

PRO



VERITATE

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THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD

BERNARD SHAW, in the Preface to "St. Joan", quotes the letter of a Catholic priest who wrote to him thus: "I see the dramatic presentation of the conflict of the regal, sacerdotal and prophetic powers, in which Joan was crushed. To me it is not the victory of any one of them over the others that will bring peace and the Reign of the Saints in the Kingdom of God, but their fruitful interaction in a costly but noble state of tension". This could hardly be put better

In the modern world we have not only the conflict between Church and State, but also between Church and Church, the Church in its prophetic ministry, the Church in its priestly and pastoral ministry. Often this conflict is within a single man called to be, in East Germany or South Africa, in Poland or the United States, prophet and pastor at the same time.

To make the issue one between Church and State alone is not merely to over-simplify it: it is also making a distinction which fundamentally does not exist. To quote Bernard Shaw again, this time from "John Bull's Other Island": "In my dreams it is a country where the State is the Church and the Church the people: three in one and one in three. It is a commonwealth where work is play and play is life: three in one and one in three". Teilhard de Chardin could have written that, but it was written by one who claimed to be an unbeliever, yet an unbeliever whom I have quite naturally quoted twice in the first two paragraphs of an article for a Christian journal.

• The fact is that there is no fundamental division between the sacred and the secular, and therefore the main issue is not Church versus State. When we are told that "Loving Shepherd of Thy Sheep" is sacred music and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony profane music we are told a ridiculous lie. When we are told that the shape of the liturgy is a religious question and apartheid a secular question we are being led into mental and moral confusion.

The sword of God

We shall, as we must, return to this question. But in the meantime, since there are some differences between the Church and the State let us consider how the Church fares in a persecuting and also in a patronising State. A persecuted Church may find it much more easy to be pure and genuine. It can fairly easily avoid hypocrisy. But it may well become supine and apathetic in those great questions of life which we call "politics", and which, because they affect human personality are fully within the purview of the Church. The Church in East Germany or Poland finds it hard to fulfil its calling of being the sword of Christ in human affairs.

It has been the practice, especially of the reformed Church, to deplore the conversion of Constantine. Con-

stantine's conversion (which I believe to have been sincere) did help to make Christianity fashionable. People, many of whom had not had any deep personal experience of Christ, crowded into the Church. Hypocrisy increased. Standards fell. But for the first time in its history the Church was put in the position to challenge the world. If the Emperor was to be a Christian, the Church not only could but must tell him how a Christian should reign. We now live in an age of Parliamentary institutions, but the principle is the same. If a Parliament claims to be Christian, the Church has the right and duty to tell the legislators how Christians should legislate. The Church, no longer living a hole-and-corner life, is called to be the sword of God in the State.

Too often it fails in this duty. The fact that the State patronises it, makes it easy for the Church to "conform to this world". A "Christian" State may become very unchristian. So in pre-war Germany a large part of the Church conformed to nationalist and Nazi policies. The salt had lost its savour.

Even when things do not go so far the Church becomes, like much of eighteenth century Anglicanism, a defender of the status quo. The State supports the Church, and it in turn becomes apathetic. Thus parts of the Christian Church in our country which do not feel an obligation to fight for apartheid tolerate it because it is in fact the accepted practice of the country. They wish to be comfortable, not to have to think too much, not to be shocked unduly. Such a Church has its prophets occasionally as eighteenth century Anglicanism had its John Wesley, but it does not like them.

A fruitful tension

One of the puzzling things in the life of the Church is that it is called on to minister to such people, some of whom may not be altogether insincere and who, while apathetic on public questions, have and know that they have, personal needs. The fact is that the Church has two functions. It is the sword of Christ. It is also the mother of wayfaring men. Never can it give up either function, yet their co-existence (often in the life of one minister or priest) can mean almost unbearable tension. The Church must challenge society. This is its prophetic work. Not only the robust

Elijah, but the tender-hearted Jeremiah, had to accept this function. So in South Africa today it is often the duty of a minister to challenge a comfortable congregation which resents being made uncomfortable on a "political" question such as the tremendous disparity between European and African wages, the plight of the man who is paid black and has to buy white. Yet he cannot shut his heart to those in need, even if they have never opened their own hearts on personal questions.

• The Church cannot be the Liberal Party at prayer, any more than it can be the Nationalist Party at prayer. Its ministers must care for all Christ's people, aware or unaware of the political situation, and there can be no limits to evangelical charity.

But in no way must they accept the view that the Church is something apart from life, or that politics is something 'worldly' with which Christians should have nothing to do. This kind of other-worldliness is not justifiable, for, in the words of Edmund Burke, "all virtue which is impracticable is spurious". In our own day two great men, the Catholic Teilhard du Chardin and the Protestant Tillich, have taught us to avoid this and similar errors. Their teaching and that of others has opened up great fields of thought, which we should all pursue further. They are not new. They were with us, as the First Epistle of St. John says "from the beginning". Yet they need further study based on deeper experience.

* Continued on page 2

PROF. C. A. VAN PEURSEN

Enkele opmerkings oor die verskynsel „Sekularisasie”

„SEKULARISASIE” vorm die tema van baie diskussies, met name in die kring van teoloë. 'n Mens is daarvan bewus dat die Kerk in 'n nuwe verhouding tot die nie-christelike wêreld gekom het, sonder egter, dat 'n mens hierdie verhouding reeds duidelik kan omskryf.

Die diskussies oor die sekularisasie het daarom 'n uiters praktiese sy, hoe teoreties hulle ookal mag klink, want hierdie diskussies is uiting van 'n daaragter-liggende verskynsel: die poging om 'n nuwe verhouding te vind tot die nie-christelike wêreld van vandag, ja, tot die eie geloofservaring.

Onder sekularisasie word verstaan dat die „sacrale”, die „seculum”, oftewel die wêreldsterrein, binnegedring word. As egter heilige voorwerpe, bv. 'n tempel, uit hul sakrale milieu in die profane wêreld kom, behou hulle dan nog wel hul geheimsinnige krag, of word hulle opgevat as alledaagse dinge wat nugter beskou moet word? Wanneer 'n godebeeld deur almal bewonder word weens die kunssinnige kwaliteite daarvan, dan kan dit wel wees dat die geloof in die godheid wat in daardie beeld gemanifesteer is, verlore is. Dit wat tans „sekularisasie” genoem word, is 'n gelyksoortige verskynsel. Die godebeelde, hetsy in die letterlike sin van die woord, hetsy in die figuurlike sin: kerklike dogmas, oorgelewerde goddelik gesanksioneerde wette, onbetwyfelbare, hoëre waarhede, hulle almal word in die sekulum binnegedra. Dikwels wek hulle bewondering: hoe wonderlik tog is die psigologiese meganisme waardeur die mens sy eie geheim kan projekteer in godebeelde. Hoe verrassend werk sosiale pressie wat onbewus saamhorigheid bevorder deurdat die norme van die samelewing erken word asof hulle

geboorte van 'n godheid sou wees. Maar soms wek dit hulle afkeer: hoe onbegryplik is die dogmas waarin iets oor 'n hoëre, goddelike werklikheid gestel word. Hoe star, hoe min persoonlik-betrekking, is alle ewige waarhede en norme, wat in 'n godsbegrip kulmineer, en waar niks mensliks meer te herken is nie. Positief of negatief, die sekulum (wêreld) is dit eens in die beoordeling van religie en metafisika dat dit slegs sinvol is, indien dit as menslike of as sosiale meganisme onthul word.

Dus is sekularisasie nie soseer die profanisering van die heilige nie, maar dit wat in wese veel erger kan wees: die as sinloos beskou van alles wat bo hierdie wêreld, bo ons menslike ervaring, bo die logika van die alledaagse taal uitgaan. Die metafisiese en religieuse kontrole van hierdie wêreld word verwerp, nie omdat dit nie waar sou wees nie, maar, veel erger, omdat mens niks sinvol daaronder kan verstaan nie. In baie vorme het hierdie sekularisasie hom voorgedoen. Om nog maar enkele, dikwels gememoreerde voorbeelde in herinnering te roep: Laplace, wat aan Napoleon sy teorie omtrent die heelal uiteengesit het, en op Napoleon se vraag waar daar dan nog plek is vir God, geantwoord het: „Meneer, ek het hipotese nie meer nodig nie”. Of die opkoms van die Darwinisme, waarby dieselfde verskynsel haar in die biologie voltrek, omdat

* Vervolg op bladsy 2

The Church in the World

* Continued from page 1

The Incarnation

Two of these fields of thought call for attention here. One is the full meaning of the Incarnation. The Eternal Word, in becoming man, has in effect said: "Homo sum; humani nil a me alienum puto". The religion which uses water, bread and wine for its main sacraments cannot be wholly other-worldly. It is true that our Lord refused to become a political leader — His vocation was far greater — but He did describe the tetrach of His own Galilee as "that fox", and He did in His cleansing of the Temple attack a political abuse by the priestly leaders of His own Jewish nation.

