainly that their new framework for Christianity covers the ruin of all Christianity. "There are numerous definitions of God current today which reduce Him to a condition of complete helplessness so far as any direct influence on either things or men is concerned. In such a philosophy there is no place for

a chosen people; no place for specific divine revelation, . . . and certainly, therefore, no place for such concepts as those of the supernatural, divine mercy, incarnation, miracle, atonement, reconciliation, and the like. A philosophy which makes these preclusions is typically 'modern.' It can be presented with a great show of plausibility. . . . It can make large use of the magic terms evolutionism, rationalism, organicism. But such a philosophy and the Christian faith cannot live together in the same world; at least they cannot live together in the same mind." (P. 120.) Lewis declares war against radical Modernism, a war to the death. "We gain nothing," he goes on to say, "by blinking the fact that Christianity not merely is a religion in the narrow sense of spiritual life and experience but also, as has been said repeatedly, involves definite beliefs about God, about the world, about man, about the course of events—and with any view which challenges or denies these beliefs Christianity can make no peace."

Going to the root of the matter, Dr. Lewis points out that the religious philosophy of Liberalism is based on the alleged self-sufficiency of man. The thoroughgoing Liberal has no need of a divine Savior. Lewis does well to tell these men: "No man can ever be a Christian in any proper sense who is not willing to believe some truths about himself which are a flat contradiction of his self-sufficiency in respect of both mind and will. . . . 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged.' It is difficult for the modern man to agree to this. He would be the arbiter of his own destiny, the master of his own fate, the captain of his own soul. He would determine for himself what is true and what is not true. . . . What we have to face is the fact that it has also crept into the Church. Well might we pray for another Jeremiah to lift up his voice against the grievous hurt of the daughter of God's people, as the cry is heard, 'Peace, Peace,' when there is no peace. Or perhaps we would better pray that God would give to His Church in our day another Luther, who would point to the one ground on which the Church can securely stand, and bid it stand there confident and unafraid, 'amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.' But all is not well with the Church, and it is not well because the Church has too often forgotten the rock whence it was hewn and the pit whence it was digged." (P. 126 ff.)

Adam "wished rather to be self-sufficient." Like him, the moderns have adopted the motto "To thyself be—sufficient." (P. 126.) "This supposition of human self-sufficiency is a leading item in the modern creed" (p. 23), and the inevitable result is that they deny the basic truth of Christianity, salvation through the

work of Christ, the Son of God. That is the charge Lewis raises against the radical Modernist. "It leads him to wave aside as a piece of speculation borrowed from Alexandrian philosophy that most profound and overwhelming statement of the fourth gospel: 'The Word was with God. . . . And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.' . . . Naturalism is antithetical to every distinctive element of the Christian faith. Yet there are many people associated with the Church who do not seem to realize this. In so far as they believe in Jesus Christ, it is as one of the great teachers which the race has from time to time produced." (P. 127 ff.) All is not well with the Church, and it is not well because these moderns are telling it to forget the rock whence it was hewn and the pit whence it was digged.

Forget the old doctrine of salvation through faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ and save yourself through your ethical aspirations and accomplishments. The Modernists are telling the Church that the essence of Christianity is the ethical teaching of Jesus. Lewis is telling them: "Christianity is not primarily an ethic, although it carries with it an ethic incomparable and revolutionary." (P. 55.) He will have nothing to do with this gross form of autosoterism preached by the extreme Liberals. All is wrong with the church that heeds their voice. — We can understand why "the liberal Christians have a bad taste in their mouths" after reading *A Christian Manifesto* and *The Faith We Declare*.

