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John Theodore Mueller

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Miscellanea

Christianity and Crisis Theology

By PROF. CORNELIUS VAN TIL*

In recent times it has become quite clear that Christianity and Modernism are two mutually exclusive religions. But a third party has appeared upon the scene. It is the *Theology of Crisis*. Its chief exponents, Karl Barth and Emil Brunner, were trained as Modernists. But they have been very critical of Modernism and its great theologians, Schleiermacher and Ritschl. Moreover, they claim the paternity of Luther and Calvin. Their language is frequently that of historic Protestantism. As a result, many orthodox Christians seem to think that the old Gospel has found a new and powerful expression through their mouths. We believe that this is not the case. Without in the least presuming to judge the hearts of its exponents, we shall offer evidence to prove that the *Theology of Crisis* is but a new form of Modernism.

The Bible

Barth and Brunner refer to their position as being a *Theology of the Word*. But both Barth and Brunner accept the results of negative or "higher" criticism. Both oppose the orthodox doctrine of the words of Scripture as being identical with revelation. The words of Scripture are said to become the words of God, but not until they are accepted as such. Thus the *Theology of the Word* is after all but a theology of experience, and not a theology of the Word at all. On this basic point we are back to the position of the old Modernism. (Cf. Barth: *Kirchliche Dogmatik* I, 2, p. 590; I, 1, p. 105; also Brunner: *Revelation and Reason*.)

Revelation

Barth and Brunner also speak of their position as a *Theology of Revelation*. But they oppose the orthodox idea of a *finished* revelation. According to them revelation is always an *act*. And

* Crisis Theology, or Barthianism, in both its more conservative (Barth) and its more liberal unfolding (Brunner), is still arresting the attention of thousands of students the world over. This deep interest in Barthianism induced Professor Van Til to publish a brief study of Crisis Theology in *Cheng Yen Pao*, the official magazine of the China Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. With the permission of that paper the *Presbyterian Guardian* (March 10, 1948) presented the article to its readers. Dr. Van Til is professor of Apologetics at Westminster Theological Seminary, which represents the Machen group of confessing Presbyterians, and author of the widely read volume *The New Modernism*, which is an extended appraisal of Barthianism. While there are many points in the teachings of Barth and Brunner which because of their obscurity and ambiguity of expressions may be interpreted in various ways, we believe that on the whole Dr. Van Til's appraisal of the theology of the two men is essentially correct.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

[618]

it is never an act until it is *interaction* between God and man. And to take his part in this interaction, man must become more than man. Through the Holy Spirit man's act of accepting revelation becomes God's act of receiving His own Word. God can be known by God only. Thus we are back to the modernist idea of God coming to self-consciousness in man, and man coming to self-consciousness in God. (Barth: *K. D.*, I, 1, pp. 313 ff.; Brunner: *Die Mystik und das Wort*, and *Revelation and Reason*.)

God

Barth and Brunner speak much of the transcendent God. Yet they reject the orthodox doctrine of God. For them God is identical with His revelation. And as already noted, revelation is a process of interaction of God with man made divine. Barth argues that God's transcendence means His freedom to become wholly identical with man and to take man up into complete identification with Himself. For Brunner God is virtually identical with what he calls the divine-human encounter. Both are vigorously opposed to the orthodox idea of God's self-contained intertrinitarian existence. Both virtually identify God's intertrinitarian activity with His works of creation, providence, and redemption. Thus we are back to the God of Schleiermacher and Ritschl, a god made in the image of man. (Barth: *K. D.* I, chapter on "The Freedom of God"; Brunner: *Revelation and Reason*.)

Man

Barth and Brunner speak of man as having been created in the image of God and as having fallen into sin. But these ideas, they say, are not to be taken as orthodoxy takes them. The Genesis account is not to be taken as historical narrative. There was no historical Adam. There was no paradise. There was no fall. The notion of a state of perfection is rather an ideal for the future. It intimates God's intention for man, and therefore by revelation as interaction is man's ideal for himself. But God's intention may be thwarted by man; which by the process of interaction means that man never lives up to his own ideal. So we are back again to the level of Modernism. In the evolutionary process man forms for himself high ideals, but because of the situation of which he is a part, he never fully lives up to them. (Barth: *K. D.* III, 1; Brunner: *The Mediator*, p. 146; *Man in Revolt*, pp. 85 f.)

