

The *Seminarian*

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PEACE ON EARTH?

'Impossible! A mad-hatter's dream!' says the matter-of-fact materialist. 'The might', says the militarist, 'if they eradicate Hitler, execute Stalin, erase Hirohito.' 'If that bomb in the Munich beer hall had only exploded fifteen minutes earlier, if a suicide victim would only get Stalin before he ends his own life,' says the more timid souls like you and me, who don't know exactly what to do about war, but at least we want it to end. 'While a humble few pray to their God, 'Lord, forgive the hardness of our hearts.'

There, I believe, is a fair analysis of the twentieth century search for the Holy Grail of Peace. In pious platitudes and holy phrases most of us express a desire for peace, but in our hearts resides a vicious triumvirate of Violence, Hatred, and Death. Even in consideration of everyday affairs it slips into our conversation: if the accident at Germantown Ave. and Lincoln Drive didn't result in the death of the driver and at least two others the newspaper account has been uninteresting; if four merchant ships and two subs weren't sent to the bottom of the Atlantic today the war has been dull; "What, nobody killed!" when the first report of a gas explosion travels through the ether. While a precious few humbly pray to their God and say, "Lord, forgive the hardness of our hearts."

In other circles this vicious sentiment crops out too. Southern mountaineers travel as much as ten miles

every evening to the nearest radio to hear if "Hitler has been licked yet", and hundreds of them would be willing to snipe Germans tomorrow. In a recent Town Hall program, supposedly concerning the methods of peace settlement possible for Europe when the present struggle ends, every member of the debate, except the solitary German on the program, seemed to possess one idea, "We must get rid of that 'Beast of Berlin' to have any kind of peace." One British author on the program had the temerity to describe every German as a despicable Hitler on the ground that he permitted himself to be militarized, permitted himself to be subjugated, permitted himself to be oppressed.

Rash as her argument seems to be, I should like to carry it a bit further. Not the Germans alone, but every person on the face of the globe (including you and me), who entertains thoughts and feelings as cold, brutal and inhumane as those I have mentioned, is a potential Hitler too!

Therein lies the accusation against you and me. We talk and pray for peace while our hearts are hotbeds of hate and indifference. We hope for peace by the removal of an external manifestation while the inner source flourishes and grows. Then the cinema was in its infancy a favorite serial was "Pauline and the Villains". It is said that when Pauline was about to be destroyed at the hands of the villains Western cowboys pulled out their six-shooters and 'got' the villains on

the screen. Their success in removing the villains and our success in securing peace are exactly the same. To remove an evil we must remove its source.

In our search for peace on earth, then, let's get at the real source of war--human hearts. We will have universal peace only if and when we exile the individual Hitlers sitting in our hearts and enthrone the spirit of Christian Love. So long as these grave world issues become the butt of pleasant jests and satirical thrusts, so long as Herbert Hoover can characterize Russia's attack on Finland as a carrying of the world "back in morals to the time of Genghis Khan", so long as Christ's decree to "Love one another" remains a beautiful oratorical expression and not a rule of human hearts we can never hope for peace on earth.

As the celebration of the birth of Christ, the Prince of Peace, approaches again, we ask with fear and trepidation, "Can we have peace on earth?" Yes, we can if we are willing to strive for it. We can have peace if we first cherish within OUR hearts the peace that the Christ-child brought, through Love and the prayer of the humble few; "Lord, forgive the hardness of our hearts." If this Christmas season means that much to us it will not have been celebrated in vain.

- Charles J. Harris

PROLONGING THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

Some people try to crowd the happiness of the blessed Christmas season into one brief day. Crowding the joy of the Christmas season into twenty-four hours is the same as squeezing a size ten foot into a size eight shoe. Can this be done? I'll let you decide.

Other people allow the spirit of Christmas to permeate for one whole month. During the month of December they are drawn into closer fellowship with God as well as with their fellowmen. To them, the world seems better at this particular time, and even the air seems purer. Men and women forget their petty quarrels at Christmas time. They spend days and weeks selecting gifts for their friends and relatives. "Merry Christmas" and "Happy New Year" grace the lips of the countless persons we meet.

Unfortunately, as soon as the month of December departs, men and women return to their former way of living, and dare not reveal the joyous spirit until another Christmas season arrives. Why should Christians refrain from prolonging the spirit of Christmas? I am afraid that there is no justifiable answer. It is true that we cannot celebrate December 25th every day. To retain the trimmings after Christmas has passed is as futile as to cling to the appearance of youth after it has left us.

Nevertheless, we can prolong the spirit of Christmas as long as we live. By the spirit of Christmas, I mean the desire to extend a helping hand to our needy neighbors. We do not have to give them costly

presents every day; but we can render personal service that cannot be measured in terms of dollars and cents. For example, a daily smile or a cheerful greeting may mean more to the recipient than a gift given with that superior air which causes the recipient to feel inferior.