He was in the line of succession of the Old Testament prophets who were heart and soul bound up in the fight for social justice, and unless we are to exclude from Christianity all that preceded and all that followed the New Testament we must accept politics as part of the concern of God. The conditions of the New Testament — a persecuted minority Church, a single ordered Empire ruling the civilised world, a monarchy where the subject, Christian or non-Christian, had few duties except to obey — are not often reproduced in human history.

The Holy Spirit

We still have to understand fully the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and to rejoice in the great joy of His constant presence, inspiration and strength. In our own day the Church is beginning to draw up new treasures from this inexhaustible store. We cannot find words lovely enough to describe this abounding life. If as we think of the Incarnation we are led not to take from the glory of Jesus but to 'crown Him with many crowns', so, as we think of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, we take nothing from the glory of the eternal Godhead but only begin to see more clearly how deep and high and all-embracing it is. To the young, and to those of the old to whom God gives the young heart, the thought of the Holy Ghost at work in the 1960's with absolutely no limits to His power and love, is exhilarating in the extreme. This is why we rightly and instinctively react against 'evangelistic' campaigns which fasten on the personal life, especially sex and prayer, and ignore almost everything else. It is not that they demand too much: it is that they demand too little. It is not that they are too emotional: it is that they are not emotional enough. It is not that they are too orthodox, but that they have failed to plumb some of the greatest depths of the orthodox faith.

The City of God and the earthly city

The antitheses, then, are not the Church versus the State, or the godly versus the world. The contrast to be drawn is that between utter devotion and obedience in all things and an incomplete surrender to God. It could hardly be put better than by St. Augustine when he says that the citizens of the City of God love God to the contempt of self and the citizens of the earthly city love self to the contempt of God.

He goes on to warn us that these two Cities are "in the course of these declining times intermixed and intertwined" in mankind generally and in our own lives. We cannot afford to be self-righteous about 'the world': it is one of the ugliest characteristics to be found among professing Christians. The State is not merely the "earthly City", nor is the Church as it stands the "City of God". Catholic Bishop though he is, Augustine is pre-

pared to find Christians (not claiming to be such) in unexpected places, and men of sub-Christian life in the Church and so it is today.

• Whoever prefers truth to comfort, even if he claims to be an atheist, is a knight of the Holy Ghost. Whoever prefers comfort to truth is a betrayer of Christ, even though he attends two services every Sunday of his life.

And yet we dare not repudiate the visible Church even though it contains much sub-Christian thinking and living. To do this is to repudiate humility and to revel in our own self-righteousness. Christ knew (who could

know it so well?) that His Church was bound to consist of frail and fallible men. It was "in the same night that He was betrayed", in the nadir of the infant Church's fortunes, that "He took bread and brake it, and said 'This is my Body'." One of the first twelve was a traitor, one denied Him, the rest ran away. He knew (who better?) that in the second generation there would already be hereditary Christians, and that not all of them would have the enthusiasm of their fathers, and yet they could not be turned away. He was willing to work in a world of such men, in a Church of such men. Are we holier than He was? Judging from the Epistles, the Churches of Corinth and Ephesus, of Rome and Thessalonica, were frail

even by today's lax standards, but the Holy Spirit did not desert them. For the Corinthians who quarrelled and lived in impurity He, through St. Paul, wrote the great poem on love. Christ took this risk of an imperfect Church: we must take it.

• But even as we do we must dedicate our own lives to utter obedience and pray passionately for grace to give that obedience. We must ever strive for the pure Church while we recognise the actual Church. For many of us the role of a prophet in a hostile and suspicious Church is indicated. May we, filling that role with courage, help to keep the Church, with all its faults, salt in a corrupt world, light in a dark age, Christ's home always. ★

Enkele opmerkings oor die verskynsel „Sekularisasie”

* Vervolg van bladsy 1

daar vir die afsonderlike biologiese soorte nou geen afsonderlike goddelike ingryping meer nodig was nie, omdat hulle wetmatig uit mekaar voortkom langs die weg van ewolusie. Of die opkoms van die dieptepsigologie, waar Freud die religie as illusie kon beskryf. Of die van die sosiologie, waarby Marx, vanuit die spel van maatskaplike kragte, die goddiens kon aandui as 'n remmende ideologie. Die gate in die veld van ons kennis word steeds kleiner, so klein dat die mens geen grote god meer nodig het om die gate op te vul nie. Vroom praatjies vul geen gaatjies nie!

In die diskussies rondom hierdie sekularisasie lê ten grondslag, soos reeds gesê, die behoefte om 'n nuwe verhouding te vind tot die moderne manier van dink, maar, meer nog, tot dit wat die Bybelse verkondiging nou eintlik as werklike en kragtige boodskap vir vandag inhoud. Die beoordeling van sekularisasie is dan ook uiteenlopend. Die eerste groep sien daar uitsluitend 'n groot gevaar in. Mens moet die tradisionele waardes verdedig en die bonatuurlike gehalte van die Christelike geloof nog weer 'n keer duidelik formuleer. So het 'n fundamentalistiese skrywer uit die kring van die Internasionale Raad vir Christelike Kerke ('n organisasie wat teen die Wêreldraad gerig is) geskryf, dat teenoor die tegniese oormoedigheid van die Russe met hulle ruimtevaarders deur die Christene gewys moet word op die hemelvaart van Christus as die eerste ruimtevaart. Dan word dit moeilik: metafisika teen metafisika. 'n Tweede groep sien in die sekularisasie alleen maar voordeel. Die ware Christendom is van hierdie wêreld, en die Ou Testament teken niks anders as een groot sekularisasie van 'n heidense sakrale wêreld nie. Die Christendom beteken geen religie nie, maar is die stryd teen die religie en die metafisika. So is daar geen konflik nie. Nie tussen geloof en wetenskap nie, en ook nie tussen kerk en sekularisasie nie. 'n Mens kan jou nie aan die indruk onttrek nie dat hier in 'n teenoorgestelde rigting die eie gehalte van die moderne sekularisasie misken word. Die moderne sekularisasie is immers geensins bereid om op 'n gesekulariseerde wyse Christen te wees nie, maar verwerp juis elke aanspraak van Godswê op die mens. Mens sou behoort na te gaan hoe enersyds die sekularisasie juis dit verwerp wat in wese nie tot die Christelike boodskap behoort nie en dus deur hierdie sekularisasie as metafiese ballas uitgesuiwer kan word. Maar ook hoe andersyds die sekularisasie 'n toesluiting is van die mens vir God, hoe dus daar in elke transendensie afgewys word.

Transendensie, 'n gevaarlike woord, as 'n mens in Christelike sin daarmee kan en mag bedoel nie. Nie die metafisiese transendensie nie. Die sekularisasie het in 'n bepaalde opsig iets van 'n bevryding as dit die bonatuurlike

werklikheid, wat 'n mens sleg op gesag sou moet aanneem, verwerp.

Hierdie verdubbeling van die wêreld in natuur en bo-natuur, in tyd en ewigheid, in verskynende en substansiële werklikheid is in stryd met wat die hedendaagse neo-positivis die sinvolle en verifieerbare gehalte van die menslike taal sou noem. Maar dit is seker soseer — op 'n ander wyse — in stryd met wat die Bybel tot die hart van sy boodskap maak, te wete dat slegs oor „God” gesprek kan word as 'n mens erken dat die menselewe direk op Hom betrokke is, en dat sy naam alleen sinvol genoem kan word as 'n mens Hom in sy woord-dade, in sy betrokke-wees by die menslike geskiedenis, herken.

In die tradisionele metafisika word die onderskeiding gemaak tussen „transendent” en „immanent”; die eerste bevind hom agter, bo en buite die immanente wat die sfeer is waarin die mens hom bevind, maar hierdie skeiding misken die transendensie van God, weer dit af, plaas dit buite die deur. Die transendensie van God is allereers dat die lewe van die mens sinvol oopgebreek word, dat die menslike geskiedenis nie vanuit homself 'n uitsig verkry nie. Hierdie Goddelike transendensie is nie te rym met die onderskeiding van „immanent-transendent” nie, omdat die mens hom nie kan verskans nie, welwillend soos die fundamentalis of onwelwillend soos die Marxist, in metafisiese dogmas en stelsels, waar die mens hier en God daár sou wees.

Die hele diskussie wat deur en rondom Robinson gevoer is, hoeveel metafisiese struikelblokke ook op waardevolle wyse opgeruim is, beweeg nog te veel in die sfeer van die vraag of God nou daar bo, daar ver, of daar diep in ons sou wees. Die transendensie van God is nie lokaliseerbaar nie, is weliswaar altyd teenwoordig in die sekulum en is vir sover sekulêr, maar breek tegelykertyd alle eie singewinge weer af. Vandaar ook die ander betekenis van hierdie transendensie: die soewereine, verhewene, ondeurgrondelike. Maar dergelyke woorde het dan eers sin as die Godnaam vlak by, 'n worsteling van lyf teen lyf soos by die Jabbok, funksioneer. Eers van hierdie God met wie 'n mens van naby worstel, hyg en hoop, kan vervolgens gesê word, dat Hy was voor die berge gebore is, van oertyd tot eindtyd. Teen hierdie telkens nuwe werklikheid van die Naam breek die onderskeidinge van bo en benede, immanent en transendent, tyd en ewigheid stukkend!