Certain points in Dr. Lewis's charge against Liberalism are of special significance to us, too. They treat of dangers confronting us, too. One point concerns the business of the Church, which is the preaching of the Gospel. We are not going to turn the Gospel into an ethical code, as the Liberals have done; but if we should make social rehabilitation the goal of the Church's work or even if we should make ethical betterment or the works of charity the chief business of the Church, we would ultimately arrive in the liberal camp. Our readers will know what we have in mind when they study these pronouncements of Dr. Lewis: "All is not well with the Church, and it is not well because the Church has too often forgotten the rock whence it was hewn. . . . In so far as they believe in the Church, it is as a society of men of good will, an institution with a useful social function to discharge, an agency for promoting mutual understanding and for keeping men mindful of the higher things of life. Much of the weakness of the modern Church is to be traced to this source." (P. 132 ff.) Because of "those who have reduced Christianity to a social and economic theory . . . and see in the Church nothing but an instrument for the propagation of humanitarian, social, and economic theories, . . . the Church itself today is in grave danger of defining the content

of its message in a way that makes it a matter of indifference that Christ should have lived and suffered and died and risen again. If the Church has nothing to talk about except what it could find in the Hebrew prophets and elsewhere in the Old Testament, then let us lay aside the New Testament except in so far as it may be an interesting commentary on the Old, and let us transform our churches into synagogues." (Pp. 19, 194.) We are certainly still preaching the living Christ, but what is happening in the liberal churches contains an earnest warning to us: "The Church languishes today because it has exchanged the role of Mary for the role of Martha; it has turned its eyes away from the living Christ and has become 'busy about many things.'" (P. 98.)

Another point: Dr. Lewis scourges the Liberals for proclaiming the self-sufficiency of reason in spiritual matters. We of the Lutheran Church have always denounced rationalism. But those Lutherans who attempt to harmonize seemingly contradictory teachings of the Bible, modifying certain statements of the Bible in the interest of a rational compromise, and those of us who think we must vindicate the teachings of the Bible before the forum of reason and logic, need to be told by Dr. Lewis: "The Church has languished when it has surrendered or modified or compromised these truths under the pressure of rationalism." (P. 98.) "What books have you ever read which were more uninspiring, more deadly in their effects, than the books in which the Christian faith was 'reduced'—(the word is well-chosen!)—to the dimensions of an impeccable rationality?" (P. 230.) But dare we in our teaching, in repeating the statements of Scripture, fly in the face of logic? "In actual fact no man lives by logic, but many claim to do so. The claim always gives them an excuse for refusing what they do not want to be true." (That's the root of the matter!) "The two-plus-two-equals-four attitude to life is remarkable chiefly for the areas in which it is not operative! One can appreciate the impatience of Dostoevski, which led him to exclaim: 'I spit on the philosophy that cannot see beyond "two plus two equals four." . . . There are ways to truth other than the way of logic.'" (P. 24.)¹⁾ "It may not be syllogistic truth, and it

1) Luther speaks in a similar strain. He asks us not to pay any attention to reason when it ridicules the Christian teachings on the two-plus-two-equals-four basis. "Es lautet zu laecherlich in Ohren und geht nicht in die Vernunft. Ja, es soll auch nicht darein gehen, sondern so dazu sagen: Wenn ich das Wort hoere lauten als von oben herab, so glaube ich's; ob ich's wohl nicht kann fassen und nicht verstehen, noch in meinen Kopf will, wie ich das kann fassen, dass zwei und funfe sind sieben, mit der Vernunft, und lass mich niemand anders weisen; noch wenn er oben herab sagte, nein, sondern es sind achte, so sollte ich's glauben wider meine Vernunft und Fuehlen. . . . Also sollst du auch hier tun. Ob's gleich die Vernunft nicht kann leiden,