Christmas, as most of us know, comes but once a year; but the spirit of Christmas may be shown every day. The Christmas spirit can be shown at our daily chapel services by our willingness to swell the triumphant song, instead of letting the choir do all the singing. At conferences or conventions the spirit of Christmas may be prolonged by our constructive contributions to the discussions, instead of grasping everything the others have to say and failing to voice our opinions.

"To give," said the Christ, "is more blessed than to receive." On behalf of Him Who has taught us to give and Whose birthday we celebrate at the Christmas season, may we reveal the best that is in our hearts. Let us reveal this, not only at Christmas, but every day of our lives!

- Samuel A. Lewis

CHRISTMAS 1959

It is not the sound of angel voices which the world will hear this Christmas Day, but rather the drone of bombers carrying a message of death and destruction. It is quite a contrast to that day when

the messengers of God proclaimed the birth of the Prince of Peace. These messengers today bring tidings of the hatred in the world.

Yet, with all the hatred which exists, we, as Christians, still proclaim the message of peace to a world which is sadly longing for it. Despite the tense situation of the world about us we celebrate the birth of the Christchild. And, perhaps the phrase, "peace on earth, goodwill to men" takes on new significance for us. It is that message which sounds clearly above the drone of planes and the cries of power-hungry rulers. It is the knowledge that Christ still offers to all who will accept the means of true life.

It is with no small amount of joy that the world awaits Christmas this year. To one and all, it is the symbol of a day of peace and joy. It is the assuring note in these days of uncertainty. It means to us that we need put no trust in large armies, in idealistic peace movements, but that our security can be found in the birth of a Child. Christmas signifies more than ever the hope which never fails. It symbolizes the renewal of God's covenant with man.

To those who despair it gives new hope; to those who can see nothing in the future but darkness it provides a light; to those who are burdened with sin and sorrow it provides relief. That is the Christmas which we look for today. May our Christmas mark the beginning of a new life of peace and comfort for all men in Christ Jesus.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE OF
CHRISTIAN YOUTH - AMSTERDAM 1939
II.

In this part of my article I want to tell you a little something concerning the discussion groups which carried on the unity of understanding which I mentioned in my first article on the worship services. For even as the worship services set up a unity of understanding, so did the discussion groups which took place twice a day. The first was not so much a discussion group as it was a STUDY group. For that is what we did in the Bible group each morning. We read various pertinent portions of the Scriptures in an attempt to allow Christ to speak to us concerning those things which we desired to discuss later on in the day. These were connected to the special theme for the day which was set forth in an address which followed each day's worship service. It might be of interest if I listed the topics studied in the Bible study groups.

Study I: 'As One having Authority' (Mk.i.14-28): Themes- Our Different Backgrounds and our Common Calling and Jesus is Lord.

Study II: 'Despised and Rejected of Men' (Mk.viii.27-37) Theme: The Christian in a World of Conflict.

Study III: 'Children of your Father' (Lk. xv. 11-32) Theme: 'Can Men be Brothers?

Study IV: 'Not by Bread Alone' (Lk. xii. 22-34) Themes: Our Daily Bread and the Christian Community and the World of Nations.

Study V: 'Members of One Body' (Acts iv. 1-35) Theme: The Body of Christ, His Church.

Study VI: 'Witness unto Me' (II Cor. v. 14 to vi. 10) Theme: The Christian as Ambassador.

Using these topics as stepping off places, questions were suggested and soon others were freely forth coming from the group members concerning the scope and the breadth of meaning to be gotten from these scriptural fundamentals and the applications, if any, which could be made to the problems we were concerned with in our discussion groups. Incidentally, there were seven major divisions of special interest or Discussion Groups. They were designed to cover the major problems confronted by Christian Youth in the world of today. The seven groups were:

1. Christian Youth in a World of Nations
2. Christian Youth in the Nation and the State
3. Christian Youth in the Economic Order
4. Christian Youth and Race
5. Christian Youth and Education
6. Christian Marriage and Family Life
7. The Church: Its Nature and Mission

It is interesting to note that of all these groups the greatest percentage of those present at the conference elected to join group number seven-The Church: its Nature and Mission. Also, for the first time in history, there was included a group on Marriage and Family life in a world religious conference. Both of these notations point out to some extent the needs which the youth of today wish fulfilled. The amazing interest in the

Church is a clear indication that the world is looking more and more to the Church for the answers of life which the Christian citizen must have.