Die woord „god” het as sodanig in die Bybel geen betekenis nie, maar verower onder die mense sin en betekenis: dit is sy transendente, d.w.s. op — ons — inbrekende krag. Ons gee dié woord maar al te dikwels 'n verkeerde bo-natuurlike betekenis en van hierdie „substansialisme” kan die sekularisasie ons bevry. Of ons dui die woord as neerslag van religieuse er-

varinge en rites van die ou Bybelskrywers („operationeel”). Die geskiedenis van die woord „God” is dat dit geen bepaalde betekenis het nie, maar in die geskiedenis betekenis kry. Die Naam is teenwoordig, funksioneer in die heel besondere geskiedenis.

En telkens weer is daar mense — die aartsvaders, die profete, die discipels — wat sê: in hierdie worsteling, in hierdie direkte gebeurtenisse herken ek dat dit Hy weer is, die Naam, wat ook vroeër uitredding beteken het. Dan word daar geskiedenis gemaak, omdat die natuurlike geskiedenis van die mensheid deurbreek word.

Dit gaan juis nie om die menslike werksaamhede nie: die verhaal, selfs die verteller (Israel, die Kerk) bestaan by die gracie van dit wat verhaal word. Daarom is die vraag agter alle diskussies rondom die sekularisasie, die vraag nou na die funksionering van hierdie selfde kragdadige Naam.

Hierdie artikel wil nie voorgee om 'n oplossing te kan bied van die sekularisasie-vraagstuk nie. Dit probeer wel om by te dra tot die juiste stelling van hierdie sentrale vraag, wat ver bo die teoretiese bestek uitgaan, omdat dit die totale houding van die Kerk in die huidige wêreld raak. ★

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PRO VERITATE

Inleidingsartikel.

GOD, DIE GESIN EN DIE OWERHEID

In „Dagbreek en Sondagnuus” van 28 Junie het daar kritiek verskyn op 'n artikel van prof. Monica Wilson wat in ons Mei- en Junie-uitgawes verskyn het waar die saak van die ontwriging van die gesinslewe van die Bantoe aangeraak is ook na aanleiding van ons huidige wetgewing. Die vraag is gestel of dit die standpunt van ons blad vertolk en ons herhaal die antwoord dat ons ons stel op die eis van Gods Woord ten opsigte van die huwelik en die gesin. Dis seker nie nodig om te sê wat daardie eis is nie behalwe om te beklemtoon dat die Skrif die onverbreekbaarheid van die gesinsverband as grondvereiste stel vir enige gesonde samelewing.

Daar is verwys na die plig van die owerheid om 'n gesonde beheer oor die instroming van arbeid te bewaar. Dis volkome korrek dat die owerheid sodanige reg en plig het en niemand kan daar enige beswaar teen opper solank dit geskied met volle erkenning en handhawing van die gesinsverband wanneer sodanige kontrak uitgeoefen word. En laat ons dadelik byvoeg dat ook privaatonderneemings soos groot myn- en ander maatskappye wat duisende getroude mans as enkellopende arbeiders aanhou, 'n morele verantwoordelikheid het wat nie ontduik mag word nie.

Dit gaan hier egter nie om instromingsbeheer nie. Die probleem ontstaan waar die staat in uitvoering van 'n sekere beleid, sekere wette maak wat hierdie Skrifbeginsel van die eenheid van die gesinsverband aantast en gesinne deur die mag van die wet op 'n gedwonge wyse van mekaar geskei word.

Dan word dit vir die Kerk en vir die Christen 'n ernstige gewetensvraag wat nie ontwyk mag word nie. Somtyds word die verweer opgewerp dat die fout nie lê in die wetgewing self nie maar in die manier waarop sodanige wetgewing toegepas word. Ons neem aan dat sommige amptenare seker ook die saak verkeerd hanteer, maar ons wil dit duidelik stel dat die grootste gros van amptenare vandag hulle beste doen om op 'n verantwoordelike manier sulke wette op 'n menslike manier toe te pas. Die vraag is egter: as 'n wet inherent indruis teen die eise van Christelike geregtigheid en menslikheid, hoe pas 'n mens dit dan op 'n menslike manier toe?

Wanneer die punt geopper word met staving van talle bewyse van ontwriging van die gesinslewe en die geforseerde skeiding van mans van hulle vroue of vaders van hulle vroue en kinders, dan word soms geantwoord dat hierdie wetgewing die fundering van die hele beleid van die land i.v.m. ons rasseverhoudinge vorm (bv. die Bantoe Stedelike Wysigingswet). Daarop antwoord ons: as dit die geval is en sodanige wetgewing inherent teenstrydig is met die eise van Gods Woord vir die gesin, dan kan dit nooit slaag nie — want dan probeer ons om teen God en sy gebod te stry. En wie Hom teen God se gebod verset, word vernietig.

Ons sê hierdie dinge nie om die taak van ons owerheid te bemoeilik nie. Ons as Christene is ewe diep besorgd oor die bewaring en uitbouing van 'n gesonde gesinslewe onder beide blank en nie-blank. Maar ons besorgdheid — ook oor die voortbestaan van ons eie volksgenote — word vergroot as daar voorgegee word dat deur die wet bewerkte verbreking van die gesinslewe van duisende 'n noodwendige vereiste geword het vir die slaging van 'n beleid. Wie so redeneer en handel bedreig nie alleen die voortbestaan van 'n gesonde gesinsverband van 'n ander ras nie, maar vernietig daardeur die morele grondslag vir sy eie voortbestaan.

Editorial.

THE CRUX OF THE MATTER

THE so-called multi-racial churches (sometimes referred to as the English-speaking churches) are standing at the cross-roads. Having declared in various ways that it is the will of God that the Church should be one and undivided, they are faced with the challenge created by those who take these statements seriously. And the day of decision cannot be delayed much longer and has only been delayed because the members of these churches, both white and non-white, have been too timid and ambivalent in their application of these statements in regard to race relations in the day to day lives of their congregations. The fine phrases which have consciously or unconsciously accompanied the statements declaring the unity and non-racial character of the Church — “gradual evolution”, “ultimate fruition”, “cultural differences”, “spiritual unity”, “patience” — are not only less convincing, but are being seen for what they are: the sounds of clanging symbols. An increasing number of Christians are discovering that it is a distortion of the Gospel to suggest that Christ valued peace above conflict when the truth of His message was at stake. Behind the “gentle Jesus” imagery of the Good Shepherd the fire and sword of the Christ who divided families and cleansed the Temple is being discovered. And in this discovery there is a new awareness of the ministry to which He calls His people — a ministry which is more than comforting the spiritually crippled and will not be satisfied “till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13). J.E.M.

OORDENKING

TEKSVERS: JOHANNES 12:12-26.

„Maar Jesus antwoord hulle en sê: Die uur het gekom dat die Seun van die mens verheerlik moet word. Voorwaar, voorwaar, Ek sê vir julle, as die koringkorrel nie in die grond val en sterf nie, bly dit alleen, maar as dit sterf dra dit veel vrug. Wie sy lewe liefhet, sal dit verloor, maar wie sy lewe haat in hierdie wêreld, sal dit bewaar vir die ewige lewe.”

Geliefdes, Jesus spreek die woorde van ons teksvers uit, met sy laaste intog in Jerusalem as 'n groot skare om Hom saamdrom om eer aan Hom te bewys.

Alles dui daarop dat die menigte Hom tot Messias wil uitroep, en tot Koning wil verhef. Aan die eenkant wil Hy dit graag met groot blydschap aanvaar. Maar aan die anderkant besef Hy da' hulle onder 'n groot misverstand verkeer. Hulle sien in Hom 'n aardse Koning wat nie langs die weg van lyde oortwin nie. Aan die eenkant is daar by Jesus die hunkering na die Messiaanse heerlikheid, maar Hy weet dat Hy dit moet bereik langs die moeilike weg van lyding en die dood.

Daarom wys Hy die eerbetoen van die skare af en kies Hy om Messias te wees langs die weg van gehoorsaamheid aan sy Vader. Dit is nie die maklike wyse om die Messiaanse heerlikheid te bereik nie maar die pynlike weg van vernedering en lyding. Sy eie persoonlike voordeel en geries en lewe gee Hy prys en kies om verwerp te word en soos 'n misdadiger gekruisig te word om die verlossing vir die ganse mensdom te verkry. Hy vermy nie die weg van die grootste weerstand en vreeslike ontbering nie, want Hy wil gehoorsaam aan sy Vader wees, al beteken dit ook dat Hy aan die kruis moet kom.

