

Women and the Church

A considerable section of this month's issue is devoted to the rôle of women in the Church.

This should surprise no one since women who, like the poor, have always been and will always be with us have in recent times become News in a very big way. They form, in our day, a topic of such actuality that a journal like ours can hardly afford to ignore them.

Figuring prominently among the new demands being made by enlightened women of our time is the demand for meaningful participation in the life of the Church. Churchwomen are becoming increasingly restive and this restiveness is basically caused by the realisation that, in spite of their numerical superiority, they have in the past been fobbed off with the shortest end of the stick: the rôle of women in the Church has been just as circumscribed and limited as in secular society.

Males and especially male clergy have up to the present dominated not only the life but in fact the

very thinking of the Church. Men have been granted the freedom to be other than sexual beings whereas women have been identified by their sexuality in the first place.

This bisexual view of humanity which has held sway in the Church for so long is now being determinedly challenged and it is already becoming obvious that this challenge will ultimately entail a radical reorientation of Christian thought and practice. A whole new range of neglected human values is being discovered, as it were for the first time, and the impact of this discovery upon the very life of the Church could well prove to be nothing less than revolutionary.

We have invited a number of women to contribute their thoughts on this subject to this issue. For we, too, believe that the time has come for the Church to pay more than lip service to the Biblical statement of principle that for us who are the children of God by faith in Christ there is neither male nor female, for we are all one in Christ Jesus.

Nogeens: Godsdiens en Politiek

BY ETLIKE GELEENTHEDE is dit ons reeds verwyt dat ons in ons artikels en redaksionele kommentaar te veel klem laat val op die politiek, en vermoedelik dan te min op die stigtelik godsdiensstige.

Ons redaksionele beleid is egter nog deurgaans gevestig op die oortuiging dat juis die ware godsdiens ons dwing om kennis te neem van die politiek; dat die navolging van Christus ook, en dikwels by uitstek, 'n ernstige en onontwykbare politieke verantwoordelikheid behels.

By nadere ondersoek blyk dit gewoonlik dat diegene wat so bedag is daarop om tog die godsdiens ten alle koste te vrywaar teen die „besmetting“ van die politiek, of heeltemal onbybels te werk gaan in hul wêreldvreemde benadering tot die godsdiens of 'n

heimlike vrees koester dat hul eie politieke beskouinge nie die toets van 'n werklik deeglike ondersoek in die lig van die bybelse moraliteit sal deurstaan nie.

Godsdiens is, volgens die opdrag van Christus self, ook naastediens, en die ware politiek gaan wesenlik om naastediens. Dáárom durf geen Christen hom die luukse veroorloof om hom met skoongewaste Pilatushande te distansieer van die politiek nie. Dáárom ook bied ons geen verskoning aan vir die plasing van prof. A.M. Hugo se kwellende dog uiters stimulerende artikel oor die Christelike geloof en die politiek in hierdie uitgawe nie. Dit verdien om deur elke, veral stemgeregtigde, Christen in hierdie land met ernstige aandag gelees en oorpeins te word.

Black Theology

After centuries of subservience to the white (technically superior) man, the black man has experienced psychological, spiritual, economic and cultural deprivation. He experiences himself as inferior and his dignity - discovered over-against the white man (he is a non-white) - is impaired.

The Movement of Black Power, originated in the U.S.A. is a move by blacks to discover themselves. Separatism is seen as a temporary necessity to develop a power equal to the whites - economic power, cultural power, spiritual power - so that the hand of

friendship may be received and extended from a position of parity.

Black Theology is seen as the theological area of liberation (from oppression, and to dignity) that has its counterpart in the cultural, economic and political areas.

In our Letters column specific reference is made to this subject in a way that will make many of our readers pause for thought. We ourselves shall undoubtedly have to return to this subject again and again in future issues.