

PRO

VERITATE

CHRISTELIKE MAANDBLAAD VIR SUIDELIKE AFRIKA

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Die kerk van Christus in Afrika

Dit was my besondere voorreg om een van die twee afgevaardigdes van die algemene sinode van die Kerk van Midde-Afrika, Presbiteriaans te wees na die konferensie van Kerke in Afrika te Kampala. Vir die afgelope twintig jaar het ek sendingwerk gedoen in Sentraal-Afrika. Op my kleurbaadjie se sak pryk die wapen van die Sending-Instituut, 'n swart Afrika en daar onder die leuse: „Afrika vir Christus".

Die tema van die Kampala konferensie was: „Vryheid en Eenheid in Christus". Die groot kenteken agter op die verhoog was 'n hand wat 'n brandende fakkelt vashou aan die voet van die kruis, met Afrika as agtergrond. Maar dit was nie 'n „donker" Afrika nie maar „Verligte" Afrika.

Wanbegrip oor Afrika

Ons is nog so geneig om aan Afrika te dink as die donker onbekende vasteland van honderd jaar gelede. Die „donker-Afrika" tydperk is verby. Op intellektuele en sosiale gebied is Afrika besig om met versnelde pas voort te beur en haar agterstand in te haal. Op geestelike gebied lyk dit soms asof die voorpunt van Afrika reeds besig is om by die westerse christendom verby te steek.

Te Kampala het die Kerke in Afrika saam raad gehou, terwyl 'n paar weke later die staatshoofde van die onafhanklike state van Afrika in Addis Abeba sou vergader. As daar nie 'n A.A.C.C. te Kampala was nie sou die Addis Konferensie baie meer kommer gebaar het. Te Kampala het ons gesien hoe die Kerk v. d. Here Jesus in Afrika haar verantwoordelikheid in 'n tyd soos hierdie aanvaar het. Die kerklike leiers wat daar saam was, is tenvolle bewus van alles wat in Afrika aangaan en daarom het hulle saamgekom om raad te hou. Dit was nie 'n sending-konferensie nie, maar 'n konferensie van Kerke.

Dit het duidelik gevlyk dat die fakkelt van die Evangelie wat deur die sendelinge in Afrika ingedra is nou deur die inheemse kerke oorgeneem is, en ons kan God nooit genoeg dank daaroor nie. Ek het maar gering gevoel tussen hierdie mense, wat so tenvolle bewus is van hul roeping; hulle verstaan die situasie en hul aanvaar die verantwoordelikheid. Afrika moet vir Christus gewen word en hulle kyk nie na ander om die werk vir hulle te doen nie, hulle aanvaar dit dat die opdrag van die Here Jesus nou na hulle kom om die Evangelie in Afrika te verkondig.

Ek het daar gestaan soos 'n toeskouer en het gedink aan die swart Afrika op my kleurbaadjie se sak met die leuse daaronder: „Afrika vir Christus". Die vraag het by my opgekom: wat het ek gedoen om Afrika vir Christus te wen? Was my leuse nie dikwels: „Laat ons skyn vir Jesus, jy in jou klein hoekie en ek in myne" nie? Was my sendingbeleid nie: „Ek sal doen

wat ek kan; gee na my vermoë; ek sal bid vir die werk; maar moet tog nie meer van my verwag nie; bly jy in jou klein hoekie en ek in myne en laat my toe om my God in vrede te aanbid."

Daar te Kampala moes ek my idee van die Afrika waarvoor ek bid, in herinnering neem. Dis nie meer donker Afrika nie, Afrika is nie net die hutbewoners daar in die bosse nie, daar is 'n nuwe Afrika. Wat is my gesindheid teenoor hierdie Afrika wat vir Christus gewen moet word? Hoe wonderlik is die genade van God nie, dat temspite van al ons gebreke Hy ons nog-

tans gebruik het in hierdie land, en dat in hierdie tyd so 'n Konferensie van Kerke in Afrika gehou kon word.

Nasionale selfstandigheid en Christelike verantwoordelikheid

Al die referate is gelewer deur Banotes, teoloë, politieke leiers, opvoedkundiges en ander. Daar is nie geredekawel oor kerklike of leerstellige verskille nie, die tydsomstandigheid laat dit nie toe nie, die taak is te groot. Die toesprake was ook nie gekenmerk deur 'n toon van sagmoedigheid en onderworpenheid en lojaliteit soos ek sou verkieks het nie. Dit was woorde wat kom uit harte wat moes deurloop onder die opbruisende gevoel van nasionalisme. Die verlede het nog 'n groot rol gespeel in hul gedagtegang. Maar temidde van al die rumoer was daar bale duidelik die tekens van 'n nuwe dag wat aangebreek het in die verkondiging van die Evangelie in Afrika.

Die een groot vraag wat hul besig gehou het was, hoe kan die kerk die probleme aanpak wat hul verskyning maak na die politieke orkaan oor Afrika getrek het. Hierdie nuwe omstandigheid moet beskou word as 'n geleentheid om Christus te verkondig in Afrika.

Soos Alexander die Grote deur sy wêreldoorheersing Grieks die taal van die beskaafde wêrelde gemaak het en

so die draer van die Blye-boodskap; en soos God Rome gebruik het om die wêreld voor te berei vir die verspreiding van die Evangelie, so het die boodskap van verlossing ook na Afrika gekom op die golwe van kolonialisme. En nou is die windes van verandering weer die voorloper van 'n nuwe tydperk in die geskiedenis van die Kerk van Christus in Afrika. Daarom is hierdie konferensie van soveel betekenis, en sy tema veelseggend: „Vryheid en Eenheid in Christus".

Hoekom word die klem gelê op Vryheid? Dis sekerlik nie maar net 'n weerklink van die politieke slagspreuk nie. Die Kerk van Christus, om haar roeping te vervul in hierdie nuwe Afrika, moet ook vry wees, vry van alle mensgemaakte bande, vry om Jesus Christus te volg, vry om te bou op Gods woord en gelei te word deur sy Gees.

Die nuwe situasie vir die sending

Hierdie konferensie het my oortuig dat die Koninkryk van Christus in Afrika gevestig is en sal groei tot eer van God. Dat die swartman van Afrika beslis die beste sendeling vir Afrika is. Die tyd van die sendeling soos hy in die afgelope eeu bekend was, is baie vinnig aan die verdwyn. Dit wil nie sê dat sen-

• Na bladsy 2, eerste kolom

Prof. A. S. Geyser

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

1. The name "Church"

The English word "Church" is not found in the Bible, and it is not related to the original name for the Christian Community. In this meaning it only originated in the second century. Like "Kirche" in German and "Kerk" in Hollands it is really an adjective derived from the Greek, "kuriake" which means, "belonging to the Lord".

Yet, secondary as it is, it fully expresses the essence of that Christian Community and recapitulates the first mention of that Community by Jesus when he instituted the Christian Church: According to Matth. 16 : 18 Jesus at that occasion said, "I will build my church". The sequence of words in the Greek passage emphasizes "my". And that emphatic "my" is expressed in 'kuriake' or 'church', which means "the Lord's own". Of course, the Greek New Testament does not employ the word "kuriake" in this passage, but "ekklesia".

A remarkable feature of "church" is that the name already implies the oneness and the uniqueness of this Community which belongs to the Lord, as well as its freedom. The Lord's own cannot be but one, since the Lord is one and unique. It is universal since the Lord is universal Lord. In turn universality implies the freedom of the Church: that which belongs to the supreme Lord of the Universe cannot be subservient or servile to anything in creation. It is the exclusive property, and the exclusive instrument of ser-

vice of the Lord himself. Its very name, "church", demands that the church remain free from all temporal powers. The moment the church willingly or unwillingly subjects itself to any power other than its Lord, it ceases to be "church", even though it may continue to be a religious or semi-religious society. It then no longer belongs to the Lord but to this world.

For this reason the expression, "national church" is a misnomer and a contradiction in terminis. The church cannot belong to a nation or to nations. The very opposite is true: by virtue of the fact that it has been drawn from the nations to form a separate and universal community of the Lord, it can never be national, or even international. As it belongs to the Lord, it is supra-national and free from all national ties and political subservience.

Of course, while implying the freedom of the church, the name implies that the church should never seek to dominate — politically or otherwise. Being itself the dominium of God, it must not try to dominate or to domi-

neer anybody or anything. It was founded by the Lord to belong, not to own. It will be untrue to its Lord and itself if it strives after, or assume authority over temporal institutions.

The task of the Church is precisely to proclaim to all the world that the Lord rules universally. That which belongs to him, must not try, not even partially, to dethrone him. Right through history, from the times of Constantine the Church lost its freedom whenever it allowed itself to be tempted into a position of dominance. The ceasaro-papist struggles up to the time of the Reformation bear witness to the incalculable harm which the lust of power inflicted on the church. And the church of the reformation was not able to withstand the temptation to rule either. The ruling church ultimately always loses its freedom. A sabre-rattling and government-steering church belongs to Janus, not to Jesus. His church is in this world but not of this world.

The Church in Africa must bear in mind that the temptation to take short

• Continued overleaf

• *Vervolg van bladsy 1*

delinge nie meer nodig is nie en sal wees nie, nie, daar is nog ontsettend veel te doen. Maar die sendeling sal alleen dan kan werk met vrug as hy hom self gee aan Christus en sy Kerk en saam met die inheemse werkers en miskien onder hul toesig en leiding, die opdrag van die Meester uitvoer. Bantoe kerke onder leiding van blanke sendelinge wat waak oor die heil van die kerk het nie meer 'n plek in die denke van nuwe Afrika nie.

Ons is so selfversekerd van ons intellektuele, geestelike en sosiale meerwaardigheid dat ons nie kan sien dat die man van Afrika soms 'n dieper kennis het as ons van die verlossing deur Christus Jesus nie. Nou onlangs was hier vyf sendelinge in Nyasaland, ryf Kikuyus, gestuur deur die Presbiteriaanse Kerk van Oos-Afrika. As ek dink aan die invloed wat van hulle uitgegaan het na ons almal, en veral na ons as sendelinge, dan loof ek die Here vir die gawes wat hy aan hierdie mense gegee het om die boodskap van verlossing te bring.

In Oos-Afrika is daar 'n herlewingsbeweging aan die gang vir al meer as dertig jaar. Kerkleiers getuig van die wonderlike werking van Gods Gees in alle kerke.