Christ

Barth and Brunner want to interpret all things Christologically. And their Christ, they contend, is the Christ of the Scriptures. This claim, too, must be denied. Their Christ is not the Christ of the historic Christian creeds. He stands for the process of interaction between God and man. God is nothing but what He is toward man in Christ, and man is nothing but what he is in Christ toward God. Identification with Christ is God's ideal for man and,

through revelation as interaction, Christ is man's ideal for himself. He is the true Adam. So we are led back again to the old modernist notion of a Christ who is naught but an idealized man. A Christ who is a mixture of a God who does not exist apart from Him, and a man who does not exist apart from Him is not the Christ of Scripture. (Barth: *K. D. I, 2*; Brunner: *The Mediator*.)

Salvation

Barth and Brunner speak much of God's sovereign grace. By the sound of the words they use, one would even think that they were Calvinists. For to them God's election is the source of man's salvation. But election, they say, must be understood Christologically. It is therefore a process. Creation itself is taken up into this process of election. A man does not really exist except in so far as he exists in Christ. Self-consciousness presupposes Christ-consciousness. All men are reprobate, but they are reprobate in Christ. Judas, says Barth, "is not against Jesus" (*K. D. III, 1, p. 508*). He is not wholly for Jesus. Neither is any one else. All men are elect; they are elect as reprobate (*idem, p. 526*). Judas represents the principle of evil that is found in all men, and Peter represents the ideal perfection in Christ that is found in all men. Christ unites the reprobate and the elect; both are destined for participation in God's glory (*K. D. II, 2, p. 460*; for Brunner cp. *Wahrheit als Begegnung, p. 52*). Thus the sovereign grace of the Crisis theologians has been made quite acceptable to the natural man. It is but the auto-soterism of the old Modernism in a new dress.

The Church

Barth and Brunner speak of election as the heart of the Church. But as they reject the orthodox doctrine of election, so also they reject the orthodox doctrine of the Church. For them the Church is identical with the process of election, as both are identical with the process which they call Christ. All men are involved in this process. As vessels of wrath they are outside, but as vessels of mercy they are inside the Church. As Scripture itself is full of contradictory systems and is but a witness to the truth, so no creed can be anything but an arrow pointing toward the truth. Thus we are back again to the level of the old Modernism with its notion of the Church as a local improvement association. (Barth: *K. D. II, 2*; Brunner: *The Divine Imperative, p. 300*; *Man in Revolt, p. 78*.)

The Commandment

Barth and Brunner speak of interpreting ethics Christologically. There is no God apart from Christ as there is no man apart from Christ. In Christ the commanding God and obedient man have coalesced. There is no other good but Christ, and there are no other duties but those to Christ. Christ is the standard of good and evil. The disobedient disobey in Christ. God's judgment upon them is reconciliation in Christ. Men cannot know that they have

sinned except in the light that they are forgiven in Christ; self-consciousness is identical with Christ-consciousness. Thus ethics is identical with the process of election. As Esau all men disobey, but as Jacobs all men obey in Christ. What God wills of us is the same as that which He wills for us and is doing within us. Thus we are back to the old Modernism according to which Christ is the impersonation of ideals which men have set for themselves in the course of the evolutionary process. (Barth: *K. D. III, 1*; Brunner: *The Divine Imperative.*)