may not be scientific truth, but it is truth none the less." (P. 232.) "Are not the most important truths those which in their very nature are extralogical?" (P. 26.) "The Christian certitudes are faith certitudes, not logical certitudes." (P. 14.) Why, then, should we be perturbed when the Scripture teachings present logical difficulties? And why should we waste our time in trying to *demonstrate* the Bible-truths? "The voice of the Church is prophetic. Its task is to announce, not to debate; to take its stand on the revealed will and Word of God and declare to the world what that will and Word are." (P. 45.) "Your business as a preacher is not to prove Christian truth by much elaborate ratiocination, but to allow it through full testimony to demonstrate the reality of its saving power. . . . Your business is not to force the Christian faith into a logical strait-jacket and to reject what will not submit to the treatment, but to declare it in living wholeness. Do not forget that the stone which the logic-choppers reject because it is too hard for their shaping-tools, is still the head-stone of the corner in the building of faith." (P. 227.) If you once begin to ask regarding any Bible teaching: "Is this logical?" and then chop and change it in order to give it the correct logical form, you are a Liberal, a rationalist, in embryo, and this is what Lewis has to say to the full-grown Liberals: "You cannot eliminate all 'mystery' from the Christian faith; or if you do, what is left is no longer a living thing glowing with emotional warmth, but a few ethical principles, barren of feeling, icily regular, and as impotent to move men to great achievement as a mouse to move the Himalayas. If you want to 'understand' everything about the Christian faith before you seek to make it known, you will never make it known. If you proclaim only those parts of it that you do 'understand,' you will find that the places on which you keep silence are the places that are most important." (P. 226.) And he tells them this: "Evangelical Protestantism has been much more willing to ask how much it must give up in order to remain intellectually respectable." (P. 170.) "The Church has languished when it has surrendered or modified or compromised these truths under the pressure of rationalism." (Page 98.)

dass zwei Personen ein Gott sind. Das lautet eben, als wenn ich sagte, zwei sind nicht zwei, sondern zwei sind eins. Da hast du das Wort und Vernunft widereinander; noch soll sie da die Meisterschaft legen und kein Richter noch Doctor werden, sondern das Huetlein abtun und sagen: Zwei sind eins, ob ich's schon nicht sehe noch verstehe, sondern ich glaube es. Warum? Um des willen, der es oben herab gesagt hat." (St. L., X, p. 1095.) Luther at Marburg: "Vernunft will ich nicht hoeren. Fleischliche Beweise, geometrische Argumente verwerfe ich gaenzlich. . . . Gott ist ueber alle Mathematik, und die Worte Gottes sind staunend anzubeten und zu tun. . . . Gott ist ueber alle Mathematik; Christus kann seinen Leib ohne Ort wie an einen Ort halten." (W. Koehler, *Das Marburger Religionsgespraech*, p. 9 ff.)

Yes, *The Faith We Declare* leaves a bad taste in the mouths of the Liberals. Lewis is demanding that they surrender their citadel, the authority of reason.

Will they do so? Not because of Lewis's attack. He is attacking them with a blunted sword. In fact, when they get the full import of the challenge and carefully study *The Faith We Declare*, they will say: Lewis is really one of us. The liberal reviewer declares: "This is a great book, greatly written—and greatly needed."

In an article appearing in the *Christian Century* of June 14 Dr. Lewis says: "My break with the futilities of Modernism and my acceptance of Christianity in its Biblical and historical self-presentation, were finally made definite by the publication of *Rethinking Missions*. I became convinced that what was proposed there was a virtual abandonment of the Christian Gospel." He makes the further remark: "In 1934 I published *A Christian Manifesto*. The book was hardly off the press before a minister of the Church, well known for his radicalism, called on me and denounced me vigorously for having 'flopped back into Fundamentalism.'" Is Dr. Lewis a Fundamentalist? Does he teach the absolute inerrancy of Holy Scripture and salvation through the vicarious atonement of Jesus Christ, the Son of God? *The Faith We Declare* shows definitely that he has not flopped back into Fundamentalism. It definitely puts him into the class of the Liberals.