Die woorde van ons teksvers is nie slegs 'n hoë ideaal wat Jesus vir die mensdom voorhou nie. Die weg van die koringkorrel gaan Hyself. Hy maak dit sy eie lewenspatroon. So bring Hy die heerlikheid van die lewe met God ook oor die mense. „As die graankorrel nie in die grond val en sterf nie, bly dit alleen, maar as dit sterf, dra dit veel vrug.” — Dit is eenvoudig 'n onweerlegbare natuurwet, wat nie verander kan word nie. Dit is presies die beeld van die werk en lewe van Jesus Christus. Met die verskil: waar dit vir die koringkorrel natuur-wetmatig is om vernietig te word om vrugte te dra en lewe te verseker, kies Jesus Christus doelbewus hierdie weg in gehoorsaamheid aan sy Vader. Hy gaan nie willoos die lyding en die dood in nie. Hy kon dit verhoed as Hy wou. Maar Hy gaan gewillig en doelbewus die godverlatenheid in en tree lewend uit die graf om uitermate verhoog te word en redding oor sondaars te bring.

Dit is duidelik dat Jesus sy navolgers en gelowiges voor dieselfde beslissing stel — „Wie sy lewe liefhet, sal dit verloor, maar wie sy lewe haat in hierdie wêreld, sal dit bewaar vir die ewige lewe”.

Die navolgers van Christus sal ook op die lydingspad geplaas word. As Hy gely het sal sy dissipels dit nie ontkom nie. En nou beteken dit dat hulle nie hul lewe as 'n selfstandige grootheid moet beskou nie. Die lewe van 'n mens is nie 'n doel in sigself nie. Die waarde daarvan lê in die verhouding en die verbintenis wat dit met Christus het. Dit is ondergeskik aan Christus. Christus en die navolging van Hom kom eerste. Dit was die hoogste waarde. Die lewe op sigself, om dit te behou en te bewaar is van sekondêre belang. Christus moet eerste gestel word, terwille daarvan om christen te wees, d.w.s. in Hom te glo en te gehoorsaam moet jy bereid wees om te sterwe.

Natuurlik moet 'n mens jou lewe as 'n gawe van God beskou en jou lewe nie roekeloos in gevaar stel nie. Maar as dit lewensgevaarlik word om in Christus te glo en Hom gehoorsaam te wees, moet dit jou nie afskrik om in Hom te glo en Hom te gehoorsaam nie. — Dan moet jy kies om te sterwe soos Stéfanus en Johannes Hus en ander begenadigdes. En nie soos die owerstes wat ons teksboekstuk vermeld wat in Jesus geglo het maar dit nie bely het nie uit vrees om uit die sinagoge geban te word.

Want elkeen wat sy lewe as die hoogste goed waardeer verloor soos die ryk dwaas alles waarvoor hy gestry het en sy lewe self. Elkeen wat hom uit selfbehoud, bloot terwille van die behoud van sy lewe onttrek aan moeite en stryd en sterwe terwille van Christus, gaan vir ewig verlore. Maar elkeen wat homself nie in ag neem omdat hy nie van Christus geskei wil wees nie ontvang die ewige lewe.

Wie homself liefhet en sy lewe as die hoogste waarde sien en homself wil laat geld, verspeel sy christen-wees. Hy verloor die band met Christus en verloor sy lewe. Maar elkeen wat sy lewe agteraan in die diens en gehoorsaamheid aan Christus stel, se lewe word vir ewig behou.

Geliefdes, wie hierdie geheim nog nie geleer het nie, weet nog nie wat dit beteken om in Christus te glo nie.

En laat ons nou daarvan kennis neem dat die woorde van Christus in ons teksvers deur niemand anders in die ganse bestaan van die wêreld gebesig is nie, en ook nooit gebesig sal word nie. Dit is nie die ideaal wat ons volk nastrewe nie en dit is nie die lewenspatroon van enige volk op die aardbol nie.

Volkere en leiers van volkere sien altyd die lewe en voortbestaan as 'n doel in sigself — dit is die aard van 'n sondige mens. Vandaar die feit dat ons teksverse van hulle waar is. Hulle bly nie. Hulle kom en gaan. Die volkere het die volksbestaan as 'n selfstandige grootheid gesien en dié wat die sterkste daarna gestrewe het is telkens tot in hulle fondamente afgebreek. Rye van hulle — Babilonië, Egipte, Griekeland, die magtige Romeinse Ryk, Spanje, Frankryk . . . So sal dit in die toekoms met die volkere van die wêreld wees!

Die taal van ons teksverse is nie die taal wat in parlemente gebruik word nie, ongeag watter politieke party aan bewind is.

In die raadsale van die wêreld praat hulle van selfbehoud en handhawing van jouself. Dit is die grondreël van alle kultuur en ekonomie en alle aspekte van die samelewing.

Maar vir Christus gaan dit om lewe ondergeskik aan Hom en terwille van Hom! Daarom is dit alleen die ware Kerk van Jesus Christus wat op hierdie wêreld sal bly en wat verseker is, dat sy die laaste dag nog daar sal wees — dié Kerk wat dit beoefen om soos die graankorrel te sterwe in die grond en veel vrug te dra, wat sy lewe laat in die wêreld.

Gelukkig is die volk in wie se midde daar nog so 'n Kerk is wat dit leer en beoefen. Want lewe is alleen daar in verbondenheid met Christus. As jy terwille van Christus sterwe, lewe jy. As jy strewe na die behoud van jou lewe net om te lewe, gaan jy verlore. Sou die woorde van ons teksvers verstaan word in hierdie tyd waarin ons lewe? — en deur ons verstaan word?

AMEN.

(Oorgeneem uit „Die Christelike Vrou”, Mei, 1964.)

E. P. J. MATOKAKO*

Christian Home and Family Life

Our task was to discuss and plan further seminars to study the whole question of Christian Home and Family Life. We are encouraged and rewarded by making use of what little experience has been gained from the "All-Africa Seminar on Christian Home and Family Life", but hope that in the future more denominations will participate in discussions such as these. If more denominations had joined in the conference at the NAXA Ecumenical Youth Centre the ideal of the Christian Council of South Africa that the work of the Family Life Section should be conducted on an ecumenical basis, would have been advanced.

One of our major assignments was to attempt to understand more fully and clearly what makes for a Christian marriage. What follows is a resume of the lecture and findings on this subject. We were helped in our discussions of marriage by thinking of a marriage as a 'person' and of trying to work out the analogy between the life and development of a marriage.

Thought of in this way we described marriage as a 'marriage-person'.

1. The "Marriage-person":

Up to the present the Church has confronted African society with a negative message concerning the family — "You cannot be polygamists and church members". The more important task awaiting the Church is to spell out what monogamy means in positive terms. A monogamous marriage is not necessarily a Christian marriage. Even the marriage of a baptized girl does not automatically constitute a Christian marriage.

2. The independence of the "Marriage-person":

Genesis 2:24 describes in an unsentimental way the essentially necessary condition for the 'birth' of the marriage-person: leaving the respective families, setting up a apart home from the parental dwelling. From now on the marriage-person is forbidden to speak of 'my' and 'your' family. There is only 'our' family. And unless the couples are independent the nation will not be independent.

In Africa one of the greatest enemies of a Christian marriage is the clan. Husband and wife only have a federal relationship, not a union. He has all his confidential relationships with the brothers of his clan and she with the sisters of her clan. The African wife is thus like an ambassador in a foreign country. She keeps her clan in her heart as a possible refuge in time of need. Her clan is her life-insurance company and her savings deposit. She is first of all the daughter of her mother, in the second place the mother of her children and only in the third place the wife of her husband. Thus husband and wife are not one person, but two business partners living on a contract where each one tries to get the most out of the joint enterprise. In Matth. 12:48-50 Jesus warned strongly against the real idols of marriage in present day Africa — mammon and the clan. Both these idols are effectively at work in the clan-lobola system.

In the traditional African society this custom served to stabilize marriage because the lobola was paid in kind and had to be restored if the marriage broke up. The change over to a monetary economy has corrupted this custom by introducing cupidity and greed. The following vicious circle is at work: the lobola system prevents young men from getting married and favours prostitution; prostitution

favours the spread of venereal diseases; venereal diseases are amongst the most frequent causes of sterility and divorce; sterility is one of the main motives for polygamy; polygamy strengthens the lobola system. Thus the rich possess the monopoly of women because they alone can afford the money for lobola.

Because every human being is a brother or sister for whom Christ died and because at the Cross marriage between God and His Church was established, the only price that can be paid for a human being — the blood of Christ — has been paid. Every other price is a price that enslaves. And because of the death of Jesus, every financial transaction which enslaves a human being is a blasphemy against the Cross.

For these reason some churches in Africa do not bless a couple in church if lobola is paid or received.

3. The growth of the "Marriage-person":

A person is constantly growing and changing. When he stops growing he is dead.

The engagement, the mutual promise to marry is the procreation of the marriage-person. The time between engagement and the actual marriage is its embryonic development. It is hidden from the outside world. It is not yet sure whether birth will take place — miscarriage is possible.

The wedding is the birth of the marriage person. It is made public and the marriage-baby is registered as a new person.

From now on it has to grow. Children's diseases are normal in the beginning and need not to be taken too seriously. But the marriage cannot grow unless there is an honest sharing between the marriage partners. Sharing means speaking together about troubles, complaints, worries, sorrows, plans and desires. Those who are unable to find the first word after a quarrel are unable to share and should not marry.