The Last Things

Barth and Brunner deal constantly with the last things. But for them the last things have no connection with the calendar. They are not *pre* or *post* or *a* millennialists. There was no creation out of nothing. There was no historical Adam. God did not reveal Himself directly in nature and history. The virgin birth, the death, and the resurrection of Christ did not take place in history, but in superhistory. And superhistory is not measured by hours and days of ordinary history. There is no difference of date between the first and second coming of Christ. There is no difference of date between what Christ did, or rather *does*, for us and what He, through the Spirit, does within us. In Christ God has time for us; in Christ, He is buried with us, with all men. In Christ our time becomes God's time; we, all men, are risen with Him. All revelation events are aspects of the one great Resurrection Event, of which God and man are the two correlative aspects. Thus we have virtually returned to the old Modernism, which reduces historic Christianity to a monistic process philosophy. (Barth: *The Resurrection of the Dead.*)

Conclusion

Our conclusion must be that the gospel preached and taught by Barth and Brunner, though couched in orthodox-sounding terminology, is still virtually identical with the gospel of the old Modernism. It is an emasculated gospel, a gospel without God, without Christ, without grace, a gospel to the liking of the natural man, and withal a gospel of despair. It is a new Modernism more subtle and dangerous than the old.

A Vocabulary Study of "Ecclesia"

By R. T. DU BRAU

The thorough study of words contributes to the full proof of our ministry. It adds connotation to the denotation of any part of the sacred vocabulary. As to *ἐκκλησία*, it has been said one should banish from the mind all remembrance of its etymology. We disagree with such a categorical statement, for an examination of both etymology and the use of the word across the centuries and millennia will yield rich result in particular knowledge (*ἐπίγνωσις*) and appreciation of a given term.

Etymology. The origin of ἐκκλησία is simple enough. It obviously derives from ἐκ-κλητος, ἐκκαλέω, "call up" (as for service), or "call out" for a meeting. The root καλ is preserved in the Latin *CAL-endae*, in the Old High German *hal-on* (*Heil*), to hail, to call. Originally, ἐκ-κλησία was a calling-out of the people from their homes and cities, but such usage was soon superimposed upon the actual assembly of those thus called out.

Classical Use. The ancient Greeks, both on the Hellespont as well as in Graeca magna, employed ἐκκλησία in strict harmony with its derivation. It was their common designation for the lawful assembly in a free Greek city of all those possessing the rights of citizenship for the transaction of public business. That the "assembled" were sometimes "called out" more tumultuously than legally, as in Syracuse, does not alter the significance of the word. Trench remarks that they were summoned out of the entire population with the exception of aliens or those who had forfeited their civil rights. The constitutional assembly at Athens was called an ἐκκλησία.

Thus ἐκκλησία became the common classic term for the *congregation* of the ἔκκληστοι assembled to transact the public affairs of a free state. It represented the body of free citizens called out by a herald (κῆρυξ). Euripides (*Orestes* 949; 408 B. C.) and Xenophon (*Hellenica* 2:4, 28; after 362 B. C.) employ οἱ ἐκκληστοι synonymously with ἐκκλησία. Thus the word comes to mean those "gathered together," *concio*, more rarely: the place of the gathering, *concionis locus*.

Transfer to the LXX. The Ptolemaean translation renders the Old Testament terms *'edah* and *qahal* (to call) more or less indiscriminately by συναγωγή or ἐκκλησία. In the Pentateuch only Deuteronomy employs ἐκκλησία where it signifies the general assembly of the people of Israel during the wilderness wanderings. It answers to the Hebrew *qahal* constantly in Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Thus LXX uses ἐκκλησία for the *congregation* of the people of Israel, whether summoned or met for a definite purpose (e. g., 1 Kings 8:65, at the dedication of Solomon's temple) or the community of Israel collectively as a congregation. Elsewhere the word designates the people themselves, especially in their relation to God, with little reference to assembling. Neh. 13:1, where the phrase is ἐκκλησία Θεοῦ, is a striking example. So also in Deut. 23:2, 3, 4, 9; 1 Chron. 28:8; Micah 2:5. *Qahal* is ἐκκλησία in Ps. 22:23, 26; 35:18; 40:10; 89:6; 107:32; 149:1; Job 30:28; Lam. 1:10; Prov. 5:14; and Joel 2:16.