The Liberals will have no fault to find with the view he takes of Holy Scripture. He does not believe that the Bible is the Word of God. He uses the Barthian phrase: "The Bible is the *bearer* to men of the Word of God." (P. 191.) He declares: "Without a doubt our fathers came very close to Bibliolatry: they could make no distinction between the Word of God and the words of men by which that Word was given." (P. 49.) "Out of the New Testament in its entirety we can gather the Word of God which is at the same time the Christian faith." (P. 151.) The Liberals, the most radical Liberals, will be ready to sit down with Lewis in a friendly conference and help him to "gather" out of the New Testament what they will agree to call the "Word of God." Lewis is not able to wield the sharp sword "Thus saith the Lord," for "Thus saith Scripture" in his conflict with the Liberals. Giving up the absolute, the sole authority of Scripture, his dealings with them result in a sorry Appeasement. He has become helpless. All certainty is lost if the verbal inspiration of Scripture is surrendered. This is how Lewis speaks of inspiration: "Perhaps we even begin to see what the Church has meant in ascribing divine 'inspiration' to that activity of the Christian mind by which these great insights were reached." (P. 89.) He does not like the term "inspiration."

He uses quotation-marks, and he is justified in doing so because it would be a bad term to describe "an activity of the Christian mind." If you ask Lewis whether he believes in verbal inspiration, he declares: "One may read in amazement of the controversies connected with . . . the theory of Scripture. 'A plague on all your doctrines!' is on occasion an understandable enough exclamation." (P. 146.) Study these utterances: "The synoptic gospels themselves were the *product of a Church* which in its turn was the creation of a Christ-centered faith" (p. 75); "Jesus' words in the first place may have been spoken to promiscuous crowds; but later they were *recaptured from memory* by the Church and made a basis of Christian teaching" (p. 66); "Even if it be true that John 'took liberties with the history,' he took the liberties only that he might make the history more real, more vivid, more compelling" (p. 83); "Without a doubt one may discount the narratives [of the Resurrection]" (p. 80); "Some of the descriptions [in the Revelation of John] are in keeping with normal Jewish apocalyptic; others, for example that of the woman clothed with the sun in the twelfth chapter, are almost certainly derived from the widely spread primitive pagan myth of the recurring conflict between light and darkness" (p. 155), and you will see why the Liberals do not fear the challenge and the sword of Lewis. They will tell him: "You are one of us. You are willing to give up parts of the Bible, and you cannot blame us for giving up parts of the Bible." Lewis charges the Liberals with this: "In so far as they believe in the Bible, it is as a record of a segment of human history with a certain religious significance." (P. 134.) The Liberals answer by quoting Lewis: "The Christian does not approach God through a record, not even through a record so incomparable as that of the New Testament" (p. 93), and ask: Is your "record" of more real worth than our "record"? The liberal *Christian Century* has no fault to find with Lewis's book on this score. "It is a great book."

And now, the absolute authority of the Bible being removed, the Liberals and Lewis sit down in a friendly conference and discuss whether there is anything certain, stable, and abiding in the Christian teaching. Dr. Lewis is very agreeable. On the development of doctrine and related subjects he says: "The faith may never be expected to assume a final form." (P. 150.) It is all right with him, if "a man may not want to say it in just the way in which Paul said it." (P. 104.) He is liberal enough to say: "One may read in amazement of the controversies connected with the Person of Christ or with the Atonement or with the Eucharist or with Baptism or with the theory of Scripture. 'A plague on all your doctrines!' is on occasion an understandable enough exclamation." (P. 146.)

The chapter *Continuity through Change* begins with the question "How much can Christianity be changed and still remain the same?" The answer is that in "matters peripheral and evanescent" change is permissible and demanded, but that which "is central," that "which is centered in Jesus Christ," is "continuous, ageless." "You have the amplest intellectual freedom within the limits of the fundamental loyalty: 'The Word [the Logos] became flesh.'" (P. 214 f.) In this connection he speaks of "certain archaic wrappings" from which the Gospel must be set free in order to modernize it (p. 182), of "new intellectual molds" for the old truths, called for by the "multiplicity of new insights" (p. 224), warns against "the rehabilitation of traditional formulations" (p. 223), and tells us that "nobody expects the Christian minister to be a phonograph repeating ancient shibboleths and phrases no longer intelligible" (p. 180). The Liberals do not find it hard to deal with Lewis. Why, he speaks their very language — "new intellectual molds," etc. — and is ready to surrender one Christian doctrine after the other under the stress of "the multiplicity of new insights." He indeed insists that the essentials of the Gospel must remain unchanged, but he has reduced the "essentials" to a very small compass. If one should ask him whether the teaching of the Church on the Personal Union, Justification by Faith (he mentions "justification by faith" on page 72 and quotes "He died for our sins and rose again for our justification" on page 76, but nowhere defines it), Baptism, the Lord's Supper, the nature of the Resurrection, etc., may be changed, he would exclaim: "A plague on all your doctrines."²⁾