The Bible study and Discussion Group meetings were held at various public schools throughout the city of Amsterdam. Each group averaged about thirty-five young people (18-35yrs.) from various nations throughout the world. In my group there were young people from five countries in Europe, Canada, India, China as well as two representatives of the Russian Church in Exile. The discussions were carried on in three official tongues--English, French and German. However, there were times when over five different languages were in use in my group. In an article such as this it would be impossible to give you much detail of each day's work, but I want to give you a short outline of the ground covered by my group. Before doing this I wish to once more stress that there was never complete agreement among the members of the group, as each member had to remain true to his own and his Church's belief.

"Why do so many young people ignore the Church?" "To this preliminary question varied and revealing answers were given. Some said that the fault lay with the organized churches rather than with their critics. Some of the reasons set forth were: the lack of unity in the Church; the lack of harmony among Christians; slackness and uncharitableness among Church members; the lack of any prophetic challenge in the Church's message. Others blamed the critics for their self-centered attitude, and mentioned preoccupation with

material and secular interests (including membership in political or economic movements), and reluctance to commit themselves as reasons for indifference to or avoidance of the Church's call. Lack of religious education in the home, and the bad example of parents, were also mentioned. In general, however, it was felt that YOUTH IS READY TO BE CHALLENGED; that it would respond to a strong challenge which called for sacrifice; but that the Church is not presenting its challenge adequately." With this discussion as a starter we then turned our thoughts and discussion to an attempt to clear up and to understand what the Church was and what its mission was. What is the Church to you? This question received many answers, with emphasis by many upon a difference existing between the Church and the churches. The delegate from India felt that The Church exists as an ideal, which has yet to be realized. The Biblical doctrine of the Church was then discussed, with its basis going back to a visible historic community with its roots in the Old Testament, in the Call of Abraham. This attempt to trace the continuity of the Old and New Israel seemed unfamiliar to many. Many wished to cut Christianity off from its historical beginnings in the history of the Hebrews. Then followed discussions on the authority of the Church; the place of the Church in the world (it is first an ecclesia-called out of the world, then leaven, sent out by God into the world in the power of His Spirit. Once we covered the Nature of the Church as best we could, we turned to a discussion of the Mission of the Church.

(To be cont.)

-William Elbert, Jr.

NOTES ON THE MESSIAH

There was a period of silence. The huge audience sat with bated breath as the tall kindly old man started to play softly on the organ. The strong clear tones of the soloist filled the amphitheatre with its semi-circular, terraced rows of gowned singers, and then floated out to the eager audience. The flowing locks of the gray-headed organist indicated in their motion the changes in tempo, and his entire body vibrated with spirit of his playing. Before him were, strangely enough, no music scores. Of course, he knew the music from memory. But no, there was a greater significance in their absence. A closer examination would reveal a vacant stare in his deep-set eyes. He was blind. But there was no hesitation in that sightless body. The fingers moved over the keys with marvelous certainty.

Suddenly, with a shake of his head, the entire chorus entered with such a surge of pulsating music that it seemed to issue in visible waves of sound and enter the soul of the audience. They were so transported with emotion that of one accord they arose and remained standing until the chorus was ended. This was the Hallelujah Chorus, the last section of the second part of the sacred oratorio, The Messiah. The blind organist was its producer, George Frederick Handel. The place was the Foundling Hospital in London.

Handel, following a ^a career of producing and directing Italian opera for the English court, in his late forties happily turned his thoughts entirely to the species of

composition which has rendered his name immortal---the oratorio. His imagination was kindled by the sublime poetry of the sacred writings; and he felt that this grave style of composition was best suited to the circumstances of a man descending into the vale of years. Within the next two decades seventeen oratorios flowed from Handel's prolific pen with the climax being reached in 1741 which year saw the birth of his greatest work -- The Messiah.

Although the performances of his other oratorios were so poorly attended, the Messiah was more and more favorably received, and always drew crowded houses. Since The Messiah raised Handel's reputation so high, he determined with the benevolence which belonged to his character, to have it annually performed for the benefit of the Foundling Hospital; and this he continued to do as long as he lived. The organ in the chapel of the hospital was also his gift.

In his latter years Handel became blind. It was affecting to see him, more than seventy years of age, led to the organ, and then brought forward to make his usual obeisance to the audience. But even then, the concertos and extempore pieces, which he used to play between the acts of his oratorios, were distinguished by all his accustomed strength of imagination and energy of execution.

His last appearance in public was on the 6th of April, 1759 when he performed as usual. He died seven days later. He was buried in Westminster Abbey; and over the place of his interment is a monument by Roubilliac,

consisting of his figure in an erect posture and holding a scroll inscribed with the words, "I know that my Redeemer liveth", and the notes to which these words are set in the Messiah.

-Wilbur M. Laudenslager

TOWARD A CULTURAL LIFE

The study of culture does not necessarily mean its practice. We may be exposed to the culture of the past and present, and still remain uncultured in our actions.