Tydens 'n getuenisvergadering te Kampala het die Aartsbiskop van Uganda in nederigheid vertel wat Christus vir hom gedoen het deur die herlewing. In Nyeri, Kenya, het ek 'n diens bygewoon waar die vreugde op die gesigte van die mense my aangegryp het. En terwyl ek te Kampala na die uitstekende referate geluister het, wat getuig het van 'n diepgaande kennis by die sprekers van hul onderwerp en hul vasberadenheid opgemerk het en die diepe godsvrug by gewone lidmate gesien het, het ek al geringer gevoel in hierdie groot taak. Hoe durf ek nog in hoogmoed sê die Kerk in Afrika het my as leier nodig omdat die Kerk nog nie in staat is om vir homself te dink nie? Orals het ek my vasgeloop teen mense wat nie alleen in ywer en kennis my meerder is nie maar ook op geestelike gebied vir my kon help en my nader aan Christus kon bring. Voorwaar die Heilige Gees is werkzaam op 'n wonderlike manier in Afrika vandag. Sendingwerk soos ons dit vyf jaar gelede geken het in Nyasaland is reeds iets van die verlede. Die Kerke van Christus in Afrika het die fakkelt uit ons hand geneem en as ons wil kan ons saam trek anders sal ons in ons klein hoekie agter gelaat word.

Paulus het Tarsus verlaat en na die Areopagus gegaan en daar op die heuwel van die oorlogsgod die boodskap van die Vredelopers gebring. Hy het na Rome gegaan, die politieke hoofkwartier om daar die kruis van Christus te plant al was dit in die bekke van die leeu.

Die lig vanaf die Ooste?

Watter betekenis het my geloof en my kennis van die ware God vandag vir die mense van Afrika, die nuwe Afrika?

In my isolasie het my godsdiens kragteloos en betekenisloos geword vir die mense van Afrika. Afrika kyk vandag na die Ooste vir geestelike leiding, terwyl ons, die draers van die Evangelie ons tussen die mure van ons weelderige kerkgeboue toesluit. Een spreker het gesê: „The Church should not be made to feel that she can learn only from the older Churches of the West. The Church in Africa may learn just as much, if not more, from the younger Churches of the East.”

Toekomstige beurt 'n bydrae lewer aan die Kerk van Christus in die wêreld. Soos 'n spreker dit gestel het: „Something new, some thus-far undiscovered truth about the workings of God in man's life, in the community and the world.”

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THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

18 cf. I Peter 2 : 9, 10). He alone builds church, and it is his property, his province and his preserve, in accordance with the fact that God the Father had subjected everything to Him for the duration of time (Phil. 2 : 9-11; 1 Cor. 15 : 24-28).

The word for West and East

Furthermore, according to the passage in Matthew, the church is where people hear God himself (not flesh and blood had revealed this to Peter), and on the strength of what they hear confess Jesus as his promised Messiah. The church is therefore Christian and it is apostolic. After all, Peter confessed not only on his own behalf, but on that of all the disciples. The word of God is that which is mediated to the world and the Africa of today by the apostolic tradition as contained in the Bible.

For the Church in Africa this fact is of the greatest importance: it must not hear the message of men other than that of the Apostles. It must not hear God's voice as modulated by two millennia of Western logic or Eastern mystique. It must not take the superimposition for the picture.

It must take pains to avoid the quarrels, divisions and opposing dogma's of 2,000 years of church. It must from the outset jealously guard the unity and the freedom which is implicit in the origin of the Christian and apostolic church, which Jesus, and he alone builds on the confession that He is Messiah.

The extent and confines of the Church

Now, even as the basic and biblical meaning of *ekklesia* implies God's initiative in the formation of church, so it determines its extent and confines. The omnipotent and universal God makes Jesus the Christ universal Lord of the church (Acts 2 : 34-36; Phil 2 : 9-11). In line with his universality he speaks to man wherever man is, regardless

This paper was originally intended as an address to be delivered by prof. A. S. Geyser at Kampala. The court case in which he was involved made it impossible for him to attend. Pro Veritate is glad to publish this paper especially because of its message for the Church in all parts of Africa to-day.

of man's racial, national or cultural or social provenance, as St. Paul points out in Rom. 1-3. And this is the extent of the church: it is literally everywhere where people live. It is ecumenic as Jesus intended and foresaw it to be (Matth. 24 : 14).

The church in Africa must realize from the outset that it is not confined to Africa. Certainly, for the immediate future it will be primarily engaged in proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom to Africa. However, its scope, as that of all the universal church, is the whole inhabited world. No part of the church can indulge in inbreeding and closed circuit, not even for the purposes of indigenization. Its very indigenization means extension of the one Christian and apostolic Church into Africa, not secession from the rest of that church.

If the extent of the church is without limit, its duration is limited to the duration of time. The church will be as long as time will be, and no longer. Time and church ends with the return of the Lord. (Matth. 24 : 14, 16 : 18, and I Cor. 15 : 24-28.) At the end of time church will be absorbed completely in Kingdom, which simply means the complete and everlasting rule of God. For this reason the visionary of Rev. 21 : 24 does not see a temple, symbol of the church, in the new Jerusalem, which in turn symbolizes the Kingdom.

Its limited time has implications for the task of the church. It may never

stand at ease, because time is short. There is forever an undertone of urgency in what Jesus has to convey to his church; there is urgency in his command to the disciplesmissionaries in Matth. 10 : 5-23; urgency to in the similitude of the wise and foolish maidens; urgency in his command to go into the world and to make disciples of people from all nations; urgency, finally, in the picture of Christ standing at the door, knocking to be let in (Rev. 3 : 20). Two thousand years of Christianity without the Lord having returned, must not lull the church in Africa into inactivity. The church is always active. It has an immense task to accomplish in a limited and uncertain space of time.

Its task is to proclaim and to "call out of the world" all those whom God had called out. Ecclesia actually means "those who are called out to call in". It is after all an ecclesia apostolata. The church has to proclaim "the triumphs of him who called you out of the darkness into the marvellous light".

The kerugma of the Church

On the whole, modern New Testament scholarship, after C. H. Dodd's, *The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments*, like to refer to this task of the church as its "kerugma". The New Testament itself introduces this activity under a variety of descriptive verbs of much wider scope. They range in their meaning from "broadcasting" to "demonstrating publicly". For, the proclamation of the Gospel by the church is not confined to words. It is an attitude of life. It consists of acts and attitudes as much as of words, deeds to witness to the truth of God and to his revelation in the person of Jesus the Christ. Jesus himself proclaimed in words of teaching, but also in acts of salvation. His miracles were nothing but preaching in deeds. Like justice, the Gospel must not only be "done", it must also be seen to be done. However, the remarkable feature of the New Testament words for proclaiming is that they are mainly compositions of the same root which underlies "evangel". By the nuance of the Greek prefixes, dia-, kata-, apo-, eu- and ex- (Rom. 9 : 17; I Cor. 11 : 26; 14 : 25; 15 : 1 and I Peter 2 : 9) they are made the vehicles of the various means of the churches proclamation. Whereas Rom. 9 : 17 states that God "broadcasted" his name by what happened to the Pharao, I Cor. 11 : 26 teaches that the Holy Communion must "publicly exhibit" the meaning of Christ for humanity, and I Peter 2 : 9 calls on the church to serve as the "royal herald" of Christ the King.

Even if in the course of time the full scale and scope of the proclaiming of the Gospel had escaped the older part of the church, it is pre-eminently necessary that its fresh extension into Africa appreciate it anew. There is such a thing as a Christian way of life and the Church in Africa must foster and cultivate it.

There are two more expressions in the New Testament for the proclaiming task of the church which should be specially mentioned: Firstly, the prayer of Jesus to his Father. His prayer in John 17 : 11, 21, 22 is a command to his church: "That they be one". The unity on which he insists is not infended to be an end in itself, but as a witness to all the world. Unity is proclamation by act, the act of oneness. On account of the unity of the church the world must be convinced of the divine mission of Jesus, and of God's love for all mankind as revealed in the life and death of Jesus. These few verses of John 17 contain the whole essence of church, and conveys the whole glad tidings it has to proclaim and to exhibit.

Secondly the command in Matth. 28 : 18. The risen Lord commands the church-in-embryo surrounding him, to go into the world and to make all nations disciples. It is clear that these words are a construction ad sensum: not nations as a whole are to become disciples, but individuals from all the nations, are to constitute the

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Inleidingsartikel

BETER MENSELIKE VERHOUDINGE

By verskeie geleenthede het verantwoordelike persone uit ons samelewning die afgelope tyd die noodsaaklikheid van beter menslike verhoudinge tussen blank en nie-blank bepleit — 'n pleidooi wat ons heelhartig wil ondersteun. Daarteenoor bespeur ons 'n gevaaarlike gees van defaitisme wat by sommige blankes in Suid-Afrika posgevat het — 'n gees waarin geargumenteer word dat aangesien die nie-blankes van Afrika tog nie die blankes op hierdie vasteland wil hê nie, alle blankes nou hulle kragte moet saamsnoer en alle moontlike stappe moet neem om hulleself te beskerm en so hulle voortbestaan te verseker — desnoods met wapengeweld. Vanselfsprekend word aanvaar dat die meerderheid van nie-blankes in Suid-Afrika die uitsprake van dié Afrika-leiers wat die blanke wil uitban, ondersteun en dat dientengevolge ook so teenoor hulle opgetree moet word indien nodig.

Afgesien daarvan dat 'n gees van fatalisme of defaitisme by die Christen nie tuishoort nie omdat dit ongeloof in God verraal, is die veronderstelling waarvan uitgegaan word verkeerd omdat ons oortuig is (en hierdie oortuiging bevestig word deur verantwoordelike leidende nie-blankes) dat ten spyte van vernedering of verontregting wat die nie-blanke baikeer moet verduur, daar nog altyd 'n verbasende mate van goeie wil en 'n verlange tot beter samewerking by die groot meerderheid van die nie-blanke bevolking van Suid-Afrika aanwesig is. Dit wil nie sê dat die nie-blanke bevolking die apartheid-beleid goedkeur of ondersteun nie. Inteendeel — dit moet vir alle goeddingelike blankes steeds duideliker word dat al minder denkende nie-blankes die beleid vrywillig onderskryf of glo dat dit in die praktyk gaan werk. Maar ten spyte hiervan veroordeel die meerderheid van verantwoordelike nie-blankes alle vorms van sabotasie, geweld, bedreiging van lewes of vernietiging van eiendom as ongeoorloofde middelle om hulle doel te bereik. En dis by name die Christene onder die nie-blankes wat hier hulle stem duidelik laat hoor.