The New Testament Usage. Schmoller (*Handkonkordanz zum Griechischen Neuen Testament*) lists 112 occurrences of ἐκκλησία in the New Testament. The term does not occur at all in Mark, Luke, John, 1 and 2 John, 2 Timothy, Titus, and Jude.

Here we find ἐκκλησία applying to the *congregation* of God's people, Acts 7:38. The Christian congregation in the midst of Israel now is simply designated ἐκκλησία, without being confounded

with the Jewish community, the συναγωγή (Acts 2:47, etc.). In the New Testament, then, the word has taken a further advance. It still appears in the sense of "assembly" at times, true, as in 1 Cor. 11:18, but usually the idea is that of a body or company of believers, whether assembled or not. The ἐκκλησίαι called and gathered by God now are grouped collectively under the term ἐκκλησία, 1 Cor. 10:32; 12:28; Col. 1:18, etc. It is now the entire congregation of all who are called by and unto Christ, who are in His fellowship, the Church.

Here are to be noted the phrases ἐκκλησία τοῦ Θεοῦ, Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 10:32; 11:22; 15:9; Gal. 1:13; 1 Tim. 3:5, 15. Also: σῶμα Χριστοῦ, Col. 1:18, 24; Eph. 1:22, 23, and ἡ ἐκκλησία ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, Eph. 3:21; 5:23, 24. As a matter of fact, in the Epistle to the Ephesians ἐκκλησία denotes exclusively the entire Church.

Primarily it must be remembered, ἐκκλησία served to denote the local church. The term signifies the New Testament churches as confined to particular places, even in "houses," ἡ κατ' οἶκον ἐκκλησία, 1 Cor. 16:19, i. e., smaller congregations worshiping in individual homes. We have thus the ἐκκλησία in Thessalonica, in Asia, in Rome, etc. Every group in which the character of the Church as a whole is repeated is an ἐκκλησία and with reference to the composition of these churches they are termed ἐκκλησίαι τῶν ἐθνῶν, Rom. 16:4; ἐκκλησίαις τῶν ἁγίων, 1 Cor. 14:33.

It is of interest to note that Luke well remembers the classic derivation of the term in Acts 19:39, ἐν τῇ ἐνόμῳ ἐκκλησία ἐπιλυθήσεται. The additional ἔννομος, elsewhere κυρία, denotes the regular in opposition to the special assembly (σύγκλητος), Acts 19:32.

Documentary Penetration. The word ἐκκλησία manifested a strange force in the post-Apostolic world. Like many other Greek technical terms, it became untranslatable. Although the Latin language was in no wise poor in expressions for "assembly" (*contio, comitia*, et al.), there seems to have been a feeling that no Latin term exactly covered the Greek ἐκκλησία. Thus the word was simply transcribed and Latinized, a misfortune which ultimately resulted in the usurpation of the term *Ecclesia* by the Roman Catholic Church for its own exclusive use. The Vulgate thus consistently spells *Ecclesia* with a capital E.

But to continue with our study of ἐκκλησία in some post-New Testament documents: Already the younger Pliny (62—114 A. D.) uses a Latinized *ecclesia* in his letter to Trajan (Book 10, 110): "The attorney of the City of Amisus demanded of my client Julius Piso some 40,000 denarii, which sum had been given him by the city upon approval of the council and assembly (*bule et ecclesia consentiente*), referring to thy edict, Emperor and Lord, which now forbid such gifts. . . ." (Translation my own.)

Still remembered is that discovery of a striking inscription of the year 104 A. D. from the theater in Ephesus, that same theater so well known to every reader from Acts 19. It appears that a prominent Roman official, one Vibius Salutaris, dedicated a silver shrine

to Diana (cp. Acts 19:24) and some statuettes to be placed upon a pedestal at each ἐκκλησία in the theater! (ἵνα τίθῃται κατ' ἐκκλησίαν ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ [sic!] ἐπὶ τῶν βάσεων) — yes, τῷ θεάτρῳ is actually written like that in the original! Here we have at the same time a confirmation of Acts 19:32, 41, viz., that those ἐκκλησίαι were held in the theater at Ephesus. Better yet: the inscription is bilingual, and the Latin parallel text reads: "ita ut omni ecclesia supra bases ponerentur." Here, then, is a simple transliteration of the Greek word. (Austrian Archaeological Institute, 1899.)