4. The "Marriage-person" as a living organism

The husband and wife are the main organs of the marriage-person and are represented by the head and the heart.

The husband is the head of the marriage-person who represents it legally and publically. He is expected to act as the captain of the boat — looking ahead, deciding where to live and to provide food and clothing.

The wife is the heart of the marriage-person. She gives warmth and nourishment, is the keeper of the house and brings up the children. If the husband is thought of as the hearth then the wife is the fire in the hearth.

It is also important to notice that the head and heart are equally essential for the health of the marriage-person. If either one or the other does not function as it should the marriage-person becomes sick.

If a husband does not fulfil his responsibilities as 'head', the wife is

tempted to neglect her role as 'heart' and to take over the functions of the 'head'. Then the struggle for power is on.

A man feels unconsciously and secretly inferior to a woman because she has more self-assurance and decides things by intuition and feeling rather than by complicated reflection. Thus the husband is doubly sensitive to criticism which comes from his wife and in order to compensate for his feeling of inferiority is tempted to assume a dictatorial manner.

But a woman also feels inferior to a man and often tries to compensate for this by a passion for fault-finding in her husband. This is the root cause of most marriage quarrels. Thus, if a husband who is constantly depreciated by his wife meets a woman who admires him, he is tempted to go after her. This is often how unfaithfulness and adultery begins.

On the other hand, the more the husband becomes 'head' the more his wife will play the role of heart. Her task is to make her husband 'head' by appreciating his work, by encouraging him. She has to 'knock him into shape'. Then she is not only 'heart' but the 'helpmeet' of Gen. 2:18.

5. The blood of the "Marriage-person":

Love is the blood of the marriage-person. But blood belongs within a person's veins and outside of the person it coagulates. So too love deteriorates outside marriage.

Love has three aspects:

a. The physical aspect of love:

The physical aspect of love we call 'sex'. A man can be attracted sexually by any woman even though he does not know her. Sexual excitement is comparable to the watering of the mouth — it happens instinctively at the sight of delicious food. Sex does not see the partner in the marriage as a person but as a means to an end. It is self-centred and looks for its own satisfaction.

Nevertheless sex should not be despised. It has its God-given task as the means of procreation and a source of pleasure.

But in Africa we have to emphasize the fact that sex is just one aspect of love. Most of the confusion and unruliness of young people is due to the fact that this part is taken for the whole and identified with love itself, whereas sex should be one among many other expressions of love.

b. The psychological aspect of love: We call this aspect of love 'eroa' (not to be confused with 'eros'). Eroa is concerned with the marriage partner as a person. It is directed towards a specific individual. It responds to beauty, laughter, the tone of voice, the gestures — in fact to everything that lays bare the soul of one person to another. Eroa-love is the exclusive relationship between two persons and excludes polygamy. Eroa makes love at once an art and a game, thus distinguishing human beings from animals. (Song of Solomon 2:8-14.)

c. The spiritual aspect of love:

This we call 'agape'. Agape is the

open window towards God, the stalk of the apple which connects it to the tree.

Sex has its centre of gravity in the ego. Eroa has its centre of gravity in 'us two'. But Agape's centre of gravity lies outside the married couple. It includes a mutual responsibility to each other but also a further responsibility to God.

Agape loves another person because he exists, not because of certain characteristics and features of his personality. Thus agape is the basis of fidelity. It remains even when sex and eroa fail. It gives strength to stay together, even if one of the partners in the marriage becomes hopelessly sick.

Agape is the gift of a common spiritual life. It expresses itself in common devotions, prayer, worship and decisions before God. It means total responsibility for the other one and can only be realized in monogamy.

Every person lives out of his encounter with another person.

The partner of the marriage-person is God. That which one partner of the marriage does to the other he does at the same time to God who holds husband and wife together in His hand.

Suggested programme for a week's study of family life:

In case individual churches or congregations wish to organise their own conference on Christian Home and Family Life, I am including a suggested programme. Also invaluable is the report of the 'All-Africa Seminar on the Christian Home and Family Life' obtainable from Mindolo Ecumenical Centre, P.O. Box 1192, Kitwe, North Rhodesia. (35 cents, post free).

SUNDAY:

Invite guest preacher to preach on Christian marriage.

MONDAY:

Invite all "WOULD-BE MARRIED COUPLES".
1st lecture: Courtship and Engagement.
2nd lecture: "Mixed marriages".
(each lecture followed by discussion, or discussion groups).

TUESDAY:

Invite YOUTH.
1st lecture: "Choosing the right partner".
2nd lecture: "Sex education".

WEDNESDAY:

Invite MARRIED COUPLES.
1st lecture: "Why one flesh?"
2nd lecture: Family Planning and Budgeting".

THURSDAY:

Invite CHURCH ELDERS AND CATECHISTS.
1st lecture: "Broken relationships".
2nd lecture: "Marriage Counseling".

FRIDAY:

Invite MEN'S AND WOMEN'S GROUPS.
1st lecture: "What God has joined . . ."
2nd lecture: "The home and the child".

SATURDAY:

Social day for all — Games, Drama, Film, Panel on Marriage.

SUNDAY:

Thanksgiving Sunday (Family Sunday).
Tea, Procession and visits, etc.

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REV. C. WILKINS*

COMMISSION AND COMFORT —

Our Unity in the Risen Christ

IT seemed right to those who arranged this demonstration of Christian Unity, that instead of having separate addresses in English and Zulu, the one message should be given in both languages. My colleague and I are therefore collaborating to bring this message to you. The one stupendous fact which has brought us together this afternoon is the Resurrection of Christ.

Without this, there would be no Church — not even a divided Church. By our presence we bear witness to this tremendous Act of God in the history of men, and it seems right therefore that we should consider the implications for us who are called by that Name, which is above every other name, "Before Whom names and sects and parties fall for Thou, o Christ, art all in all"; and it seems good that we should remind ourselves of two of the implications of this tremendous activity of God — implications which may be summed up in the words "Commission and Comfort".

That the Resurrection means Comfort for those who will respond to the offer of the Gospel is gloriously true, but it is worthy to note that many of the Resurrection words are words of Commission and Command. The "Lo, I am with you always" follows and is part of the Commission to "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel". This Commission finds expression in a wonderful word which the Lord spoke to his disciples and speaks to us. "As the Father has sent me, even so send I you."

It would be well for us in our own devotions and fellowship to consider this. We say a few words concerning it now.

The Lord of Truth

We rejoice that part of the purpose of the Coming of Our Lord was to reveal Truth. He was and is the Lord of Truth. It therefore follows that in the world of our own day, we are called to seek to proclaim and uphold Truth. That there are truths of varying degrees of importance is, of course, true. To say that one cigarette is longer than another may be true, but it is not of any great importance. To say that a given colour is fashionable for this year, may also be true, and possible expensive, but again it is of passing importance. To hear that "God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" this is of eternal significance. To listen to the Divine Story-teller telling of the Good Samaritan and hear Him say "Go and do thou likewise": this is as relevant as the news in this morning's paper, but also of eternal significance. It is this quality of Truth which we are to hear, to heed, to seek to understand, to obey, to uphold and to proclaim.

The Lord of Love

Secondly, we know Him to be the Lord of Love, whose purpose was to make clear to all men the fact of the love of God. We acknowledge that the word Love is much misused and abused and that to learn its real meaning we must turn constantly to Him, to His whole life, for He is the manifestation of Divine Love, here on earth. We hear Him say that Love to God is the first and great Commandment and through Him we know that the God, Whom we are taught to love is Himself, perfect Love. We are taught to love each other, who are called by His name. We may differ in our modes of worship; in opinions; we may not think alike on all things, but without doubt, we may and we must love alike

and the witness to our Risen Lord will be, not in the least measure, that we allow Him to use us as instruments of His Love, in our relationships, one with the other, who bear His Name. See how these Christians love one another, may well be the demonstration of Love and Truth for which the world so anxiously waits.

But His Commission is not limited to loving each other, who are called by His Name. Quite explicitly He teaches us to "Love your enemies; to pray for them that persecute you; for if you love those who love you, what reward have you; do not even the tax collectors the same?"

So His Commission is that we shall seek to understand Truth, as it is revealed in Him; To show forth by His Grace, the reality and the power of Love.

The cost of Truth and Love

But being Christian, does not mean that we have become facile optimists; He Who is the Lord of Truth, Who has sent by the Father to reveal the height and length and depth and breadth of Love which passeth knowledge, was crucified. If we are to be sent into the world as the Father sent Him, to show forth, Truth and Love; then perchance, we shall be sent also to suffer. He upheld Truth, in spite of the Cross and revealed the depth and majesty of Love, because He was willing to embrace the Cross, and we are taught quite clearly that the Servant is not greater than His Master. The cost of both Truth and Love may still be the way of suffering.