Die vraag is nou: watter roeping het die Kerk en die Christen in so 'n situasie? Watter stappe is hulle geroepe om te neem op grond van hulle Christelike belydenis en oortuiginge om spanninge te help verlig en om pynlik versteurde menseverhoudinge weer te herstel? Met volle erkenning van die godgegewe plig en die reg van die owerheid om as draer van die swaard die orde en wet te handhaaf, wil ons daarnaas beklemtoon die ewe noodsaaklike roeping van Kerk en Christen om die owerheid in sy taak te ondersteun sover dit enigsins moontlik is, maar om terselfdertyd in beginsel standpunt in te neem teen alle bepalinge of beskouinge wat die Bybelse eis van geregtigheid, naasteliefde en christelike verantwoordelikheid verkrag of aantas. Enigiemand wat homself op hoogte gestel het van die Stedelike Bantoeuwysingswet, die Groepsgebiedewet, of die wette insake Rasse-klassifikasie en Werkreservering sal kan bevestig watter onreg en ontwrigting die toepassing van hierdie wette vir duisende nie-blanke individue en gesinne meebring. Gewoonlik word ter verdediging die argument aangevoer dat hierdie wette noodsaaklik is om die voortbestaan van die blanke beskawing te verseker en dat die onreg (indien enige) net tydelik van aard is. Wie so redeneer, stel die eis van die Skrif ondergeskik en die elebelang voorop en vergeet dat die Skrif duidelik leer dat geen mens of gemeenskap of volk of samelewing kan voortbestaan behalwe deur die genade van God en tensy dit gegronde is op die riglyne van reg en geregtigheid soos geteken deur Gods Woord.

En dis hier waar die taak van die Kerk en van elke Christen inkom om steeds toe te sien en mee te werk dat die groots moontlike reg aan die groots moontlike getal inwoners van die land geskied. Waar dit nie gebeur nie, sal geen wetgewing wat die minderheid se belang verskans, op die lang duur slaag nie, sal geen militêre mag die drang van die meerderheid na reg kan stuit nie en sal die heersendes uiteindelik huis dit vernietig wat hulle wil behou.

Bowendien speel ons as Kerk en as Christene pragtig in die hande van kommuniste en die agitators wanneer ons swyg of weier om te getuig vir die noodsaaklikheid van die gedurige uitlewing van geregtigheid en naasteliefde volgens die eis van ons Meester omdat hulle dan poseer voor die massas as die „ware bevryders“ en die „kampvegters vir die regte van die mens“. Hoe gouer die Kerk dus die leiding neem om sy lidmate die eis van Gods Woord vir die verhouding van mens tot mens te verduidelik en elkeen op te roep tot gehoorsaamheid aan hierdie Woord, hoe gouer stel dit die owerheid in staat om alle grawende en vernederende bepalinge te wysig of te herroep wat die toets van Christelike geregtigheid nie kan deurstaan nie en wat niks anders as frustrasie, verbittering en vyandskap veroorsaak nie.

KAMPALA CONFERENCE

Message to the Churches in Africa

We, three hundred and forty delegates and participants in the historic inaugural assembly of the All Africa Conference of Churches in Kampala, Uganda, send you affectionate greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church.

We came here from one hundred churches in forty countries, and we found in the cathedral at Namirembe Hill, that we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members of one another. On the Lord's day of April 21, 1963, most of us, the Lord's people, gathered at the Lord's House. We passed the Peace, we ate the bread, we drank the wine, and when we came out of the Lord's House, we said to ourselves, "Why did we have to come across Africa to discover this thing?" Now we ask you all the same question. Why, in Capetown and Dakar, in Douala and Nairobi, on the plains and the rivers of this land, must we continue in those divisions which crucify the Lord until He comes?

Most of us here represented the Protestant Churches in Africa. One morning we shared in the ancient worship of the Orthodox Church of

This message of the A.A.C.C. to the churches in Africa was adopted at the close of the meeting and expresses the spirit and concern of this important gathering for the life of the Church.

Ethiopia, led by our brother delegates from the Orthodox Christians in Africa, and we said, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." We were further blessed by having among us three official Roman Catholic observers.

We are deeply grateful to God that at this assembly, the All Africa Conference of Churches has been duly constituted as a fellowship of consultation and co-operation within the wider fellowship of the universal church. What was conceived at Ibadan in 1958 has become a reality at Kampala in 1963. We are confident that God will use the All Africa Conference of Churches as an instrument of His purpose to quicken the life of His Church in Africa.

We have rejoiced that since Ibadan many new independent nations have been born in Africa. We identify our-

selves with the aspirations of our peoples towards development of dignity and a mature personality in Christ and we exhort the churches on this continent to participate wholeheartedly in the building of the African nation. We affirm that there is a larger freedom which God offers through His Son, so that men are liberated from the slavery of sin and fear, to live the rich, free, abundant life of the children of God.

This is the Good News. Here in Kampala at the tombs of the first Baganda Martyrs, we have been reminded of all the saints who died for His cause on this continent. We share the burden of all on this continent who suffer persecution, oppression, and injustice in any form and from whomsoever. We have been made conscious that the faithful proclamation of Christ as the only Saviour of the world may, even in our day, have to be tried out by a Cross and Martyrdom. But, remembering that "The servant is not greater than the Master", and aware of His abiding presence who said, "Behold, I am with you always" we do not flinch.

We came to Kampala to discuss many problems which face the churches and in the reports of this Conference we shall share with you all the things we talked about. We have learned from the Bible studies that it is only in the searching of the Scriptures that we can find Him, Who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. We beg you in the churches, as you face all your problems, to turn again to the study of the Holy Scriptures.

God is calling us to be His Church, the instrument of His Will in a new age with its problems and opportunities. We have glimpsed the possibility of renewed churches more sensitive through obedience to the leading of the Holy Spirit, more responsive to His bidding and awakened to concern for the needs of men, women and youth in the new Africa. He is faithful who calls us and can do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think. He will match us to the opportunities and responsibilities of our time.

May His grace be with you.
Amen.

EDITORIAL

THE CHURCH AND IMMIGRANTS

In a recent radio broadcast one of our Cabinet Ministers drew the attention of South Africans to the problems encountered by immigrants upon arrival in the country of their adoption and called upon the citizens of our country to give their active support in welcoming them in their new surrounding. Apart from the financial risk involved in emigrating to another country there are many other factors which play an important role in the process of adaptation e.g. the question of a possible new language, of new social customs and labour conditions, of a different educational system in the case of a family with schoolchildren and, as far as our country is concerned, of the complex situation of our race relations. Mr Trollip appealed to South Africans to do their duty in accepting them as fellow-countrymen and future citizens of South Africa.

We fully endorse and heartily support this appeal. The state can do much to assist newcomers in settling down as happy and contented citizens, but the task of extending to them a sincere friendship and of giving them a spiritual foothold is that of the church and the Christian community. And this means much more than just placing their names on the member list of a particular church. Where a real understanding has grown within a particular community of what Christian brotherhood and fellowship means, that community will do everything in their power to offer these newly arrived Christians as well as non-Christians a visible and enduring proof of their sincere desire to welcome them into their community and to assist them by all possible means to become an integral part of the Christian community.

Daar is nog tyd om ons verhoudinge reg te stel. En hierdie regstelling moet van albei kante — blank sowel as nie-blank — kom. Maar die tyd word kort — gevaaarlik kort. Elke Christen het in die saak 'n dure plig en elke Kerk 'n dure verantwoordelikheid. Mag God gee dat elkeen sy plig uitvoer voor dit te laat is.

In our rural areas, where people know one another much more intimately, it is easier to draw immigrants into the life of the community. In our urban areas, however, one of the obstacles in realizing this ideal is the lack of co-operation between the churches undertaking well-planned surveys of specific suburbs to ascertain where new immigrants have moved in and to divide these areas and families in such a way that each local church grants have moved in and to divide these areas and families in such a way that each local church gets its full share of responsibility in attending to the spiritual needs of our new neighbours. We presume that some churches and individual congregations have already done an admirable work in this respect but the church as a whole has not yet woken up to its great responsibility. As far as we could ascertain the Roman Catholic Church is being actively supported by its members to make contact with members of their faith who emigrate to our country but up till now there has been no united effort of all the other churches to unite in a worthwhile co-operative effort on behalf of our new arrivals. Here is one of the many levels where these churches can work in unison with great success.

Rev. James Lawson *

Freedom and Unity in Christ

— towards a renewed church in a new Africa

While we are gathered together here the thoughts and prayers of many Christians, more or less near in spirit, especially on this great continent of Africa, are with us. They are praying that this All Africa Conference of Churches may be a memorable experience for all those who are participating, and also that this Conference may show us, who constitute the Church of Jesus Christ in this land of Africa, the best way to accept a great responsibility, namely that of liberating peoples still plunged in the darkness of sin, and more and more to get them to bring about in a true way our vocation to the Universal One.

The historic event that we have just passed through the organization in a permanent manner of the All Africa Conference of Churches, this effort begun by the Churches to group themselves and to collaborate more readily, appears to me to be the great opportunity in our march towards Christian unity in this country. This is the way which blocks every sectarian spirit; to all those whose individualism and narrowness of spirit have led the Church into this state of its present division.

More than ever, at a time when everything changes so fast and so disconcertingly, the Church of Christ in this world owes to itself the necessity to be in the forefront of every evolution, to manifest the real liberty in Christ and our unity.

Liberty?

When we speak of liberty, generally, we make this mistake: we think of liberation from something and not of liberty in view of something.

In the dictionary Larousse, liberty is the "condition of a person who is not the property of a master". But we know that there is no worse slavery than that of not having a master. One is therefore a slave of his desires, of his very self, and the worst of tyrants is myself.

Danton, the soul of French national defense, said: "We are in the process of making free: man, family, land, conscience". "Liberty consists of being able to do anything which is not injurious to another". (Declaration of The Rights of Man). Therefore, it does not have the permission to do everything, the authorisation of anarchy: it presupposes the voluntary submission to the law.

When one wants to study that which the Bible says concerning liberty, one does not find there a systematic definition, but the Bible shows us free men and it is through these concrete cases that we are able to understand what is liberty. And for the Bible we can make the definition that "liberty is the condition of those who are the property of God". It is paradoxical. In Chapters 37 and 39 of Jeremiah, the prophet shows us that which is his own liberty: it is to be at the call and service of God. Before the hope and the false security of the people, Jeremiah proclaims: The Egyptian army will return to its country; and the Chaldean will come back to attack the city and to burn it. The more a man is a slave of God, the more he is free with regard to men and circumstances.

God has made of man his associate, his collaborator to the point that the psalmist is able to exclaim: "Thou hast made him little less than God, and dost crown him with glory and honour. Thou hast given him dominion over the works of Thy hands". (Ps. 8 : 5-6.)