Many are the "arts" which a seminarian studies and pursues as he seeks to prepare himself for his high calling. Aside from the study of these subjects which are directly related to the nature of his work, the young ministerial student endeavors to broaden his background and his viewpoints by a study of subjects in all fields of human endeavor. The more that there is to know, the more there is that he wants to know. To know the ideas and the cultures of many people is not just a "hobby" with him, it is a real part of his training and a necessary preparation for his work. The more he knows the better able he will be to understand and solve the many problems and questions which will be his to answer. So the quest for knowledge and more knowledge. So the insatiable hunger for culture and a knowledge of the "arts". And so to the pursuit of a wide and broadening study of the arts and sciences, of human nature, and, finally, a growing appreciation of the

mind and purposes of man. The latest book is read; the latest achievement in the world of science is noted; the latest play is seen in relation to the political, economic and sociological developments of the day and age, and through all the mind of man is seen still exploring, still reaching out for an even greater knowledge. Or, this young student may go to the Academy of Music for an appreciation and understanding of the best in the world of music. He visits the art galleries, and sees there the past in all of its glory, and the future with new beginnings. To understand the problems that concern the modern sociologist, he visits the slum sections of the city, and so better understands the social problems and conditions of the poor. And so up and down this student goes, learning from every experience, seeking for something more. This, we know, is the proper attitude. To be well informed we must inform ourselves. So always will the pursuit of knowledge remain a daring and fascinating adventure.

However, there is more to be desired than just a knowledge of culture. The cultured person is more than just one who "knows" something, he is also one who "does" something--that is, he lives within the light of his knowledge. His thoughts, his words, his deeds are an expression of that which he knows. Knowledge that cannot be used to express our daily living is no knowledge at all, for thoughts, ideas and ways of living are something to be passed on; not to be hidden, locked up in air-tight compartments, and then forgotten. In other words, what I am trying to say is simply this --: our thoughts,

our words and our deeds express the true value of our knowledge. They also express the nature of our lives from within. It is as St. Paul so aptly puts it, "Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing". Charity, or Love, is the means by which we express our faith in the promises of Christ, and the Christian Church today is a result of a determined expression on the part of those early Christians who endured all manner of hardships in order that the Gospel might live.

You and I, we seek knowledge, we strive after culture, and great is the opportunity that we have at Mt. Airy, but greater is the opportunity to make this knowledge of ours work in the day-by-day relationships which we have with one another. In such a small matter as eating at the Refectory, we could hope for a decided improvement. Most of us, I am sure, know the simple rules of table etiquette, but very few there are who consistently observe them. The need to leave the dining hall within fifteen or twenty minutes is too great to remember that the "gulping down" of food is not only unhealthy, but is also disagreeable to those who do like to take time to enjoy their food and the fellowship connected with eating. I firmly believe that a minister can do greater harm to himself by poor manners at the table of a parishioner, than he can by two or three poor sermons. I also firmly believe that little things are important to the person who would truly be "cul-

tured" -- little kindnesses, little bits of thoughtfulness for the other fellow, little words of cheer in times of stress and trouble. Let, us, then, put the knowledge that we are receiving here to work for the interest and the betterment of the entire Seminary group. There could be, and would be, a change in our whole pattern of living. Not only would we represent the wisdom of cultured gentlemen, but also we would breathe forth the very spirit of our Lord and Christ.

- Paul E. Walthour, '33

HEARD IN THE CLASSROOMS

Tea-sipping women of both sexes...

Dr. Tappert

Even those who know only baby Greek can recognise literary differences in the New Testament

Dr. Offerman

Christ-likeness is more than turning the other cheek.

Dr. Snyder

Faith is an attitude toward the knowledge which you have. ...C.H. Jacobs

The Holy of Holies for us, as Christians, is in Heaven, and our officiating High Priest is Christ Himself. Dr. Offerman

The Nunc Dimittis was Simeon's swan-song.
Dr. Offerman

Compiled by Wm. J. Leifeld

FROM A WORLD FAR UP



From a world far up in a kingdom unknown
Our God, Jehovah, sits on his throne
And looks down. That pitiful sight
There meets His eyes! Of His great might
He did create, and we, plagued with sin
Have turned our backs to Him.
Oh, unworthy world, to have received
That wondrous gift,
Which God Himself in His Son did lift
Upon the cruel cross. For our offences
He did die
While on the tree uplifted high.
A sacrifice of love it was;
Real blood He shed for us.

Can I believe He died for me?
Yea, cries the Christian, yea.
Remember in Gethsemane the agony He bore?
It was my sin He lifted and opened
Heaven's door.
Oh God! what stupid fools we are
That we forget it is by Thee
Our sins are washed, our souls made clean,
Our lives are purged, our todies freed,
God, give me strength to come to Thee
And like a child on bended knee,
Pour out my heart in faith and love
To Thine eternal throne above.