In allusion to the Temple the Church is sometimes compared to a building, Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:10; Eph. 2:21; 1 Pet. 2:5; but ἐκκλησία is nowhere unequivocally used in the New Testament for the building in which any particular Christian congregation met. As the word *church* (κυριακὸν δῶμα) was originally applied to the building of Christian worship, and then extended to the ἐκκλησία itself; so, conversely, ἐκκλησία came to be transferred from the congregation to the building in the post-New Testament era.

A late third-century document, P. Oxyr. 43, a papyrus of 295 A. D., gives a list of watchmen who were distributed over the chief streets and public buildings in Oxyrrhynchus. On the verso, col. I, line 10, and col. III, line 19, we find a list of public buildings on the "beats" of watchmen Apphous Theon, and Amos Parammon. Among those buildings figure the temples of Serapis, Isis, and Caesar. Also two churches lay on their beat, the North Church, ὄμμη τῆ βορινῆ ἐκκλησία, and the South Church, ὄμμη τῆ νοτιῆ ἐκκλησία.

However, except for the transliterations into the Romance and Celtic languages, the overwhelming use of ἐκκλησία is for the Christian community, the chosen Church of God. So St. Epiphanius (315—402 A. D.) writes in the later 4th century somewhat redundantly of the Ebionites: συναγωγὴν δὲ οὗτοι καλοῦσιν τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ οὐχὶ ἐκκλησίαν. (*Adv. Haeres.* II, 18.)

We adduce one more document and from the time when the clouds of the Mohammedan Conquest were already gathering in the Eastern world. It is P. Oxyr. 136, the contract of a farm manager, now in the Gizeh Museum, and dated A. D. 583. It is the contract between the heirs of Flavius Apion and Serenus, a deacon, by the terms of which Serenus agrees to become overseer of certain estates for one year: "Serenus, deacon of the Holy Church (ἁγίας ἐκκλησίας), son of the sainted Apollos." . . .

The Translations. Quite correctly Harnack (*Die Mission*) called the choice of the word ἐκκλησία for the Christian Church a master stroke. Not only from Acts, but also from numerous inscriptions in the ancient synagogues we learn that the organized Hellenistic congregation of converted Jews called itself still a συναγωγή. Also in the very early Christian *usus loquendi* this term is used to designate the congregation of Christians, but only very rarely. "The word is soon smothered by those innumerable cases where ἐκκλησία is used; a term of far greater cosmopolitan

range and color, a term far more comprehensible to the city dweller in the Hellenist East." (Deissmann.)

Thus ἐκκλησία victoriously penetrated Latin and other languages across the centuries and continents: *Ecclesia*, *église*, *iglesia*, *chiesa*, *eglwys* (Welsh). The Gothic translation of Bishop Ulfilas has *aikklesjo*.

It is most reassuring to note the care with which modern translators of the New Testament distinguished between ἐκκλησία as "assembly" and as "church." Thus, to cite but one example, Acts 19:39 is translated "assembly" (A. V., B. R. V., A. R. V., Tischendorf, Douai, Goodspeed). We know that Luther with an almost inspired insight into the text wrote *Gemeinde*. The American vernacular with its uncanny instinct for pointed expression speaks of "going to meeting." In French we read *assemblée*; the Italian has *assemblea*; Spanish *asamblea*; Danish *Forsamling*; and the Swedish even *folkförsamlingen*. The modern Greek has correctly: *συνελεύσει*. In all these cases the Vulgate can offer only *ecclesia*.