Man has been made in the image of God. This means that man has been made in order to be like Jesus Christ. "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first born among many brethren". (Rom. 8 : 29). Christ is the image of the invisible God. It is He, who represents and reveals the Father. In Him the Father recognizes Himself. It is why the Father loves the Son. The Father does not want to be alone. He

wants to love and to be loved. God wants to share his love, to communicate his riches and to extend his compassion to a large number of creatures. He wants to have a family because He is "the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named". (Eph. 3 : 15.)

God has created man in order that he may reproduce the divine perfections as Christ has reproduced the divine perfections. He has created man in order that man may love Him and obey Him as Christ has loved Him and obeyed Him. This fellowship that God wants to realize is the sole purpose of the creation. In creating man, God gives Himself a partner with whom He would be able to maintain a personal relationship, with whom He would be able to speak and who will respond to Him.

But, this implies human liberty. God has created man to be free, since He has created him in order to reflect His perfections and to respond to His word and His grace in obedience and in love, without liberty, man cannot be obedient nor can he have love. Without liberty, man would not be the image of God who is supremely free.

Man was a creature, that is to say that he was dependant on God, that he had relationship with God, an intimate rapport, close and necessary, because as a creature, he was in a state of submission to God.

But at the same time, he was a creature who was free, because God had created him capable to say "Yes" freely, and to choose obedience; that is to say that the rapport which was existing between man and God a rapport of love, of absolute confidence. The fall is the proof of this liberty.

And then suddenly, without explanation, man refuses this union with God, tears himself away from confidence, from love, turns away from his Creator. But in doing that, he changes his very nature, he makes himself a creature rebelling against God, that is to say, guilty of distrust and of covetousness. From this very moment, the nature of man is to be a sinner, one might even say to be sin (II Cor. 5 : 21). He has lost the liberty to say yes to the love of God, he has shut himself up in his rebellion, he becomes a slave. Thus man ceases to be a real creature, and becomes a rebel, because sin is always rebellion against God.

With Abraham the history of salvation begins, the history of our liberation. When he leaves his country, alone with his small family to enter into the great adventure of the faith, he becomes a sign for believers of all ages. He becomes the father of believers. He believes all the promises of God, and dedicates his whole life on His word. This is the step toward liberation.

That which God has done in the Church in Africa:

Since the first voyages of Vasco da Gama, the European little by little has extended himself in the world by the help of his inventions and his discoveries. The colonial people set out to conquer the world and discovered in Africa (some) new peoples. The first navigators set out not knowing always where they were going, and with very diverse purposes: some went in order to extend the fruits of west-

All Africa conference KAMPALA

ern civilisation; others in order to plant the cross of Jesus Christ everywhere in the world; still others went to exploit new lands and to establish themselves there for their own profit and for the interest of their own country; and finally others went to create empires. Then, there was that odious commerce of slave-trading which decimated the African population over a period of many years.

It is true then that colonization is a great complexity, where there is a mingling of the need for adventure, the thirst for wealth, the instinct for battle, the love of power and of domination. We are not in the position to affirm that this was not the will of God, for the foundation of this finite world, which will be in the ages to come without doubt for all men, a definite social bond, a common life of the human family, a blossoming of the diversity of geniuses in the general establishment of the universal conscience. In this Africa which has been discovered, conquered, pacified, but still under foreign domination, we still see free men in the church of Jesus Christ. I cite only one name, Samuel AJAYI CROWTHER, but for these many years, how many martyrs and witnesses there have been; and also how many forgotten names. And I don't think it has been a bad thing in forgetting the names of those who have gone before us. The Church through the ages has done the same thing. That which counts is their faith and not their name. Man is like grass; his faith is the seed which remains and springs up again in the next generation.

When the voyager Savorgnan de Brazza explored the Congo, he felt that the first task before France was to abolish the scourge of slavery, the horror of which covered this whole country. He erected in his camp a mast, at the top of which he flew the French flag. Then he bought some slaves; they brought them to him still with the iron collar on their necks and shackles on their feet. Brazza invited them to touch the mast, showing them the colours which were flying at the top. At once a soldier delivered the unfortunate one from his iron collar and broke the irons: "You are free now", Brazza said to him. "Come with us or return to your country". That which Brazza did for those poor black men is only a dim image of that which Jesus did for us on the cross; of that which God has done for us in Africa in his Church.

On the cross Jesus frees us from the slavery of sin; he gives us liberty. St. Paul always calls himself: servant of Jesus Christ. Therein lies his liberty. God has made us in such a way that we cannot be free without Him, but by Him, only can we be true men, happy, joyous, strong and human. God created us in order to be in fellowship with him. This fellowship with God is the substance of human life. When we separate ourselves from Him, becoming autonomous, that which hap-

pens is similar to the destiny of the prodigal son. He says to his father: "Give me the part of the heritage which will come to me". He went and fell into misery. Without God we fall into misery. Without God we corrupt this human substance, which consists always precisely in fellowship with Him and in love.

Herein lies the redemption by Jesus Christ: he brings back the lost ones to the Father. And by that, he restores them to liberty. That one who has really become a slave of Jesus Christ is, to speak with Luther, "free and master of all, by faith". Freed from human authority and from the law and its masters; freed from the weight of his debts, of the fear of death. Because in Jesus Christ he possesses the forgiveness of sins and the assurance of eternal life.

Unity:

By his redemptive work, Jesus Christ has laid the foundation for only one Church. One only, Jesus Christ, is the origin of the salvation of all, and he creates the unity of those whom he saves. In the New Testament, the idea of the solidarity which unites Christ with the Church is developed along three parallel lines. They are:

1) The opposition Adam — Christ: Just as one only is the origin of the fall of all, one only is the cause of the salvation of all. (Rom. 5 : 15-19.) In II Cor. 11 : 2 Paul presents the Christ to us as the one husband of the Church. The image of the marriage shows very well that the unity belongs as much to the Church as to Christ.

2) Believers are one in Jesus Christ: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3 : 28). They are one body in Christ and Christ is the head of this body.

3) On the trial: "...there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism..." (Eph. 4 : 5), we see that the unity of Christ extends itself in the unity of the Church. The unity of the faith and the unity of baptism means the unity of the Church, with the understanding that the faithful share the same faith in Christ and have all been baptised in the name of Jesus.

The redemptive work of Jesus Christ has, as a consequence, to call to existence the unique Church of the one Saviour. We must realise concretely the unity of the Church. She must remain one and united, because the glory of Christ will manifest itself to a greater degree when the Church in which he incarnated will be perfect in unity. Unity is a major element of witness that the Church owes to the world. "That they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me". (John 17 : 21.) The requirement and the duty of the unity

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Conference of Churches ASSEMBLY

Dr. K. A. Busia *

Freedom and Unity in Christ

— in Society

I wish to focus attention on a few matters concerning the activity of God through the Church in Africa, and the impact of the Church on Africa Society.

As I reflect on the history of the Church in Africa, I am struck, first of all, — I should say awestruck — by its survival and continuity. That the Church should have survived at all, despite its unpropitious beginnings, is itself evidence of the activity of God. Victory has come again and again through what seemed utter defeat.

One of the earliest records of the Church in Africa tells us that on the 17th July, A.D. 180, seven men and five women from Numidia were executed in Carthage for refusing to abjure their Christian faith. The establishment of the Church in Africa is marked by the cost in lives, both of early missionaries, and early converts. At the beginning of its missionary activity, the Church Missionary Society lost 53 men and women in Sierra Leone alone between 1804 and 1824. A vivid impression made on me as a schoolboy has been a constant reminder of the high cost in lives of early missionary activity in Africa. I used to worship Sunday after Sunday in the Methodist Church at Cape-Coast where

the pulpit bore the plaque with the inscription: "The first five missionaries to the Gold Coast lie buried beneath this pulpit." Then followed the names and dates, between 1835 and 1837 showing that the five missionaries had died within short periods of their arrival in that country. There could not have been a less unpromising beginning. The Church here in Buganda, where we hold this conference, has in its history, one of the most moving records of the early martyrs of Christianity in Africa. Early in 1885, three boys attached to a new mission station were seized and led to the execution ground at the edge of the Mpimerebera Swamp where they were mutilated and burnt to death. Many of the delega-

* From page 4
are expressed in this sacerdotal prayer.

Missionary activity seemed to be Christian colonialization because the forms and the occidental liaisons of Christianity and the ecclesiastical organization were imposed on the Churches in Africa. Everywhere on the continent there were Christians of different confessions depending on the colony in which they were living.

At the beginning of this century, Dr John R. Mott visited a large number of countries, converging with the leaders of the Churches. The result of these visits was the creation of Christian Councils in most of these countries: South Africa, The Rhodesias, Nigeria, Congo. These churches understood the necessity, in the world in which we live, to establish an organic tie among themselves. The Federation of Evangelical Churches and Missions of the Cameroun and of Equatorial Africa (grouping five countries), defined their purpose as such: "to aid in the propagation and defense of evangelical Christianity by making easier the task of each of the missionary societies and churches who are members of it, and to develop among them a most brotherly collaboration".

This collaboration in co-operation was not enough. Some conversation for unity among the predominant Churches began and some Commissions were named. Some Anglicans, some Methodists and some Presbyterians started some discussions in Ghana, Sierra Leone, Nigeria in view of a union of

Churches. The Congo Protestant Council (Leopoldville) decided to create a "Church of Christ in the Congo", where more than forty different Churches work in one country alone. These discussions, even though they are slow, are progressing on the road towards unity.

New Africa in Search of Unity

The last two world wars have created a total world-wide interdependence. Human solidarity has become an established fact.

With the accession to independence of several states, contacts are multiplying in order to seek after the best means of co-operation that must be employed in order to make concrete the desire of African unity and the desire of co-operation which quickens all Africa today. These states, so different, have met with each other, and will meet with one another again with the resolute intention of co-operation. They have looked at all their difficulties in order to try to bring about a solution to them. This step is very positive. It is certain that this means of proceeding will break through the traditional barriers that Africans have known.

I am happy that the challenge issued by political Africa has been taken up. Since Ibandan in 1958, it appears more and more clearly that the Churches of Africa, quickened by the Spirit of God, have the desire to become the best instruments of the

tions at this conference could give examples of Christian martyrs whose death, seeming to mark the failure of their mission, has, in God's own way, proved to be the grain of wheat that fell to the ground to die and spring up to rich fruition — victory through apparent tragedy and defeat has been God's way with what is now His Church in Africa, ready to meet the new challenges of today. Contemplating her history, we may well sing:

By the light of burning martyrs,
Christ, Thy bleeding feet we
track,
Toiling up new Calvaries ever,
With the Cross that turns not
back.