By the way, what does Lewis teach on the Virgin Birth? Did he flop back into Fundamentalism? "Whatever difficulties may be raised on critical and historical grounds as to the infancy narratives, and in particular on scientific and philosophic grounds as to the Virgin Birth, it is certain that these narratives and beliefs reflect a deep-seated conviction on the part of the early Church concerning the Lord," etc. (P. 87.) On *scientific and philosophical* grounds? Lewis has forgotten his brave words "I spit on the philosophy that cannot see beyond 'Two plus two equals four.'" The Liberals are pleased. Another point has been yielded.

2) In view of Dr. Lewis's readiness to surrender a great part of the Christian teaching, a great many fundamental doctrines, the following stout words lose much of their force: "The preacher always preaches today, but what he preaches today must be that which was true yesterday and will be true forever. . . . 'Give us a sure word!' This is the cry which we daily hear. 'We are lost in a jungle; lead us to the highway. Tell us, is there nowhere one word which stands above all other words, no truth of rocklike quality which nothing can move? Must we always flounder, must we always be experimenters, must we always build up only to tear down?'" (P. 188 f.)

You cannot please the Liberals more than by making the distinction between essentials and peripheral doctrines for the purpose of declaring the latter to be evanescent and subject to change. When the Liberals hear the conservatives say: "Fundamentals are binding, but not the non-fundamentals," they know the battle is going their way.

The most extreme Liberals and Lewis get along well together. Lewis is liberal enough to declare that the *Apology* of Robert Barclay "retains the substance of the Christian faith" (p.164); liberal enough to say: "Only occasionally does God give to His Church an Ephesian seer to write the fourth gospel or . . . a Thomas Aquinas to write a *Summa Theologiae* . . .; or shall we even say a Horace Bushnell to write a *Vicarious Sacrifice*?" (P.174.) Lewis stands for the liberal freedom of thought. "Neo-orthodoxy is neither an impertinence nor an idle dream. It is an imperative necessity for the Church, especially for that part of the Church in which freedom of thought is still encouraged." (P.173.) And so he takes up arms for the heretics. "Even so-called 'heresy' is a part of the total testimony. 'The Church's debt to heresy' is not merely a clever phrase; it represents an actual fact. Heresy is nearly always an overemphasis of a neglected truth." (P.164.) Deal gently with Robert Barclay, for instance, for though his *Apology* is "an extreme reaction against ecclesiasticism, sacerdotalism, and sacramentalism," it nevertheless "retains the substance of the Christian faith" (same page). And the Creed of Chalcedon "rejected definitely four other possible explanations [of Jesus Christ's relation to God], each one of which had a following in the Church on the part of men of unquestioned loyalty to Christ" (p.162). All is not well in the Church, and it is not well because of the men who, like Lewis, setting out to war against Liberalism, make concessions to Liberalism.

Of course, Lewis is a unionist. Every Liberal is a unionist, for Liberalism and indifferentism are one, — and every unionist is infected with the spirit of Liberalism. A typical statement: "Although there is only one Christian center, there are many radii proceeding from that center. Although there is only one rock upon which the Christian man may build, the superstructure arising from it will be now of one kind, now of another. The sacramentarian and the creedalist and the ethicist and the socialist and the mystic and the evangelical may all alike claim that in Jesus Christ is the inspiration of their faith, the source of their hope, the motive of their service, and the ground of that confidence with which they face the uncertainties of life's journey." (P.102.) The Church is in an evil way when its leaders are willing to condone the least departure from the teaching of Christ, the teaching of Scripture.

