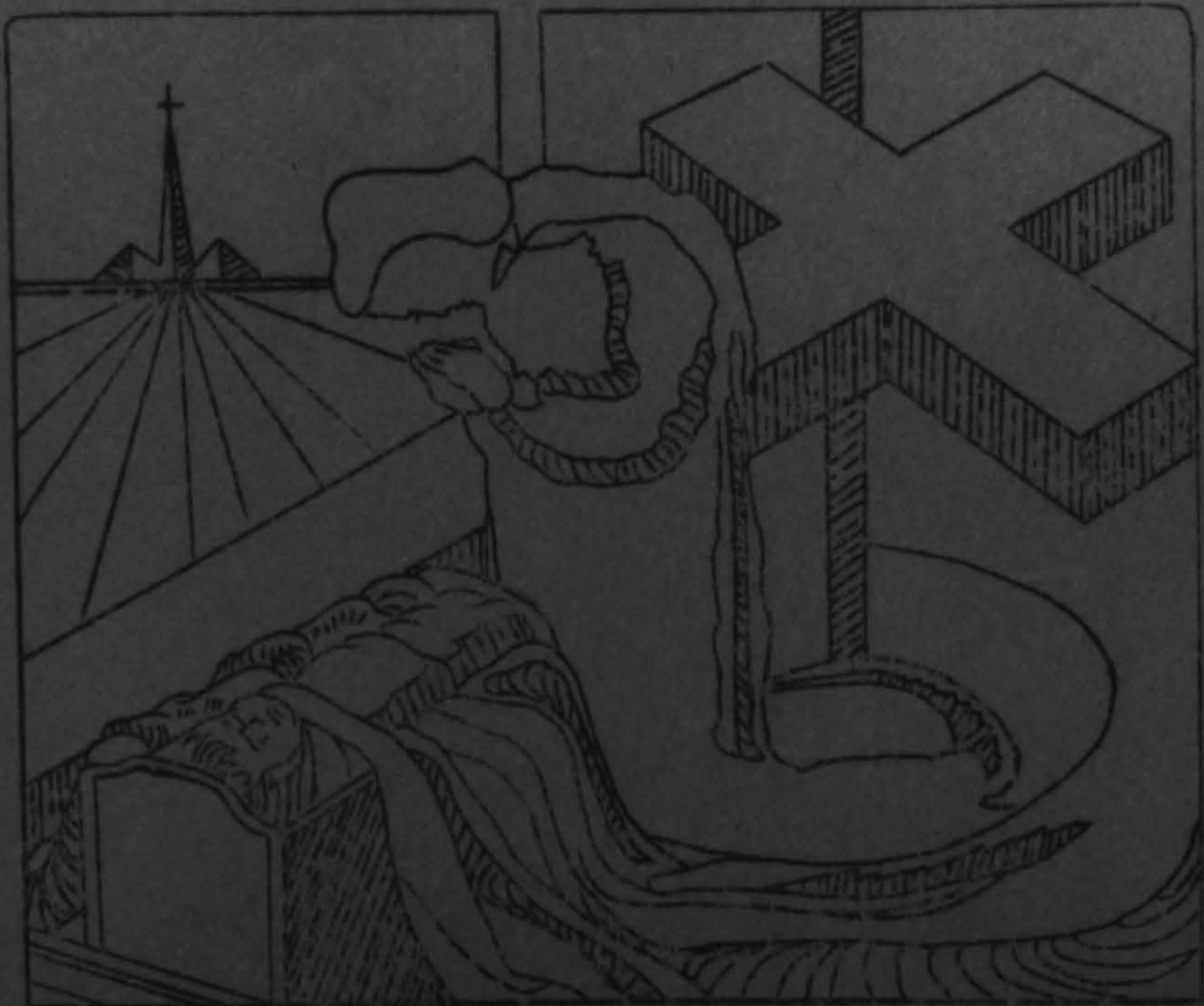


STANTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY  
LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
AT RHY, PENNSYLVANIA

# THE SEMINARIAN

LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT PHILADELPHIA  
VOLUME V      December 1940      Number 2

## MERRY



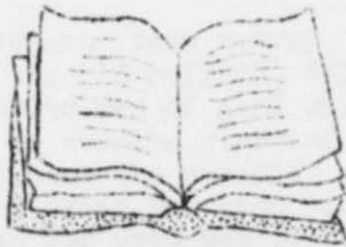
## CHRISTMAS

THE SEMINARIAN STAFF

Editor-in-chief - - - - - Donald Pichaske

Associate Editors - - - - - Walter Bock  
John McConomy  
George Forell  
Charles Harris

Make-up and Art - - - - - Russell Zimmermann  
Oscar Weber  
Harold Engle



From the Editor's Desk

In one of the articles that came to us, not printed in this issue, was an idea that has been met by all of us time and again both before and during our seminary years. In fact, some of us at times have jokingly referred to it as the dominant idea behind the general position of the Lutheran Church. It is the idea of the happy medium.