Society is a network of relations between individual human beings, and in considering the impact of the Church on African Societies we may properly begin with the difference it has made to the concept of the individual and his role in society. I believe that the teaching of the Christian Church about the individual has been of great significance for human dignity and freedom.

If a mere layman may so venture, I would say that at the heart of the Christian religion, central to its whole teaching, is the assurance that God does care immeasurably for every single inhabitant on the earth, whatever his race, or colour or social status, and that He loves each one with a love beyond human understanding; that God cares so much that at one point in history He took the form of a man and lived among men, and was crucified by them in their sin and ignorance, and that He allowed this to happen, in order to give men some idea of the depth and extent and nature of His love and concern for every member of the human race personally.

Slavery and missions

The Slave Trade which took millions of Africans across the Atlantic to plant nations in the New World, could not stand in the light of such a doctrine. It is noteworthy that the missionary movement of the late eighteenth century, through which Christianity has reached most territories in Africa, derived its impetus from the desire to combat slavery and the Slave Trade. It was this which inspired the foundation of the Free Church and Evangelical Missionary Society of the last quarter of the eighteenth century, and the expansion of missionary

design of God in New Africa, which is in the process of development, and which is changing more rapidly than we who are in the Church.

In this search for the unity of Christians, it is true that we are moving less rapidly in a certain sense, than the world — which itself is almost a sign for us. Let us discern the signs of the times. It is the reason why, in the bosom of this All-Africa Conference of Churches, that it is necessary for us to unite all of our forces in order to obey even better the mission that Christ has entrusted to his Church, and to be a sign of unity and brotherly love for those who do not yet believe, who cannot believe, often precisely because of our divisions. How can we speak with sincerity, with love towards our fellow men when we do not realize among ourselves this love? How can we proclaim the gospel to these millions of men and women who do not know the Christ, when we waste so much energy with our internal conflicts?

It is with the call of St. Paul to the Phillipines that I would like to terminate:

Let us, Brethren, "go forward in the light of such truth as we have ourselves attained to."
(Phil. 3 : 16 — J. B. Phillips translation).

*) Rev. Lawson, from Dahomey, was associate secretary of the Conference and formerly Theological tutor at the Methodist Seminary, Porto Nayo.

activity on the West Coast of Africa in the first half of the 19th century: the Basel Mission in the Gold Coast (1824), the Wesleyan Mission (1835), the Baptist Missionary Society in the Camerouns (1845), the Protestant Episcopal Church of America in Liberia (1845), the "Austrian" Mission of the Roman Catholic Church in the Sudan, (1845), the Church Missionary Society in Nigeria (1846), the Church of Scotland in Calabar (1846), and the Bremen Mission in Togo (1847).

Livingstone's exploration opened up East and Central Africa in the second half of the century, and revealed the continuing Arab Slave Trade in that area; this led to the expansion of missionary activity to East and Central Africa in the second half of the 19th century.

Christianity and human dignity

So from the very beginning, the Church and the gospel it has propagated has been closely associated with the battle for human dignity and freedom in Africa; not only with freedom from slavery, but also from superstitious fear, and from certain inhuman customs and practices; human beings are no longer burnt as witches, or slaves or widows; nor are children killed or abandoned out of pious but erroneous beliefs. But the battle for freedom has not yet been completely won; there are still vestiges of slavery, and in new guises, there are fresh attacks on human freedom and dignity. There are new urges for personal freedom and social justice for which the Christian gospel provides both a justification and a challenge.

The Church has also been a vehicle of divine compassion in Africa. Mission hospitals, leprosy centres, and clinics throughout Africa testify to the witness that the Church has given of her Lord, the account of whose life is full of stories like this: "Being moved with compassion, He stretched His hand and touched him, and said unto him, I will; be thou made clean", (Mark. 1 : 41); and who when John sent from prison to ask: "Art Thou he that should come, or do we look for another", replied: "Go your way and tell John the things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight; and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good things preached to them." The Church's compassionate ministration in the steps of her Lord has left its imprint on Africa, and lights the way to new needs for self-giving service, motivated by love and fellow-feeling.

And the Church has pioneered in education; in all parts of Africa, in all walks of life, there are many who have received their education under missionary auspices. Though the Christian population of Africa is put between 15 and 20% of the total population, the contribution the Church has made to social progress through education is of far greater significance than these statistical figures would indicate.

Through the work of missionaries, Christianity has reached many African communities through their own vernaculars. This incidentally has made an important contribution to the search for roots that is now going on in independent African States.

Disruptive aspect of Church's work

This brings me to some of the disruptive aspects of the Church's work. In some parts and periods, the close alliance between the Church and imperial powers has made her fail in her mission of propagating the gospel of the supreme worth and value of every human being as a son of God, and of the brotherhood and equality of mankind. Inevitably, too, the Church has been a potent factor of social change. Particularly noteworthy has been the impact of her doctrine on the traditional cultures of Africa, especially on religious beliefs, and on the in-

• Continued overleaf

KAMPALA CONFERENCE

Dr. W. A. Bijlefeld

VIER BELANGRIKE ASPEKTE:

Basis**Islam****Wereldraad****Nasionalisme**

De redactie verwacht van mijn hand zeker geen verslag van de conferentie die 20—30 April jl. in Kampala gehouden werd, en waar de All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) officieel werd opgericht. Een bekwaam hand zal voor dit verslag zorgen, daar ben ik zeker van! Natuurlijk is het ook niet de bedoeling dat ik inga op de specifiek Zuid-Afrikaanse vragen en discussies rondom dit nieuwe oecumenische lichaam.

Hoewel het zelfs zó nie mogelijk zal zijn te voorkomen dat ik punten bespreek die ook elders in dit nummer van Pro Veritate aan de orde komen, wil ik toch proberen zo 'persoonlijk' mogelijk te zijn in mijn bijdrage. Daarmee bedoel ik dit. De uitnodiging naar Kampala te gaan ontving ik van het 'Islam in Africa Project'. Het spreekt dus vanzelf dat ik bijzonder geïnteresseerd was in de vraag óf en hóe de ontmoeting met de Islam aan de orde zou komen. Bovendien is het nu eenmaal een feit dat ik als vanzelf bij alle discussies en besprekingen waarbij ik tegenwoordig ben, zit te luisteren 'als een Muslim', d.w.z. me probeer in te denken wat een Muslim hiervan zou begrijpen en welke indruk het gezegde op hem zou maken.

Deze Islam-belangstelling heeft de keuze bepaald van de eerste twee punten die ik wil aanroeren.

In de tweede plaats was ik in Kampala als 'waarnemer' namens de TEKAS, de Federatie van Christelijke Kerken in die Sudan. Zoals U waarschijnlijk weet zijn er binnen Kerk en Zending in Noord-Nigeria velen die uiterst kritisch staan tegenover de Wereldraad van Kerken, en die mede daarom ook nogal sceptisch staan tegenover de AACC. Ik wist dat na mijn terugkomst in Nigeria bepaalde punten van kritiek tegen de AACC aan de orde zouden komen, en heb dus ook geprobeerd mij op die punten een zo nauwkeurig mogelijk beeld te vormen van wat er in Kampala gebeurde. Hiermede zijn mijn punten 3 en 4 hopelijk verklaard en gerechtvaardigd.

I. 'Christus: God en enige Saligmaker'

Een bespreking van de basisformule zou U misschien eerder verwachten in verband met de discussies in bepaalde kerken over de mogelijke aansluiting bij de AACC dan in verband met het Islam apostolaat. Maar ik ga dan ook de basis formule al als zodanig nie bespreken. Dat zal elders wel gebeuren. Er is slechts één punt waarvoor ik aandacht wilde vragen.

Tijdens de besprekking van de Constitutie, werd — door een afgevaardigde uit Cameroun — het voorstel gedaan in het eerste artikel het woord 'only' in te lassen voor 'Saviour', zodat de basisformule zou luiden: 'The All Africa Conference of Churches is a fellowship of Churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and only Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit'.

Met een duidelijke meerderheid werd dit voorstel aangenomen. Allen die voor stemden, hebben dit ongetwijfeld gedaan vanuit de overtuiging dat — in een wereld waarin zovele godsdiensten en ideologieën de mensen heilbeloven en in het vooruitzicht stellen — de Kerk in alle duidelijkheid haar geloof heeft te belijden in Jezus Christus als de enige Zaligmaker.

Zó gezien kan men niet anders dan dankbaar zijn voor deze toevoeging. Maar waarom stemden meer dan der-

tig afgevaardigden tegen deze aanvulling? Op grond van een 'vrijzinnige theologie'? Omdat men het aanstaotgevende uit deze Christusbelijdenis wilde wegnemen? Er is nauwelijks enige discussie hierover geweest, en het zal wel onmogelijk blijken ooit de verschillende motieven te weten te komen. Maar dat zéér uiteenlopende motieven mensen er toe hebben gebracht tegen te stemmen, staat voor mij vast.

Mijn eigen aarzeling (ik had geen stemrecht, en behoor dus noch bij de voorstanders noch bij de tegen-stemmers!) komt voort uit geheel andere overwegingen dan de boven aangeduiden. We kunnen niet spreken over Christus als 'enige God en Zaligmaker', want we geloven ons geloof in de drieënige God: Vader, Zoon en Heilige Geest. Maar zouden we om dezelfde reden er ook niet beter aan doen de uitdrukking 'God en enige Zaligmaker' in dit verband te vermijden. We willen toch niet suggereren dat God de Vader weliswaar onze God, maar niet onze Heiland is?

In verschillende ontmoetingen met Muslims bemerk ik telkens weer dat ze de Christelijke boodschap interpreteren als een 'dualisme' tussen een Rechtvaardige Rechter en een Liefdevolle Heiland, tussen Degene Die wil ('moet') veroordelen en Degene Die wil behouden, tussen 'God' en 'Christus'. Natuurlijk bedoelen wij als Christenen dat niet, en dat is ook geenszins opgesloten in deze woorden in de basisformule van de AACC.

Maar het gaat bij het geloven niet alléén om wat wij bedoelen te zeggen, maar ook om wat 'de anderen' ons hören zeggen. En dat is dikwijls iets heel anders! Met onze Kerk belijdt ik dat we 'ons heil buiten onszelf moeten zoeken, in Jezus Christus'. Maar we moeten de schijn vermijden dat onze gelijdenis is dat we ons heil buiten God om in Jezus Christus dienen te zoeken. Daarmee zeg ik niet dat ik de basisformule van de AACC onaanvaardbaar acht; ik hoop slechts dat ook in dit opzicht 'Kampala' zal stimuleren tot een voortgaande bezinning op ons spreken en handelen, in deze tijd, op dit continent.