Peace — in the midst of life

The second word which we link with this wonderful fact of the Resurrection is Comfort. From what has already been said, it is apparent that this word does not imply for Christians a way of ease or luxury. It does not mean taking the difficulties out of life or the cost from discipleship. Most of us will have entered at some time or another into a time of crisis in our human pilgrimage, and in that crisis we shall have rejoiced in the steadfast loyalty of a friend, or friends, who stood by us to the end, and at the end we may well have said to them: "You've no idea what a comfort you have been". It does not mean that by their friendship the crisis was removed, but by their loyalty they somehow imparted to us strength and inspiration and courage and the burden was lightened. There, surely, is the idea of the Comfort that the Risen Christ brings to us, who is with us in every circumstance of our living. It is said that in the days when Pastor Niemoeller was in a concentration camp, he walked one day along its dusty path and was arrested by a word, which a fellow inmate had scratched in the dust. The one word "vivit" — He lives. He was still there in the midst of all the misery, the horror of that wretched place, but because he knew that he was not alone, even that place was transformed and he was comforted and strengthened.

The Risen Lord appeared to His disciples and His word was: "Peace be with you". They went out into a world which was hostile to them who

were dedicated to Christ. Being dedicated to Him meant oft-times being dedicated to death, but because He was with them, they had His peace. This is the tremendous Comfort of the Resurrection.

So the Risen Christ confronts us all, who are called by His Name, in the midst of life where we are. He is the Lord of Truth and Love; Whose Love was willing to embrace a Cross;

Whose power burst asunder the bonds of death. With quiet courtesy, He makes His plea: "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you". But His plea is also His comfortable promise and assurance and "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end."

* The Rev. C. Wilkins is Chairman of the Natal Synod of the Methodist Church.

DR. ANDRE DE VILLIERS*

Ons Eenheid in die Verresee Heiland

Hierdie byeenkoms is gereël as gevolg van 'n soortgelyke demonstrasie wat verlede Desember, net voor Kersfees, hier te Durban gehou is. As gevolg van die entoesiastiese wyse waarop ons eerste demonstrasie van eenheid begroet is, is gevoel dat ons die eksperiment kan herhaal om verder aan die wêreld te betuig dat, ten spyte van ons dogmatiese en liturgiese verdeeldheid daar wel ook 'n eenheidsband is tussen die verskillende kerkgenootskappe. In seker opsigte verskil ons hemelsbreed van mekaar. Hier op die platform sit Roomse priesters, Protestantse leraars, en offisiere van die Heilsleër. Kan u vir useulf 'n breër verskil voorstel as dié tussen die Roomse priester en die offisier van die Heilsleër? En tog is daar 'n eenheid tussen hulle, dié eenheid wat hulle vanmiddag hier op dieselfde platform saambring. Waarin bestaan die eenheid? Dogmaties, histories, liturgies — selfs in hul klere drag verskil hulle radikaal van mekaar — waarin dan is hulle een?

Die eenheid lê in die feit dat hulle gloeuf op dieselfde grondslag berus. Hulle glo, ons glo almal, aan die vleeswording van die Seun van God. En ons glo almal dat die Here Jesus nadat Hy vir 'n tydperk op die aarde geleef het, wondere verrig het, sy leer verkondig het, God as liefdevolle Hemelse Vader openbaar het, eendelik vir die sondige mensdom 'n soendood gesterwe het. En ons glo dat Hy die derde dag na die kruisiging van die dood opgestaan het. Ons is vanmiddag hier saam om aan die wêreld te sê: Ons verskil wel van mekaar — in uitsig, in metodes, in tradisie. Maar ons glo almal in een Heiland — die Here Jesus Christus, enigste Middelaar tussen God en die mens — Jesus wat geleef het, vleesgeworde Woord van God, Jesus wat gesterf het, en Jesus wat uit die dood opgestaan het!

Om die rede is ons hier — om te getuig dat ons een is in hierdie geloof. En, ons betuig ons eenheid sodat die wêreld kan glo!

Christus is hier teenwoordig

Daar is kritiek uitgeoefen op hierdie samekoms — misleidende kritiek, soms deur mense van wie ons dit altermens verwag. Ek is hiervan egter seker — dat ons kritici nie persone is wat in Desember by ons soortgelyke demonstrasie teenwoordig was nie. Ek beskou daardie diens as 'n hoogtepunt in my persoonlike ondervinding. Ek was al, in die loop van my evangeliebediening, in groot vergaderings waar ek diep in die gees ontroer was. Ek dink byvoorbeeld aan 'n diens in Chicago deur Billy Graham geleë en deur 35,000 mense bygewoon. Ek het al geluister na die vooraanstaande predikers in die wêreld, maar nooit is ek so diep in my siel aangegryp en ontroer nie as in daardie eerste demonstrasie van ons eenheid in Christus. Ek kon alleen saamstem met 'n broeder uit die Metodiste Kerk wat aan my gesê het: "Christus is hier teenwoordig". Ek glo stellig dat Hy, ons lewende Heer en Heiland, ook vanmiddag hier by ons teenwoordig is.

Ek is 'n Protestant, 'n Presbiter-

riaan, 'n Calvinis — ek dra 'n eredoctorsgraad van 'n Universiteit wat die naam dra van een van die opstellers van die Heidelbergse Kategismus, Zacharias Ursinus. Ek is 'n direkte afstammeling van die Hugenote, en dra Franse name. Daar is derhalwe dié wat sal sê dat ek verkeerd handel, hul sal selfs sê dat ek sondig handel om vanmiddag hier op hierdie platform met Roomse priesters en andersdenkendes saam te sit, te staan, te sing, te bid. Ek kan dit glad nie insien nie. Ek beskou my teenwoordigheid hier geensins as kompromie nie. Ek is hier omdat ek nou glo wat ek nog altyd geglo het. Ek glo aan 'een heilige algemene Christelike Kerk, die gemeenskap van die heiliges'. Ek het as kind die Apostoliese Geloofsbelofenis geleer. Ek glo dit nog. Daarom is ek hier.

In Christus — wat ons red

Ek is hier omdat ek aan die Here Jesus glo as my enigste Saligmaker, en ek is bereid om die hand te reik aan enige broer of suster wat ook aan Hom glo. Daarom is ek hier. Hier op die platform en in hierdie stadsaal is daar mense wat op verskillende wyse trag om die Here Jesus te dien en te eer. Ek mag van hulle verskil in die praktyk. Maar ons is een in Hom.

'n Roomse priester het voorverlede week een aand in my kerk, my gemeente toegespeek. Onder andere het hy die volgende gesê: Laat ons dankbaar wees vir die Dood en Opstanding van Christus, wat ons red! Wanneer hy so praat, al verskil ons hemelsbreed in sekere praktyke, reik ek hom die hand, en sê ek aan hom: "Jy is my broer in Christus — wat ons red!"

Soli Deo Gloria

Na vandag sal ons nog van mekaar verskil — ons soek nie na en bepleit geen eenvormigheid nie, maar ons sal in liefde van mekaar verskil. My optrede vanmiddag, en my uitkyk in hierdie dinge, word as volg dikteer: Ek sê aan enige broer of suster, van enige kerkgenootskap, wat ook al ons historiese, dogmatiese of liturgiese verskille: Glo jy dat Christus, die vleesgeworde Seun van God vir jou gesterwe het, en glo jy dat Hy vir ons regverdigmaking opgestaan het uit die dood, en dat Hy leef in alle ewigheid as Koning der konings en Heer der heren?" Antwoord hy my ja, dan begroet ek hom as broer in Christus.

Een laaste woord. As een wat staan in die Gereformeerde tradisie, op Calvinistiese grondslag, sê ek dit: As hierdie diens die Here behaag en welgeval, mag Hy dit gebruik tot sy eer en vir die uitbreiding van sy koninkryk, en waar dit Hom nie behaaglik mag wees nie, sal Hy dit tot niet maak. Soli Deo Gloria. Aan God al die eer.

* Dr. Andre de Villiers is 'n Presbiteriaanse predikant in Durban en Moderaat van die Natalse streek.

REV. T. S. N. GQUBULE*

The Christian Minister and Nationalism

A. Definition of terms — Nationalism

Nationalism is a national consciousness that has at some time or other been felt in all parts of the world. Recently it has largely spent its force in Asia and is now sweeping throughout the continent of Africa. There are two types of nationalism in South Africa which I wish to discuss briefly:

1. African nationalism

This is a product of centuries of racial discrimination in all spheres of life. It is a determined reaction against White domination. It is a determined attempt to destroy once and for all this myth of race superiority. In the words of Kenneth Kaunda "it is not anti-white but anti-wrong". This does not mean that all the wrong is on the side of the European, because we know that there are many Europeans who are against discrimination. It rather means that since the great majority of Europeans favour discrimination to some degree, they take it to be anti-White when it is actually directed against the wrong inherent in race discrimination or superiority which they represent.

2. White nationalism

This is a determined attempt to maintain White Supremacy and control at all costs, to maintain White domination as long as possible. It goes under many names such as "maintaining White standards", "maintaining civilised standards", "White leadership" etc.

Some people speak of it as Afrikaner Nationalism because they would like to stand aloof and pretend as if it is the Afrikaner who is responsible for all the wrong. Actually they are just as involved because they have allowed all these things to happen and have themselves done the very thing which they condemn in the Afrikaner. So I maintain that this is not so much Afrikaner Nationalism but White Nationalism. The aims of this nationalism, as I have said, is to retain domination and control as long as possible.