But in his dealings with the radical Liberals Lewis is at any rate standing out for "the Christian center"? Matters peripheral "are evanescent," but that "which is centered in Jesus Christ is continuous"; that cannot be surrendered. What does Lewis teach regarding the central doctrine of Christianity, salvation through the vicarious atonement of Jesus Christ, the Son of God? His presentation of "the essentials" is hazy enough to suit even radical Liberals. They are not going to quarrel with him on this score. Is Jesus Christ the Son of God, very God of very God? He says so often enough. "Very God appears as very man!" (P. 85.) He teaches the "preexistence of the Lord in the glory of the Father" (p. 88). "The Only-begotten of the Father" (p. 84). But then he also uses expressions like these: "It is Jesus whom John [in the fourth gospel] wants us to see, a Jesus incomparable, a Jesus inexplicable, a Jesus about whom nothing too great can be said, a Jesus to whom the very power and majesty of God Himself may be ascribed." (P. 82.) Again: "If Christ be the means of that reconciliation, it can be only because He is in Himself such a One as may still most fitly be described as at once Son of God and Son of Man." (P. 107.) Here one might fitly ask whether a doubt as to the real deity of Christ is expressed by the use of the auxiliary "may," which is at best an unhappy term to express reality. And what does this mean? "I believe that Jesus Christ was the eternal Word of God become flesh, that is to say, that in Him we are confronted with a self-revealing activity of God, which is unique in its character because its purpose is to redeem the world." (P. 218.) That is no longer merely hazy; it is a false definition of the godhead of Jesus. And this: "In Him, in Christ, we have the supreme and direct form of divine sacrificial saving activity. Here the strong hand of God has reached down into the confines of time as it reached nowhere else. This gives Jesus Christ a certain *apartness* from every other man. . . ." Thus "Christ grows to His stature as the eternal Son of the Father" (p. 215 f.). Can Lewis say nothing better for Christ than that He has "a certain *apartness* from every other man"?³⁾ Lewis says:

3) Lewis can do no better than Sydney Cave, who uses the term "very God and very man" and then explains the term thus: "He is the Christ, the Messiah in whom God's saving purpose for the world found full expression. He is our Lord, the Master of our lives, to whom we owe an obedience no man can claim. He is the Son of God, knowing God with a knowledge we can fully trust. He is the Word become flesh, God revealing Himself in human form. So we, too, may use the great words of the 'Nicene' Creed, He is very God and very man. . . . It is in Him that God reconciles the world unto Himself. God's glory has been seen in the face of Jesus Christ, the glory of the Father's holy love." (*What Shall We Say of Christ*, p. 241.) No better than Otto Justus Baab, who says that Jesus is the Son of God, and speaks of "the

"We can declare that a man living now, trained in the science of history, competent in the field of New Testament criticism, familiar with the processes of thought in the first Christian century, is still able to say, with complete sincerity, 'I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.' . . ." (P. 113.) He has told us that he does not believe in a *literal Virgin Birth*. That was only a peculiar mode of expressing something else. Does he believe that *Jesus is the Son of God* in the literal meaning of that term? — When he says: "Is it that they [the extreme Liberals] want the old terms dropped because they have ceased to believe what the old terms represent?" these men might answer: Are you willing to use the old terms, but in a sense different from what they originally carried?

Finally, what of the doctrine of the vicarious atonement? The term "vicarious" is never used by Lewis. That, in itself, might mean nothing, but he nowhere uses an exact synonym and equivalent. He uses the terms "redemption," "reconciliation," and even the term "satisfaction" and declares: "The Son of God came among men to suffer and die on their behalf." (P. 67.) But this does not mean what the Christian Church has always understood by these terms. "One sometimes turns away, dismayed that holy things should be so crudely treated, loaded down with gross materialism, concealed rather than illuminated by impossible metaphors and incredible analogies. 'Infinite merit was concealed in every drop of blood that was shed on Calvary.' . . . One reads expressions such as these, and it is not difficult to understand why many people look upon Christianity as 'a religion of blood and bargain.'" (P. 95.) How, then, was the atonement made and the reconciliation effected? "The Christian faith is the declaration of God's will to redeem; but to redeem how? To redeem by personally thrusting Himself into the very inwardness of the corrupted stream of human life to establish there a power of purification." (P. 91.) Such expressions are not merely hazy, but they deny outright what Scripture teaches concerning vicarious satisfaction. The atonement taught by Lewis hinges upon the transformation that takes place in man as a result of Christ's work. "It is a suffering that engenders redeeming power. It means contact with sin, but it is a contact which makes possible sin's destruction." (P. 93.) "You are to declare that in the Incarnation, God has made known once and