II. 'Islam in Afrika'

Op weg van Cameroun naar Nigeria, kort na de Kampala conferentie, is de Alg. Secretaris van het 'Islam in Africa Project', dr. P. Benignus, om het leven gekomen in het vliegtuigongeluk bij Douala. Het is mij onmogelijk aan Kampala te denken en het 'Islam in Africa Project' te noemen zonder dit schokkende feit te memoreren. Gods wegen zijn anders dan onze wegen. Maar we geloven dat ze leiden tot de vreugde van Zijn Koninkrijk.

Afgezien van het door Dr. Benignus opgestelde rapport over het 'Islam in Africa Project', komt er in de stapel van gestencilde papieren die we in Kampala kregen slechts één nadrukkelijke verwijzing naar de Islam voor, en wel in het verslag van Sectie I, over 'The Life of the Church'.

Een levende Kerk is een Kerk die haar missieopdracht ernstig neemt. Zo begint het gedeelte in het rapport waarin enkele terreinen van werkzaamheden worden besproken die

de bijzondere aandacht verdienen. De eerste daarvan is: De confrontatie met de Islam, waarover het volgende (iets vrij vertaald) gezegd wordt:

'De snelle uitbreiding van de Islam in Afrika (een toename met ongeveer drie miljoen per jaar) dient door de Kerken zeer ernstig te worden genomen. Maar deze zullen dit niet in de eerste plaats als een bedreiging moeten zien en zij moeten zich ervoor hoeden hun reacties te laten bepalen door een minderwaardigheidscomplex. In plaats daarvan behoren de kerken in vele gedeelten van Afrika met dankbaarheid de grote, door God gegeven mogelijkheden tot getuigen te zien én te benutten. De Christenen die tezamen 20 procent van de totale Afrikaanse bevolking uitmaken (het aantal Muslims is ruim tweemaal zo groot), bevinden zich daarmee in de bevoordeerde positie dat ze — op dit continent en in deze tijd — een nieuwe en misschien in vele opzichten beslissende fase in de eeuwenoude ontmoeting tussen Islam en Christendom kunnen doen aanbreken. Aangezien een gemeenschappelijk Christelijk getuigenis zo uiterst belangrijk is voor deze confrontatie met de Islam, doet de AACC de volgende aanbevelingen:

- a. de mogelijkheden van samenwerking met het 'Islam in Africa Project' te bestuderen;
- b. de Kerken te adviseren gebruik te maken van de hulp die dit Project kan bieden bij de opbouw van het werk in gedeeltelijk Muslimse streken en bij de voorbereiding van de Christenen voor een positief getuigenis tegenover Muslims in hun omgeving van Gods heilige handelen in Jezus Christus.

Dit artikel is al te lang, en ik wil nog twee punten kort aanstippen. 'k Zal dus de verleiding weerstaan om hierop nader in te gaan, óók met het oog op de situatie in Zuid-Afrika met zijn in dit opzicht bijna ongeëvenaarde mogelijkheden. Misschien is daarvoor later nog eens de gelegenheid in een afzonderlijke bijdrage.

III. AACC en WCC

De verhouding tussen de AACC en de Wereldraad van Kerken (gemakshalve maar als WCC aangeduid) is een punt dat hier in Nigeria de volle aandacht heeft. In mijn verslag aan de Kerken hier heb ik vooral gewezen op de voorgeschiedenis van die paragraaf in de Constitutie waarin de WCC genoemd wordt (het tweede artikel, over de functies van de AACC, het zesde punt) 'Without prejudice to its own autonomy to collaborate with the World Council of Churches and other appropriate agencies, in such ways as may be mutually agreed'.

Wie deze passage vergelijkt met hetgeen in de Draft Constitution gezegd werd over de relatie tot de WCC (het tweede artikel, onder 5) en wie kennis neemt van de amendementen die door de Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa en de General Purposes Committee of the Methodist Church, Ghana, waren voorgesteld (tenderend naar een nog veel nauwere band met de WCC), kan slechts verbaasd zijn over de voorzichtigheid van de uiteindelijke formulering, met de nadruk op de autonomie van de AACC.

Natuurlijk is reeds de mening uitgesproken dat deze autonomie slechts schijn is, en is in een van de rapporten de suggestie geuit dat 'the Conference is actually directed from the outside'. Helaas laat de plaatsruimte niet toe hierop in te gaan. Persoonlijk zie ik geen rechtvaardiging voor dit wantrouwen.

IV. Politieke aspek van Konferensie

Slechts een enkel woord over het politieke aspect van 'Kampala 1963'. Dat woorden als nationalisme, onafhankelijkheid, recht tot zelf-expressie, recht orde op eigen zaken te stellen, enz. veelvuldig voorkwamen, behoeft geen betoog. Vooral wanneer ze uit hun verband worden gelicht kunnen

enkele passages uit sommige toespraken de indruk maken dat het nationalisme bijna als 'norm' gesteld wordt waarmee het Christendom tot een vergelijk moet komen.

Maar men doet 'Kampala' schroomelijk onrecht wanneer men suggereert dat dit de algemene tendentie was. Herhaalde malen waren we getuige van een ontroerende bereidheid tot zelf-kritiek, midden in fel-nationalistische toespraken. Keer op keer werden we getroffen door een diep-Bijbels belyden van de grote ommekker, de enig werkelijke vernieuwing in de geschiedenis: Gods verzoenend handelen in Jezus Christus.

Het blijft waar: het accent in de sociale, politieke en economische vragen was ietwat eenzijdig in vele toespraken. Maar we zullen niet mogen reageren met de kritiek dat al deze vragen toch eigenlijk slechts van secundair belang zijn. Want het is waar dat men een waarachtig Bijbelse theologie niet kan combineren met een onbijbels gebrek aan belangstelling en liefde voor de mede mens en zijn problemen. Want wie zegt dat hij God liefheeft en zijn broeder haat, die is nog altijd een leugenaar.

• From page 5

stitution of the family. I single out these, because the traditional cultures rested on religion, and on the all-embracing network of kindship relationships. The rites of the polytheistic religions emphasized and sustained the solidarity of the various communities, and the concept of the family as a wide group embracing the living, the dead, and the unborn, was the ground both of piety and solicitude that provided sanctions for the fulfilment of the reciprocal duties and obligations of community life. It was inevitable that some aspects of the traditional cultures and practices, and the institution of family systems that allowed polygamy should prove unacceptable and incompatible with Christian doctrine.

There is a sense in which Christianity is a judgement on all social systems. But it would now be generally agreed that much was rejected without proper understanding, and that this contributed to disruption and a sense of uprootedness, harmful alike to Christianity and the African communities. Christianity is now challenged to help in the search for roots in a cultural heritage that would provide a sound moral foundation for the rapidly growing edifice of social change, with its threat of secularization and materialism.

Although the establishment and growth of the Church in many parts of Africa owe their success to the co-operation among nationals from different parts of Europe, for example to Dutch or German Lutherans serving in British missionary societies, the multiplication of different missions carried into Africa schisms and social divisions which were only meaningful in the controversies of Europe. This conference itself gives evidence of the efforts of Christians, not only in Africa, but throughout the world, towards the re-union of the Church.

Christianity provides a unity of faith and of purpose, and one of its most convincing contributions to the unity of Africa, and indeed of the human race, is the bond of fellowship which Christians, despite diversities of culture, colour or race, find wherever and whenever they meet in the name of Jesus Christ, the foundation on which the Church rests. The saints still keep their watch, waiting for the consummation of her re-union. Each of us may be an instrument in God's hands, with a part to play in that consummation.

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RAS EN REALITEIT

Prof. Dr. J. C. G. Kotzé

II. DIE VOLWASSE VERWERKING VAN RASSEREALITEITE

(Vervolg)

Gevaar van fiksering

Dit gee ons 'n idee van die gevaar van om ergens langs die weg van ontwikkeling van ons persoonlikheid vas te steek. Dit gebeur as ons op een of ander trap misluk om ons so te gee aan die eise en realiteit van daardie periode. In die proses van volwassenheid word ons geroep om ons telkens weer los te maak van wat rem en hinder om tot die behoeftes, insigte en verantwoordelikhede van die volgende lewensvlak oor te gaan. Wie daarin misluk, steek vas en staan onbekommer vir die volgende skof. Wie die realiteit van die vorige nie verwerk nie, is ongeoeuf en ongespierd vir die volgende vlak van die lewe. Want dan ontrek die mens hom aan die werklike lewe, en word met homself in plaas van met die realiteit besig. Want dan lewe hy by 'n skynsituasie in plaas van by realiteit. Tereg skrywe so 'n kenner soos C. A. Wise: "Unsolved personal problems in one period of life are always a handicap in the next period". Op daardie punt bly ons kind of onvolwasse. Hoewel in jare en leeftyd gevorder kan 'n mens dan tog soos 'n kind handel. Daarom het Hobbes gesê: "Die misdadiger is net 'n kind wat mag kry". Daarom het die waarskuwing van J. A. C. Murray vir ons die grootste betekenis: "There are certain battles, which man must fight, certain adaptations which he must achieve, before he wins the password to the next stretch, and can embark upon the new phase of his journey."

Die gevaar is dat ons op allerlei punte kan vasval in ons ontwikkeling van 'n volwasse persoonlikheid. Sulke punte is die volgende: onbevredigde kinderbehoeftes; onopgeloste spanning tussen ons werklike en ideale self; die botsing van ons drifte en instinkte met die maatskappy; die ontvlugting aan en gevolglik verdringing van alledaagse probleme en realiteit. Deur al hierdie dinge egter onverwerk te verdring, ontvlug ons hulle nie.

Sulke verdringings is 'n proses waardeur pynlike elemente van ons ondervindings verban word uit die bewusstesyn omdat ons weier om onsself daar-aan te gee. Die mens meen dat hy so die leiding en die spanning daarvan ontvlug. Dit is egter nie die geval nie. Want ons verdring nie eintlik die drang of die onaangename ding nie — hulle is nog daar — maar dit gaan om die wyse waarop ek my gee en weier aan daardie dinge. Aan die weierung om daarmee te handel verdring die ek of persoon homself en word die onverwerkte realiteit in die onbewuste vas-gelê. Vandaar uit rem en belemmer dit dan die persoonlikheid in sy motiewe, reaksies en ganse lewe. Maar dit alles geskied dan in 'n onbewuste of vermomde gestalte.