Homiletic Observation. It is a beautiful and noteworthy feature that the elements *καλεῖν* and *κηρύσσειν* constitute some of the characteristics of the ἐκκλησία. They were terms employed in classic Greek to summon an assembly of free citizens of a free state for the orderly transaction of the business of such community. The New Testament usage inspires these terms with a new force. The members of its ἐκκλησία are called into fellowship and faith by the heralding of the Gospel. They are as the called no longer strangers and aliens, but fellow citizens in the assembly of God; the *κηρύσσειν* also becomes the proclaiming and preaching of God's Word, which, in turn, calls, gathers, and enlightens the free citizens in the free estate of the redeemed, free in the liberty wherewith Christ has liberated them. In fine, God has called His people in Christ out of this world into His Church to be about the Father's business while it is day.

Steps Taken in 1867 to Compose the Differences between Wisconsin and Missouri*

By J. P. MEYER

III

At the bottom of the differences that disturbed the relation between members of the Missouri Synod and of the Wisconsin Synod in the early years of these two church bodies was the suspicion that Wisconsin had unionistic leanings, because it accepted help from unionistic mission societies in Germany. The Missouri Synod fathers frowned on all forms of unionism. Wisconsin had, as pointed out before, insisted from the very beginning on a Lutheran ordination vow, had received only Lutheran men into

* This article continues the series of historical essays which Prof. J. P. Meyer is at present publishing in the *Northwestern Lutheran*.

its service from the unionistic societies, and had assured itself of the Lutheranism of the men sent over by submitting them to a colloquy. Our fathers, however, felt not only under obligation to the societies for the help which they had sent, but they accepted their help with genuine gratitude.

Yet if Wisconsin was to do its work as a Lutheran Church in this country in truth, the original condition of unclarity must not be maintained indefinitely. The trumpet must give a clear tone. In 1867 the young synod took the decisive step of clarifying its position on Unionism—at the risk of losing the friendship and support of the German societies. We have already studied both the majority and the minority committee report as recorded in the proceedings of the 1867 convention. But that was not the end. We hear echoes rumbling still in subsequent synodical reports.

How intense was the struggle, and how deeply the hearts of our fathers were moved, when they took their decisive stand in 1867, we may feel from some of the throbbing paragraphs in President Bading's report to the Synod in 1868.

"Another important experience of the past synodical year, one fraught with grave consequences, pertains to the relation of the Synod toward the united societies within the Prussian State Church. Because of our connection with friends in the Union we have for years been charged by staunch Lutherans with secret unionistic leanings, our faithfulness to our Confession has been questioned, we have been branded as un-Lutheran, and our work has been opposed in our fields as though it were that of an un-Lutheran body.

"Let us concede frankly and honestly that, although many of the charges raised against us were exaggerated, unfair, malicious, not according to love which corrects; yet some things really touched a sore spot. Our attitude, it is true, was for some time an unstable one: on the one hand, the open confession of all the symbolical books of the Lutheran Church, as the Synod voiced it practically every year; on the other hand, our connection with societies within the United Church who consider the Union as beneficial and God-pleasing.

"Our love, I may say, on the one hand, toward our dear Church and her Confessions, on the other hand, our gratitude toward friends who helped us in our need and by sending us valuable workers made us what we are, often placed our Synod in a light which neither friend nor foe understood. Especially the feeling of gratitude kept our Synod back from giving full expression openly to its inner confessional firmness which was present all the while, and from rejecting unequivocally the charges of unionistic leanings by means of a clear testimony against both a doctrinal and an administrative Union.

"These vacillations, brethren, must come to an end. The Epistle to the Hebrews says: *It is a good thing that the heart be established by grace.* The various trends in the Church today

demand firmness of us; the honor of our Synod, the importance of the matter, truth and honesty, compel us, the Church of God, to tell both friend and foe where we stand in the movements of the day, in the heated battle between Unionism and Lutheranism, in the union endeavors of the synods of our land."