very divinity of Christ" but adds: "We mean, then, that Jesus is so uniquely and concretely related to the power we call God that His divinity is beyond dispute," and: "But this is quite different from ascribing deity to Jesus." (*Jesus Christ, Our Lord*, p. 41, 57.) No better than H. L. Willett, who, writing in the Question Box of the *Christian Century*, calls Jesus the "Only-begotten," meaning: "Unique, unusual, rare, wonderful, unexampled, preeminent, well-pleasing, beloved."

for always the steadiness of God's hatred of sin and the steadiness of His love for man. You are to declare the possibility of a relationship being established between God, a creative God of holy love, and sinful men. You are to declare a persistent but conditioned activity of the Divine Spirit which is concerned to bear upon the hearts and consciences of men the impact of what God in Christ has done on their behalf." (P. 219.) Lewis has learned much of his theology from Ritschl and from the other fathers of Liberalism. He makes, in spite of his strong words to the contrary, ethics the basis of Christianity. Rejecting the teaching that "infinite merit was contained in every drop of blood that was shed on Calvary," he proceeds to proclaim "the greatest truths ever offered to the minds of men. It is the truth of 'God manifest in the flesh for us men and for our salvation.' It is the truth that the source of the power that *transforms and lifts*" (italics ours) "is outside of our race but has poured this power into our race and has made it available to every individual. . . . Just this is what was created by the Incarnation." (P. 95 f.) Atonement is brought about by the transformation of man. Is there a Liberal who will not agree with such a teaching? ⁴⁾

The liberal reviewer does not like certain things in *The Faith We Declare*. "There is still too generous an adherence to the shibboleths and slogans of Fundamentalism." But seeing in what sense Lewis uses these ancient shibboleths, he is, after all, quite satisfied with Lewis's theology. "This is a great book."⁵⁾

TH. ENGELDER

4) Dr. F. Pieper: "Kirn teaches: 'We are compelled to make the transformation of man a factor in the work of the atonement.' That means: We are compelled to divest the Christian teaching of its Christian character and to transform it into a Romish-pagan doctrine of ethics or of works. That holds good with regard to all the theories of the atonement with which our age would supplant the *satisfactio vicaria*." (*Chr. Dog.*, II, p. 430.) — We add a few statements from Dr. Lewis's book *Great Christian Teachings*, published in 1933, which show that we have understood him correctly: atonement hinges on man's transformation. "To love and to live and to think and to serve as Christ loved and lived and thought and served — that is to attain the Christian salvation." — The Father permitted Jesus to die as a criminal "not because there had to be satisfaction of His justice before He could forgive men, not because He demanded a sacrifice as a condition of His being gracious." — "The cross saves us only as we share it. . . . Jesus Christ made our salvation possible, but we have to convert the possibility into actuality." (See *C. T. M.*, IV, p. 757 f.)

5) After the above was written, the September issue of the *Journal of the Am. Luth. Conf.* came to hand. It reprints an article from the *Lutheran Herald* and gives it the heading "Hopeful — with Reservations." Here are a few excerpts from the article: "A *Christian Manifesto* was Dr. Lewis's confession of his errors in this respect in the past and a declaration of faith in the old fundamentals of the Christian religion. . . . In the *Christian Century*, issue of June 14, Dr. Lewis speaks of 'my break with the futilities of Modernism and my acceptance of Chris-