Daarom geestesstoringe

Dit veroorsaak allerlei geestesstoringe en remminge in ons persoonlikheid. Die mees bekende is, wat ons noem, die neurotiese mens of persoonlikheid. Hy neem wel sy plek in die lewe, maar kry bitter swaar om daarby aan te pas. Om weer G. W. Allport aan te haal: "Unlike the normal person, the neurotic is not able to work out the balanced give-and-take required for sound friendship, for smooth relations at work and for domestic felicity..."

"He is demanding and possessive, jealous and self-pitying, hysterical and accusatory... Often there are fierce but unguided motives in the neurotic pattern: hate, fear, resentment... uncontrolled self-centredness".

Die probleem is dat hierdie dominante neurotiese toestand vanuit die onbewuste na die mens se bewuste lewe deurbreek.

Die onverwerkte realiteit het hy nie verwerk en in sy lewe en persoonlikheid ingebou nie. Dit lê daar as onverwerkte erts en vergiftig sy ganse sisteem. Soos J. A. C. Murray dit beskryf as 'n lewe met „a terror of reality", en H. C. Rümke het gevind: „Die neurotiese mens word dikwels die meeste gekwel deur sy onvermoë om homself te gee". En die gevolg daarvan is 'n kroniese toestand van innerlike spanninge, konflikte, frustrasies en persoonlike onvermoë om die naakte lewe te ontmoet en te verwerk.

Dit laat ons begryp waarom ons volwassenes behoef om selfstandig en produktief met so 'n uiters moeilike en selfs gevaaarlike realiteit as die huidige ras-situasie te handel. Daar is soveel angels in hierdie wêreldprobleem (ja ook buite Suid-Afrika het hulle dit hoegenaamd nog nie opgelos nie), dat vreesagtige en neurotiese ontvlugtinge van watter aard ook uiters noodlottig gaan wees. Nog nooit was daar dan ook 'n probleem voor die mens, wat so 'n versoeking tot ontvugting was nie, dan huis die eis van 'n nuwe rasse-oriëntering in die twintigste eeu. Dit wek soveel spanning en emosie; dit stel soveel botsende belang teenoor mekaar; dit raak so een van die diepste eeue-oue onderlinge vooroordele in die menslike verhoudinge, dat almal daardeur geskud voel.

Daarom soek mense om die spanninge te verlig deur die naakte realiteit daarvan te ontvug of goed te praat. Hulle probeer dink aan geweld; hulle ontduike feite in hulle bespreking; hulle rationaliseer doringagtige probleme tot blink ornamente, wat hart en gewete nie aanspreek en die brein nie laat sweet met besinning nie; hulle hou die saak so onpersoonlik as moontlik om nie by konkrete realiteit vas te steek nie. Hulle probeer teenstrydigheid versoen, soos Gunnar Myrdal die Amerikaners destyds beskuldig het, dat hulle met uitdrukking soos „equal but separate" die werklike feite probeer verdoesel het. Hy skryf van dié soort ontvugting aan die probleem: "People become trained, generally to sacrifice truth, realism, and accuracy for the sake of keeping superficial in every social situation." Hoe raak dit ons poging om apartheid te herdoop tot parallelle ontwikkeling? Hoeveel ontvugting is hier?

Solank ons met hierdie gees van ontvugting behep is, word die probleem al moeiliker. Want dit bewys dat ons nie saam met die tyd beweeg het nie. Netsoos die neurotiese mens op een of ander vlak van die lewe vasgesteek en so vir die volgende vlak geheel ongeskik geword het, so kan die persoon en die groep gearresteer raak in hulle vermoë om met snel ontwikkelende toestande tred te hou. En dit is huis een van die allerdwingendste eise van die ras-situasie van die twintigste eeu: die snelle en radikale verskil en die teenstellings met dié van die vorige eeu.

Volwasse hantering vereis en verseker die vermoë om ons ook aan sulke nuwe situasies te gee. Maar die aanvaarding en oorwinnende verwerking van so 'n radikale nuwe situasie vereis dikwels die losmaak van denkrigtings, innerlike gesindhede, lewensstyl en praktiese gewoontes, wat totaal onsaaklik en verouderd geword het in die nuwe situasie. Sulke dinge mag dikwels in die verlede geldig gewees het onder totaal ander omstandighede, maar nou geheel ondoeltreffend, missien selfs ongeoorloof, onder nuwe toe-

stande. Soos die normale kind sy klere uitgroei, so behoort die volk op menige punte sy klere uit te groei. Juis omdat hy normaal is, word ou vorme en beaderinge te klein.

Maar die nuwe situasie bring ook dikwels iets dieper en meer pynlik mee. Dit kan ook ontdek dat nie slegs die klere te klein geword het nie. Dit kan ook wees dat 'n innerlike siekte of vergroeiing geopenbaar moet word. So dikwels kan ons 'n lewensbenadering hê, wat ons nooit self geweeg en deurdink het nie. Ons het ander maar net daarin gevolg en nagepraat. Dit is huis hier waar onverantwoorde sentemente, tradisies en lewenswyses ons kan bind en mislei. Dan word ons ongereed en onvry om die nuwe situasie oorwinnend te ontmoet.

Daarom huis behoef die jeug om met hulle wêreld in aanraking te kom, en pleeg die ouers onreg om hulle in te kerker in die wêreld van 'n ouere geslag. Hulle moet wel die binding en die leiding van die ouere geslag se wisedheid, ondervinding en tradisie ken, maar moet ook met hulle eie wêreld deeglik kennis maak om so tot volwassenheid op te groei.

Waar die jeug inderdaad ryp word om hulle eie tyd te dien, kom dan ook soms die bittere pynlike situasie, dat die jeug uitbreek uit die oue om die nuwe reg te hanteer. As dit nie op normale wyse gebeur onder die leiding van 'n ouere geslag nie, skryf H. R. Wijngaarden, dan oormeester die nuwe realiteit daar die onvolgroeide jongelingeslag. En wat waar is van die jeug is waar van 'n volk en 'n nasie: tensy hy in ontwikkeling tredhou met nuwe situasies, veragter hy; word hy neuroties, gespanne en oorweldig. Daarom het die volkere al ten onder gegaan omdat gevaaarlike platoverskuiwings hulle ongereed vanweë onvolwassenheid oorval het.

Die eintlike onvermoë

Wat ons met hierdie bespreking wil beklemtoon, is dat in die hantering van ras-situasie die innerlike gesindheid van primêre belang is. Ons voorsorgmaatreëls teen patologiese uitbarstinge, ons arbeid aan beleidsrigtings, opvoeding en kerstening is alles van die mees strategiese belang vir hierdie gevaaarvolle tydperk in Afrika. Maar ten grondslag van dit alles lê die noodsaklikheid van 'n volwasse ongeremde onderlinge verhouding en gesindheid.

Soos Gunnar Myrdal terg skryf: „It is in the heart and conscience that the interracial tension has its focus. It is there that the decisive struggle goes on." Daartoe is die neurotiese geremde mens en gemeenskap nie in staat nie. Die diepste wese van die normale hantering van 'n lewensrealiteit is nie geleë bloot in wat ons daarmee probeer doen nie. Dit gaan veel dieper. Die eis van sukses hang af van hoe ons daarteenoor gesind is. Vir suksesvolle verwerking van die lewe met al sy realiteit gaan dit om die gesonde verhouding en gesindheid teenoor die wêreld met sy mense, gebeure en probleme van die alledaagse lewe. Baie waar stel A. A. Schneiders dit: „Such a good, wholesome relation to reality is helped along a great deal by sound, healthy attitudes... such as states of mind that we assume toward our work, friends, religion, racial group, death and a thousand other things... Take, for example the attitude toward racial groups. It is impossible for us to be mentally healthy when we are plagued by deep-seated hatreds and prejudices towards Jews, or Negroes or Orientals. Hatred and prejudice are to mental

health, what certain bacteria and toxins are to physical health".

Ons stem hiermee volkome saam. Maar ons moet hier tog 'n aanvulling doen. Die skrywer dink hier van die kant van die blanke teenoor die nie-blanke. Dit is nodig, maar as ons vandag na die gesindhede en gemoedstoestande van die nie-blanke mensdom teenoor die blanke kyk, dan voel 'n mens hoe magteloos en onvolwasse die menslike geslag van ons dag is om hierdie globale probleem op te los. En waarom? Omdat dit met die basiese vereiste van die onderlinge gesindheid alles verkeerd is. Daarom kan ook alleen diegene met sukses die ras-seskessie aanpak, wat voor alles gewillig is om van hulself rekenskap te gee. As daar érens eerlike persoonlike insig nodig is in jou eie gesindheid teenoor 'n saak, dan is dit hier. Want ons ontwikkel moed, krag en vermoëns tot oplossing van hierdie medemenslike probleem, namate ons onself eers reg ingestel het. Dan word ons vry om te kan doen.

Helaas is die eintlike ramp hier nie slegs neurotiese oorspanninge, emoties, frustrasies, minderwaardigheid, oormoedigheid, skuldgevoelens, bitterheid, ensomeer nie. Die diepste wese van die probleem is geleë in die feit dat die mensdom God totaal losgelaat het, en die mens self die god van die twintigste eeu gemaak het. Nie die eer van God en sy soewereiniteit nie, maar menslike waardigheid, vryheid en soewereiniteit is die passie van die twintigste eeu. En natuurlik daarnee het die menslike geslag finaal die weg van die totale ondergang gekies. Daarnee toon hy hoe geheel onvolwasse hy sonder God geword het. Uitdagend durf hy die waarskuwing van Christus te loen en om te keer. Nogtans is hy deur sy dwaasheid besig om meer dan ooit die Heiland se woorde te bevestig: „Elkeen wat sy lewe wil red, sal dit verloor; maar elkeen wat sy lewe om My ontwil verloor, sal dit vind".

Met andere woorde, as ons probleem volwassenheid vereis in ons sielkundige vermoëns, dan nog temeer behoef ons 'n religieuse geloofsverwassenheid.

• Word vervolg

The Church in the Bible

• Continued from page 2
one people of God across all national frontiers. The text gives no support for the concept of "national churches" or any form of "christian-nationalism". On the contrary, it implies that the church must be one and universal notwithstanding national boundaries.

However, the main message of this command is that the church must be missionary. Owing to the practice of the past few centuries an entirely wrong distinction grew between church and so-called "mission churches". No such distinction was ever intended by Jesus. The church as a whole in all its parts is one missionary church or it is not church at all. It cannot from its home base in any particular country form or create or found new indigenous churches in other countries. Matth. 28 : 19 does not demand a multiplication of the church, but the extension of the one and only church into every part of the world.