Comment on "Christian Nationalism"

Some people say that the difference between African Nationalism and White Nationalism is that White Nationalism is Christian, whereas presumably African Nationalism is not Christian.

I am in sympathy with the concept of a "Christian" nationalism because there is a sense in which nationalism needs to be Christian. But nationalism, by its very nature, is exclusive, and therefore, cannot have the all-embracing scope which is an essential character of the Christian faith. Secondly: Nationalism fights with a specific aim in view, and once that aim has been achieved its force is spent and needs another driving force. But the cold ruthlessness with which this type of White nationalism pursues its aim is in direct conflict with the spirit of the New Testament which advocates sympathy and love for all.

3. The relation between nationalism and communism

It is being said again and again that African nationalism is communist inspired, but every African leader has denied this. In fact a Nigerian leader has said: "There are two dangers to world peace, and these are: Communism and White supremacy". (The emphasis is mine).

ONE of the most important words in Africa today is the word NATIONALISM. Its use in and outside Africa is sometimes accompanied by emotion. It becomes necessary, therefore, for the Christian in general and the Minister in particular, to find not the proper relation between himself, as leader of God's People, and Nationalism. I shall limit myself, therefore, to a consideration of the relationship between the Christian Minister and Nationalism.

To an honest observer the strict regimentation — the idea that you must fit into a pattern allotted to you by your masters — is in itself the very essence of communism and that is what White nationalism is doing in South Africa.

B. The Minister and his calling

I am using the word 'Minister' in the popular sense of a man who has given himself to full time work in spreading the Gospel. I am aware of the limitations of this usage. By a minister I understand:

1. One who has had a vision of God and of man's need of Salvation — "I saw the Lord . . . Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of people of unclean lips."
2. One who has been sanctified (lips purged with a coal of fire and called to meet this need).
3. One who has responded to the call — "Here I am and send me".
4. One who has been commissioned — "Go".
5. He is a priest i.e. he speaks to God on behalf of the people. This does not mean denial of the individual's right of direct access to the throne of grace, but it means that the priest speaks to God as a representative of God's people.
6. He is a prophet i.e. he speaks God's word to man saying in every situation: "Thus saith the Lord".
7. He is a pastor — he has a passion for the souls of men.

The Minister's task in relation to nationalism

a. His task is not to say "Yes" in all that his group says or does. The disastrous effects of this attitude were seen in the attitude of the Church in Germany during the Hitler regime. But the Confessing Church under the leadership of men like Dr Martin Niemöller felt bound to resist the unchristian actions of Hitler and his group. Dietrich Bonhoeffer went so far as to join a plot to assassinate Hitler because he felt that Hitler was a symbol of the anti-Christ. The Church must not be told by any national movement what it should do within its own house. In other words, no nationalism should dictate the policies of the Church. Our members all need to be taught what Christian obedience may mean in specific situations. The decisions of Church Assemblies on these matters as well as their implications must be taught by the minister to his congregations.

b. The Minister is not to be dictated to by the whims and passions of his racial group. But in every situation and crisis he must seek and declare God's will — even to his own group, even when his declaration of God's will is unacceptable to his own group. This may mean ostracism and suffering. But will the servant not go the way of his Master?

c. He must study the trend of nationalism and other movements and test them by what he knows of God's will. d. He must avoid being influenced by popular ideas which may be un-Christian. He must stand firm on the Rock of Ages even at the risk of his own life. Some African Christians did this in the Mau Mau uprisings in Kenya and elsewhere in Africa.

e. At the same time he must recognize the legitimate aspirations of the people whom he serves. He must not be quick to say that what is nationalistic is necessarily unchristian. I believe that all forms of racial discrimination are wrong and as such I would resist them with all my strength especially in the Church.

Quite related to this, perhaps, and expressing this nationalism is:

The idea of an African national Church

In the late forties there was a revival of the idea of an African National Church and in the middle 'fifties the idea was much discussed by theological students and others in South Africa. The Interdenominational African Ministers' Association of Southern Africa, IDAMASA, has spent much thought and prayer on this subject. It needs a further examination because it is always a living possibility.

What were the reasons for the birth of this idea?

1. The first reason was political and it came from some of our political leaders. These leaders quoted the example of the Dutch Reformed Church. They said, in effect, that the Nationalist Party had the support of the D.R.C. They reasoned, therefore, that if the African could form one National Church they could get from the people, and from the Church, therefore, overwhelming support. It must be pointed out, however, that the D.R.C. originated from an entirely different historical situation. It did not come into being merely for the sake of supporting a political party. Moreover, when the Church comes into being merely for the sake of supporting a passing political ideal, it loses sight of its essential mission, message and character.

2. Discrimination in the so-called multi-racial churches. This racial discrimination shows itself in the following ways:

- a. No admission into the membership of White churches where language did not provide a necessary barrier.
- b. Appointment to office in the church. The highest offices in the church were occupied by "whites only". As someone has put it "in all these positions there is written an invisible 'slegs vir blankes'" (For Whites only).

Some churches have compromised the situation by appointing two people to the same position, one Black and one White to serve different racial groups. Others created entirely separate for the Blacks, so that the Blacks should occupy the highest positions (or offices) in their own church. This is "separate development".

These were workable compromises but they still meant whereas the White could exercise leadership over the non-White, the non-White could not exercise leadership over the White. The White man by virtue of his colour automatically becomes a leader whether he has qualities of leadership or not. The Black man, however gifted, can only lead 'his own people' and not the Whites.

• I find this European resistance to African leadership most difficult to understand because the growth of able Africans and other non-White groups is the natural outcome of the work of the White missionary. Don't they

want to see the fruits of their own labours? Perhaps, this is part of the refusal to admit that the African has grown. Someone has said: "You must be led before you can lead". True! But we have been led for the last three hundred years! When do we ever qualify for leadership? Or have those who have been training us all these years failed to produce leaders amongst us? Are we as impervious to training as all that? We admit that these men have sacrificed a lot to make us what we are; they have toiled and suffered. We do not want to throw them away. All we want them to realise is that we are now of age and, therefore, must share with them the work of our Master and leadership of God's people.

c. Differentiation in ministerial allowances. In some churches there are actually three scales: one for the Europeans which is the highest, another for the Coloureds which is the second, highest, and the third for the Africans which is the lowest. This is not a matter of African circuits being unable to pay higher stipends because we know of cases where European ministers serving African circuits, nevertheless, got their full "European stipend". I wish to make a special appeal to all those concerned to try and eliminate this anomaly in the life of our churches.

I have listened to many reasons advanced to defend this practice. After considering them all I have come to the conclusion that these reasons have come because there is no desire on the part of those who formulate church policy to right this wrong. Even with people doing the same work, in the same place, drawing their allowances from the same fund, there is, consistently, this same discrimination. How can we criticise the government, industry etc., when we do the same thing? Should not the church take a lead in this matter? And if the same church (or denomination) has both Black and White members, surely something can be done because the treasury is the same or should be the same.

3. It has been argued that one African National Church would help to unite the large number of separatist churches. I cannot accept this view because there has been repeated and continuous segmentation from the very churches that are run by Africans having broken away from the multi-racial churches.

Some have thought that in view of the reasons given above we should no wall break away from the multi-racial Churches and form one African National Church which would be autonomous; then from a position of independence negotiate for a closer unity from a position of equality. This is a doubtful method of creating eventual unity. In 1829 the D.R.C. decided, as a concession to human sin, to provide separate facilities of worship for the different races. Now and in the foreseeable future there is very little likelihood of the different strands of the D.R.C. forming one church, meeting together for worship, sharing in the membership and duties of the same church. With this precedent I do not think there is much possibility of forming eventual unity via the wilderness of separation along racial lines.

Rejection of the idea of an African national Church

This idea of an African National Church was rejected by IDAMASA. I remember especially the secretary of that time, the Rev. A. L. Mncube who spoke as follows:

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REV. P. S. BARKER*

REVIVAL

I HAVE been in the Ministry long enough now to be able to look back, not in anger, but certainly in some reflection! I have attended many meetings — religious, missionary, prayer, devotional, retreats, etc. — and I have listened to many speakers, preachers and ecclesiastical statesmen as they pronounce that the urgent need of the Church is for a great revival of evangelical religion — but the much needed 'revival' tarries long.

Some thought that Billy Graham was the answer, but, bright though his illustrious star shone — it did not fulfil the hopes of the watchers for the dawn. An earlier generation thought that Edwin Orr was the modern Wesley or Moody. There have been others whose name and fame, and whose powerful effective ministry of evangelical preaching have raised in many the hope that a great 'revival' had begun, but they were meteoric.

Nevertheless, in spite of much disappointment a quiet and powerful revival has been progressing constantly through the years. In our own Church, Youth Camps have kept the experimental-evangelical lamp burning with great effect among the youth of our Church. In spite too of some disastrous failures, "Planned-Giving" schemes of various kinds have re-focused the work and witness of the Church in an entirely new light and has released energy (as well as money) which our Fathers in the faith never dreamed possible. These are but two of the signs which gladden the heart, but they do not satisfy the hopes and dreams in our spirits for a tidal-wave of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit's power in a great evangelical revival among the people.