Still quoting from President Bading's report of 1868, we find the following description of the tactics employed by Unionists: "Their motto indeed is peace and love; but while preachers of unbelief, teachers of false and pernicious doctrine, antichrists, men steeped in fleshmindedness and worldmindedness, enjoy full freedom, toleration, and peace under their rule, yet they wage relentless war against the Lutheran Church, and in their memorials denounce faithful Lutherans as fanatics. . . .

"In times like these, of a great and common danger, also our Synod of Wisconsin is duty bound to draw the sword, to let its trumpet sound a clear note, to break its former considerate silence, and to declare that we deeply deplore the introduction of the Union with its total disregard for existing differences and for the ruin of our dear Church; that we pray God to avert from us His stern judgment and not to deal with us as we well deserve by our manifold unfaithfulness and indifference.

"We hope that no one will construe our action as ingratitude. We simply cannot do otherwise, and we believe that love and gratitude may well have a place in the heart together with a confession of the truth and a testimony against unrighteousness."

Still quoting from President Bading's report. "Our relation of many years' standing toward the societies of Langenberg and Berlin has undergone a radical change. Our resolutions of last year against the Union have enraged the *Neue Ev. Kirchenzeitung*, have aroused feelings of grief and indignation within the two societies, and have caused the Ev. Consistory to issue statements against several of our members which deeply affect their relation to our Synod.

"Since both societies have written to me requesting further explanation and discussion, but since I could not take any other stand than the one voiced by the Synod, both societies have addressed official memorials to our Synod. They will be presented in due time, and demand an answer from our body."

A committee to whom this matter was referred reported as follows:

"As a result of the protest issued by our previous convention against the Union both mission societies have declared their relation to our Synod to be abrogated. The letters containing this declaration demand a thorough answer, not merely according to common custom, but because of several points contained in them.

"Your Committee recommends

a) that we authorize and instruct the honorable President to answer the letters;

b) that, while acknowledging that the united societies were justified from their standpoint to break off relations with the Wisconsin Synod, we express once more to both societies our heartfelt thanks for the valuable help which they have rendered us."

In 1869 President Bading reported that because of our stand toward the Union we were branded as "fanatics" by some who also compared us with the traitor Judas, while in Lutheran circles real joy was voiced because Wisconsin had definitely broken with the Union.

In 1863 President Bading had gone to Europe to solicit financial support for our College in Watertown, then to be erected. His presidential report in 1869 contains the following paragraph:

"As a result of our separation from, and our position to, the Union an official document was received from the Consistory in Berlin informing the Synod that the Consistory with full approval of the government decided to withhold from us the interest on the monies collected in Prussia, and to apply this meanwhile to the training and support of volunteers for service in German Evangelical churches and schools of congregations in North America that are in agreement with the Union."— If my information is correct, these monies were paid from that time on regularly to the German Evangelical Synod of North America up to World War I. (J. P. M.)

Our Synod adopted the following committee report:

"that our Synod lays no claim to the collection gathered for us in the Prussian State Church, and instructs our President to inform the Ev. Consistory in Berlin to that effect."

Let us thank God for the victory of confessionalism which He granted to our fathers. Let us cherish the blessings which He thereby bestowed on our Synod. J. P. M.

The Pastor and His Bible

In his address on "The Pastor and Ways of Using the Bible" Dr. James V. Claypool of the American Bible Society submits some striking paragraphs which he has permitted us to quote and which we here reprint.

". . . To understand and to utter the message of the Bible is the unique function of the Christian minister. It has priority in his call into the ministry. The Bible is the charter, the constitution, the source book of the Christian's faith. To know it, to be thoroughly familiar with it, to understand what it has to say for its time, for our time and for all time, is the indispensable equipment of the true preacher. The Bible is God calling to man. 'The minister needs to know something about many books and everything about One Book.' He may get along without many things but not without his Bible. Ministers are considered specialists in the Bible. Should the attorney be better acquainted with his lawbook, or the editorial writer with current events, or the stockbroker with his ticker and ratings, or the military leader

with his tactics and strategy than the minister with his Bible? Would that the man of God were more deeply interested in the Bible than anything else — recovering the Scriptures as THE Book for private devotion, preaching on Bible passages as well as verse texts, and meeting with his people for group study of the Bible.