For the church in Africa today this fact demands serious reflection. "Indigenization" must not mean the creation of separate national churches, but at the most the local translation of the one universal church with its universal responsibility and task of proclaiming the Gospel of Christ to all people. For the same reason expressions like the "independance of younger churches" must be doubly weighed as to their exact meaning. All parts of the church, whether old or new, are and must be dependent of one another. The younger churches in Africa are either organic extensions of the one church universal, or that same church allows itself to be cut up into sections, that is, sects.

Nowhere is this fact more aptly expressed than in St. Paul's comparison of the church to a body, and calling that body "The people of God".

• To be continued

Meegaande stuk is die eerste van 3 afluweringe in ons blad, in Afrikaans vertaal, van 'n herderlike skrywe van die Generale Sinode van die Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk uitgegee onder datum 19 November 1962.

1. INLEIDING:

Botsings en stryd tussen groepe van mense is 'n ou verskynsel. Die mens begeer om in 'n beskermende, eie omgewing te lewe. In die persoon wat daar buite staan en saam met ander 'n eie groep vorm, sien die mens spoedig 'n bedreiging vir sy eie bestaan.

Tekenstellinge wat in die verhouding van eie groep en buite-groep, van „ons en die ander“ tot uitdrukking kom, tree oral en te alle tye tevoorschyn. Dit word volgens plek en tyd met bepaalde tradisies en belangtekenstellinge verbind. Wanneer dit gaan om die verhouding van groot volksverbande, praat mense van vreemde gewoontes, 'n snaakse taal en dom lewensgedrag. Die effek is altyd dieselfde: 'n neersien op vremdes, die massa sien as barbare, inboorlinge, mense met minderwaardige eienskappe.

Kenmerkend vir ons tyd is, dat in groot dele van die wêreld, die houding van afweer al meer en meer gestalte kry in die rasstekenstellinge. In die moderne denke, wat mag gekry het in die lewe van 'n belangrike deel van die mensheid, leef die gedagte dat daar 'n ontwikkelingslyn loop van laer na hoër, van minder tot meer waarby mense met bepaalde liggaamlike kenmerke (kleur, haargroei, ens.) bo-aanstaan. Sodoende teken 'n vry vereenvoudigde skema hom af, waarby verskillende groepe van die mensheid wat in dieselfde historiese tydvak lewe, gerekend word as behorende tot verskillende stadia van die ontwikkelingsvlakte wat in dié skema geteken is. En hoewel hierdie skema wetenskaplik onhoudbaar is, lewe dit nog sterk in die gedagtegang van baie. Daarnaas laat die geloof aan 'n patroon van die mensheid, wat deur die Here God self gewil is en waarin volke hulle aan 'n bepaalde orde moet hou, sy invloed geld.

Hierdie opvatting bring mense en groepe daartoe om hulle eie lewe af te grens vir die invloed van ander mense en groepe, wat vanweë bepaalde kenmerke, die indruk wek dat hulle minder is en laer staan.

Hierdie afgrensing word egter steeds moeiliker as gevolg van die toenemende wêreldverkeer. Die verplasing van volke en die verspreiding van rasne wat daarmee saamhang, neem steeds 'n groter omvang aan. Mense wat vroeër ver van mekaar gewoon het, is nou buure. In bepaalde sentra (bv. in Engeland) is in 'n kort tydjie deur sekere faktore hewige gevoelsontploffings veroorsaak. Wat deur die sendingfiguur Speer, vyftig jaar gelede gesê is nl., dat rasprobleme tot rasverspreiding herlei kan word, word steeds duidelik.

Waar die gevare van toenemende spanninge nou voor die deur lê, en ook in ons land so nou en dan oor die drumpel kom, is dit nodig dat die Kerk nie alleen oor die probleem van die rasverhoudinge besin nie, maar ook sy posisie ten opsigte van dié probleem duidelik bepaal. Die rasvervrees laat die lewe van die kerke nie onaangeraak nie. Dit gaan waarlik nie alleen om konflikte en spanninge wat buite die kerk-

Die Rasse-vraagstuk

HERDERLIKE SKRYWE VAN DIE GENERALE SINODE VAN DIE NEDERLANDSE HERVORMDE KERK 19 NOVEMBER 1962

algemeen gesê word, ook geld van die mens.

Alle mense wat tans op aarde lewe behoort — biologies gesien — tot een enkele soort. Die Bybel sê: „En Hy het uit een bloed al die nasies van die mensdom gemaak.“ (Die Nederlandse vertaling lui hier: „Hij heeft uit één enkele het gehele menselijke geslacht gemaakt.“ — Hand. 17 : 26 — Vertaler). Die Engelse aanduiding vir mensheid, „mankind“ (man-mens; kind-soort) bring dit tot uitdrukking. Binne die soort „mens“ kan ons 'n aantal rasne onderskei. Hierdie rasne verskil in 'n aantal kenmerke, waarvan die huidskleur een kenmerk kan wees. Die „anders-wees“ van die een ras ten opsigte van die ander, is natuurwetenskaplik gesien, nie 'n saak van hoër of laer, beter of slechter, meer of minder nie. Dit is eenvoudig 'n „anders-wees“ soos 'n renperd anders is as 'n trekkersperd, maar as perd nie beter of slechter nie. Soos 'n kunstenaar anders is as 'n wetenskaplike, maar nie hoër of laer, meer of minder nie.

Ons het reeds daarop gevys dat rasne onvermengd kan bly deur 'n min of meer toevalle of kunsmatige isolasie, maar ook dat in die natuurlike orde, aan rasne-vermenging geen belangrike biologiese hindernisse in die weg gelê is nie. Vermenging van 5 menserasse is dus in hierdie orde sonder meer moontlik. Wil 'n mens vanuit die natuurorde as „skeppingsorde“ redeneer ('n aanvegbare uitgangspunt!) dan kan 'n mens tot geen ander slotsom kom nie as hierdie; vir 'n geforseerde isolasie van rasne is in hierdie orde geen enkele grond te vind nie. 'n Mens sal dan ook moet erken en aanvaar, dat slegs die vrye huwelikskeuse van vrye mense, remmed op rasne-vermenging kan en mag werk. Die pogings om deur wetlike maatreëls of deur druk van die massa die rasne-vermenging teé te gaan, het 'n uiterst bedenklike kant.

Ons het reeds gevys op die onderskeid tussen uiterlike en innerlike rasne. Naas die liggaamlike is daar karakterieskappe wat erflik is. Ons het met hierdie verskille daagliks te doen en mag wel sê, dat sonder hierdie verskille die menslike lewe op aarde nie denkbaar is nie. Niemand sal ontken dat daar verskille in psigiese geaardheid tussen die rasne is nie. Maar hierdie verskille is nie baie ingrypend nie, hulle is in elk geval kleiner as die verskille van die geslagte.¹⁾

RASBESKOUING EN SOSIALE MITE

'n Rasbeskouing word 'n sosiale mite as dit van 'n wetenskaplike beskouing tot 'n lewens- en wêreldbeskouing ontwikkel, wanneer 'n bepaalde ras vanweë sy rasne bestaan daar 'n groot verskil tussen mens en dier, ook tussen die allerprimitiefste en die hoogs ontwikkelde dier. Dié verskil is van geestelike aard, maar daaroor gaan dit in hierdie verband nie. Waar dit wel oor gaan, is dat al wat daarvan wat nie alleen na die uiterlike sterk verskil nie, maar ook in karakter. Nie elke hond is 'n goede waghond, speurhond of

Die gevare van die vervorming van wetenskap tot sosiale mite is so ontsaglik groot, omdat die rasvraagstuk nie alleen 'n saak van teoretiese beskouing is nie, maar ook een van die mees aktuele en akute sosiale en politieke vraagstukke van die wêreld van vandag is. As 'n rasbeskouing eenmaal ontwikkel het tot 'n mite, dan is die onafwendbare gevolg dat ons die gevangenes van hierdie mite word. Ons kom nie meer daarvan los nie. Noot sal onself, of mekaar, mag wysmaak nie dat die ras 'n skeppingsordening is, 'n werlikheid deur God gegee wat as sodanig deur ons erken, eerbiedig en gehandhaaf moet word. Ons sal onself en mekaar so min as moontlik mag wysmaak dat van Godsweë die een ras meerderwaardig ten opsigte van die ander ras is.

Professor Hoekendijk het in hierdie verband die skerp-sinnige opmerking gemaak dat ons van die rasprobleem alleen dan erns maak, as ons dit as rasprobleem soveel as moontlik ignoreer, d.w.s. as ons die rasprobleem soveel moontlik as 'n sosiale, ekonomiese, politieke en kulturele probleem beskou.²⁾

'n Rasbeskouing wat 'n ras-sedogma of 'n sosiale mite word, moet 'n rasnevaan genoem word; die aanbidding van 'n hersenskim, 'n afgodery 'n vergoddeliking van vermeende rasvoortreflikhede en 'n miskennings van die onvervreembare regte wat die mense van 'n ander ras, van Godsweë, as mense het. Die kultuurniveau wat deur 'n bepaalde ras bereik is, het in wese met die ras as sodanig nikte maak nie. Wat mense vroeër beskou het as biologies bepaald, het geblyk kultureel bepaald te wees. Die gewoonte om oor rasne te spreke, het ontstaan onder invloed van bepaalde rassteteorieë wat, wetenskaplik geoordeel, onbetroubaar is.

Die sogenaamde superioriteits- of inferioriteitsvraag het betrekking op die kultuurniveau wat deur die verskillende rasne op 'n sekere tydstip bereik is. Dit is 'n heel ander vraag, as die vraag na die moontlikhede wat in die verteenwoordigers van verskillende rasne geleë is.

Tog het dit tot onlangs — en ook nou nog — vasgestaan, dat die Wes-Europese mense en hulle afstammelinge in die kolonies, oor eienskappe beskik wat aan hulle, tot in die verre toekoms, 'n oorheersende posisie in die wêreld waarborg. Deur dit wat die afgelope tyd uit die ontwikkeling van die Slawiese, Asiatische en ook enkele Afrikaanse volke duidelik geword het, is hierdie opvatting tot in sy grondslae geskok. Daar bestaan, wat die ras betref, geen wesenlike ongeskiktheid vir bepaalde take nie.

• Word vervolg

¹⁾ „Beschouwingen over het rasvraagstuk“ deur Professor Dr. G. W. Locher, Dr. P. J. Waardenburg, Dr. P. J. Idenburg en Professor Dr. J. H. Bavinck, W. ten Have, Amsterdam 1958, p. 35.

²⁾ „Enkele opmerkingen over 'Kerk en Ras' in het bijzonder met het oog op Zuid-Afrika, deur Professor Dr. J. C. Hoekendijk in 'de Heerbaan' Oktober 1961, p. 254.