Our motives for wanting revival — are they pure

During my own period as a Probationer Minister, which was just at the outbreak of the yast war, I remember then, Presidents of the Church and other great religious leaders telling us that unless the Churches could lead a great religious revival, civilization as we knew it was doomed! How terrifyingly near the truth they were! But is the fear of national disaster a sufficient reason for a revival of religion? The core of that approach is self-preservation, and, therefore, selfish.

Others, similarly gifted with preaching power and spiritual insight, declared that the Christian Church was "on the way out" unless a mighty revival could burst forth among us! This appears, in Europe particularly, to be excruciatingly near the truth. But again, the preservation of the Church (however understood) is hardly a sufficient reason for a revival. And yet again, social conditions, Tsotsies, duck-tails, alcoholism, divorce, sexual-immorality, violence, robbery, etc., these things were told could only be cured by a mighty sweep of the Holy Spirit's power in a revival of personal religion. Many pentecostal groups, as well as orthodox churches, claim many of their converts from among such harlots and sinners. Again I ask the question — is a revival of the religion of Jesus Christ to serve as the kind of moral and social sanitary department of the kingdom of heaven on earth!! The glorious gospel of Jesus Christ when it grips the human heart does in fact do just that — it also converts the "Elder-Brothers" among us who never go astray, making us of the Father's house as well as in it.

But again the central motive is selfish — 'make these nasty people nice'. I, like any who read these words, do not know what creates the right conditions for the Holy Spirit to break forth in Revival; that secret is known alone to Him, and His thoughts are no our thoughts, and His ways are not ours.

Perhaps I may venture at least on

what I consider a worthy motive for Revival. (Please forgive any suggestion of presumption, I certainly do not intend to give such an impression.)

The beginning: Love to God

Firstly, love to God. Nothing comes before this. The individual's heart should be steeped in love for God, for God's own sake. He is gloriously worthy of our love and it is His love for us that calls forth our love for Him. Revival begins there.

Also: Love for people

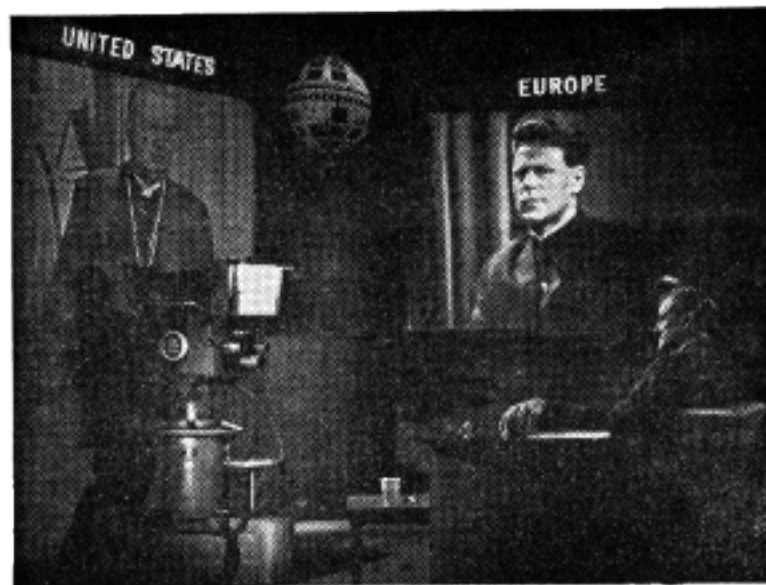
Secondly, love for people, all people as people; or, at the very least, as potentially children of God. The Church, that is, the ordinary member, must learn afresh to love people for their own sake, all sorts of people, and seek to share fully all their rich fellowship of Christ with them. Anyone who thinks this is easy, has not tried it! How eagerly the shyest folk talk to a neighbour about a wonderful new 'washing-soap' — or a new gadget for the car — or how willingly a gardener will share a new strain of dahlia with a friend, etc. This sort of thing is done so naturally, so interestingly. Why not the same eager sharing of one's personal experience in prayer — in worship — in moral triumph achieved through Jesus Christ? One loving heart setting another on fire!

Thirdly: A concern for souls

Thirdly, an earnest desire to bring them home to God where they truly belong — or as our Methodist Fathers called it, 'a concern for souls'. If our private prayers are constantly 'haunted' by a deep concern for the souls of those immediately around us whom we can influence; will it be long before the laity will be asking the Minister for a place and time to meet together to pray for a Revival? Could you imagine little prayer-cells (two or three Christians meeting regularly for prayer) around every Church in the land concentrated on praying for a Revival? How long would it take before other members of each Church would begin to take notice? How long before the deep concern for souls would begin to spread in each Church? A woman does not need the grocer at hand when she tells her neighbour about a new washing soap — a man does not need the garage manager around when he tells his office colleague about a new kind of 'spark-plug' — a Christian who loves God and has in his heart Christ's love and compassion for people and longs for their salvation — does not need the minister around before he starts a prayer-cell. But if the Minister is to be an effective Evangelist among his people, he needs as many little prayer-cells in operation as possible. It is true that the measure of the prayers of the people is the measure of the spiritual impact of the minister — no more, no less?

If Revival is to come in our time, it must commence in the prayers of every individual Christian — acting separately and collectively. The Holy Spirit can safely be left with the responsibility of finding the man to lead it at the right time — His time.

* Rev. P. S. Barker is a Minister of the Methodist Church in Florida, Transvaal, and Secretary of the Southern Transvaal Synod.



A special "Town Meeting" telecast, transmitted via America's Telstar II communication satellite, enabled eminent religious leaders in the United States and Europe to hold a face-to-face discussion across the Atlantic Ocean. The program was seen simultaneously by audiences on both continents. Shown here on studio screens in New York City are Dr. Franklin Clark Fry (left), president of the Lutheran Church of America and chairman of the World Council of Churches, speaking from Princeton, New Jersey, and the Reverend Hans Kung of the University of Tubingen in Germany, speaking from Rome. Seated at right is the programme moderator Eric Severeid of the Columbia Broadcasting System. Other program participants were Bishop Leslie Newbigin of the Church of England, speaking from London, and Laurian Cardinal Rugambwa of Tanganyika, first Negro Cardinal of the Catholic Church, also speaking from Rome. At each point of origin, audiences questioned the panelists.

* Continued from page 6

"From the beginning the suggested African National Church would be built on hatred and division . . . Its Gospel would be freedom from oppression and not freedom from sin".

Let me add here that such a church would be neither African, nor National, nor a Church. A National Church is by its very nature exclusive. If it is 'African', then it cannot accommodate those who are not Africans: if it is 'National', then it excludes those who do not belong to that particular nation. With those limitations it cannot be a true church. For the Church of Christ is a company for all God's people throughout the world, sent out to redeem the world. It is, therefore, a fellowship which is above nationality, above language, above race, above class, above culture, above colour and transcends space and time.

The idea of an African National Church still continues in certain circles up to this day and those of us who are concerned about the unity of the church cannot tolerate another split in the Body of Christ, especially when it is a split along racial lines.

Other constitutions — e.g. current political trends and the Groups Areas Act — may suggest division of the Church along racial lines as a workable proposition. But political parties and programmes are there only for a time; we must not split the Church because of them.

I, therefore, emphasise my plea to all Christians that they do all they can to correct these matters.

D. Conclusion:

Let me close by re-emphasising my main thesis:

1. The minister is a servant of God. Therefore, he must oppose all that he considers to be in conflict with God's will whether it is done by the king or governor, friend or foe, or his own group. This means that he must oppose all forms of injustice to all his fellowmen. In the heat of Hitler's persecution and extermination of the Jews, Bonhoeffer said:

"He who has not spoken a word for the Jews cannot go to Mass."

I need not press the application here.

2. At the same time he is the leader of God's people. Therefore, he must stand for the legitimate needs and aspirations of his people. He must minister to both the material and spiritual needs of God's people.

3. He must realise that God's people are one people (a unity) all over the world. Therefore, he must allow no nationalistic feelings or movements to split the unity of God's people. On the contrary he must make his contribution in building and realising their unity. He must pray and work persistently for the coming of a day when "on earth or in Heaven there shall be

ONE FLOCK AND ONE SHEPHERD".

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THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FUND BURSARIES

Adams United College now have a small number of bursaries to offer to students belonging to certain "African Independent Churches". This has been made possible by a gift of money from the Theological Education Fund of the World Council of Churches. This fund was established to assist churches and theological colleges to improve the education of ministers. In particular, the Fund Committee desires to help churches which have not in the past provided a theological education for their clergy. The T.E.F. Bursary Programme at Adams United College has been established for the benefit of these churches.

The cost of maintaining and operating the College is carried by the churches which control the College. The cost per student is very high. The Theological Education Fund has made this gift so that the College may accept students from certain churches at a very much lower fee, the bursary paying most of the cost for each student. The fee which has to be paid for each student receiving a bursary is R80 per year.