"The authentic note of Christian preaching is the reproduction of the Bible message. The Bible is both ancient and modern. Its message is essentially timeless, but it is timely because of its spiritual relevance to the problems of the day. Only the Bible is able to deal adequately with modern problems. Bible preaching never runs dry or grows thin. The Bible is indeed a well of living water from which the preacher may fill his sermons full to overflowing. There are never Sundays enough in the year for the Bible truths that clamor for utterance — no, not in a lifetime.

"Sermons will not be repetitious if a minister dips into the well of unfamiliar as well as familiar books of the Bible. It is like discovering a new lode in a rich mine. The consistent and persistent study of the Bible will bring fruitful results to his other activities. The minister will experience the statement that 'The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation' and that he does 'receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ.' When a minister (or any other person) reads the Bible earnestly, he hears God speaking to his heart and his conscience.

"Sermons on Bible books are likely to be among those longest and most gratefully remembered by the congregation. If we could put Bible truth into our hearts of our boys and girls, young men and young women, we shall be doing our best for them religiously. A minister who can arouse an attachment for the Bible and develop continued interest in it is feeding the souls of his people and being true to his mission. 'Let the Bible speak for itself. Let God through the Bible speak directly to you. Nothing but your best is good enough to bring to Bible reading.'"

Expository Preaching

According to *Bibliotheca Sacra*, in the number of October—December, 1947, Dallas Theological Seminary is laying much stress on expository preaching. It is the faculty of that seminary which now edits the journal mentioned. An editorial states that the seminary discovered that the standard three-year course of theology did not provide the required time for the work attempted, that is, the effort to make the future graduates adept in expository preaching. "Therefore, with some fear and trembling lest the students would not be drawn to a four-year course, the step was taken," that is, the step of adding an extra year; "and it should be said to the credit of the serious-minded young men of this country that there has been no occasion to advertise for students from that time until now. The young men saw the value of

the extra year and have welcomed and sustained it." In speaking of training for expository preaching the editorial says: "What then is needed if men are to be trained in exposition? First, they must come to know the Book itself. What can be learned in classroom study does not take the place of personal devotional study gained through years of attention to it. When study ceases, usefulness ceases. But personal study cannot be pursued with profit without a method and the background which the seminary alone can give and which serves as a guide in interpretation. Second, knowledge of original languages is essential to real progress in the knowledge of the Bible. It is only in recent years that lower ideals for ministerial service have appeared. Short courses of study have been encouraged and men graduated from these have been led to believe that they are prepared to preach provided they have zeal and claim a special degree of spiritual power. In the days of rapid growth of our country, such men have been ordained and placed in charge of churches when better trained men were not available. Recognizing the importance of the knowledge of original languages, the Dallas Theological Seminary requires an extended study in these languages which is wholly unknown in existing theological seminary courses, except it be for specializing on the part of some students." [Evidently the writer of the editorial has no knowledge of the work that Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, and other Lutheran seminaries are endeavoring to do. A.] "It was determined from the beginning that enough of the original languages should be required to prepare students for continued personal study throughout their lives with a method by which they might hope to become exegetes in their own right. In the Greek department the student who secures the standard Master's degree is required to translate the entire New Testament. The same strong emphasis is placed upon the Hebrew also. In like manner, the entire Bible is studied book by book, both for analysis and for spiritual content. Systematic theology has been and is the ground work of the knowledge of God's revelation — a theology which is based wholly on the Bible. This with the courses in the Bible itself and exegetical studies in the original languages is calculated to give the student a thorough introduction to God's Word. Such an introduction requires at least four years as prescribed in the Dallas Theological Seminary." The emphasis which the author places on the study of the Bible, and at that in the original languages, deserves approval and should encourage us conservative Lutherans to continue in the path that our theological schools have traveled for centuries. A.