These few lines were not intended to bring forth any brilliant new theological speculations. They are simply meant to call back to mind an old idea into minds that have been packed so full of the ordinary common sense of others that that common sense has been glossed over or blandly waved aside. And yet we so badly need it even as we live here together in our little seminary community. Seven years to be spend merely in the preparation for a career seems to many of us to be a long time. And we become rather anxious for those years to fly by. When they do not fly we become irritated, impatient and begin to feel sorry for ourselves. We expect the rest of the world to admire our "sacrificial" courage and spirit; we become very critical of those who do not make obeisance to us and cater to our whims and desires. That is not common sense at all. That is nothing of this thing we would like to refer to as "the happy medium".

We must strike "the happy medium" of seminary life too. It we find ourselves becoming super-critical about everything around us, - our dormitories, our assignments, our meals, yes, even our professors, let's try to get back to the normal Christian way of looking at things, the way that we would want our congregations to look at our first errors. It simply means a thorough bit of introspection and a call to halt to much of our hyper-criticism.



# Strictly Theology<sup>2.</sup>

## Christmas

Q.D. 1940

by John McKinstry

As the Christmas season draws nearer, the world anxiously waits to hear the angels sing the old refrain, "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth, peace to men of good will". Soon again we shall hear this song; and go to see the glory of God incarnate in the Babe of Bethlehem. We shall hear the seraphic messenger's announcement, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord!" We shall soon again celebrate the birthday of the Prince of Peace -- while war envelopes the major portion of this planet!

This anachronism jars one's Christian conscience forcibly. Something must be wrong somewhere. In order to understand more fully the anachronism, everyone must examine himself to discover wherein he has failed in his duty of unselfish love for all men. Such an examination will be neither easy nor pleasant, for this is an age of cynical agnosticism. We can easily see what is wrong by considering the typical modern character of the "man from Missouri." However, the cynical agnostic is too ubiquitous, too much in the need of Christian help to be ignored by those who have not succumbed to his mental disease. We must realize that most of us are largely the victims of "Progress", a false and overly-optimistic evolutionary philosophy of history. It was when Progress collapsed of itself that it dragged in its wake those who are now cynical agnostics.

Progress had long been held as the chief philosophy of history. Conceived and born by the Renaissance and carefully nourished in the succeeding centuries, it finally came to its full expression in Darwin, Spencer, Huxley, and Bergson. Progress has also been the basic concept of the philosophy of science. Later, this same concept was transferred to the human scene, and, behold, we were told that man and his institutions are progressing to ultimate perfection.

Science was born into the unassuming position that befitted a "problem-child" of the Church. When released from the stifling bonds of a dead Scholasticism, it fended for itself. Darwin and his school appeared much later; but, with their appearance, the whole mental fabric of the world was torn and then remended. This school brought evolution to its full stature by teaching, "Day by day in every way, the world is growing better and better of itself." Intellectuals, revelling in this concept, carried evolution one step farther along. They said, "Man is progressing steadily to ultimate perfection."

Evolution bore fruit in theology and called it Liberalism. This grotesque attempt to "harmonize" science with theology took basic Christian truths and literally went mad. Weird theological, theosophical, and philosophical teachings and all sorts of perversions of the truth were fostered. Characteristically enough, the philosophy of Liberalism was based on the doctrine of progress. "We are achieving perfection", the liberalists said, "and also achieving our natural destiny as lords of heaven and earth". One of the late nineteenth century poets reflected this attitude when he wrote, "Glory to man in the highest; for he is the maker of things."

Progressive evolution, however, received a temporary set-back during the World War I. Its adherents were assailed from all sides with the question, "If we are getting better all the time, how come the war?" The answer, stated glibly, was, "The war was just a mistake. Some one misstepped in our forward march. Now, we are really going to work to build perfection." Examples of perfection fell easily to hand. There was Mr. Wilson's noble experiment of a League of Nations to promote world peace. There were the London and Washington Naval Treaties and the Locarno Pact. These were acclaimed as evidence for the world's growth in perfection.

This philosophy conceals a dangerous and tragic weakness beneath its extreme optimism. A careful observation of the past two decades reveals the weakness. Anyone not blinded by progressive evolutionism has soon, under the panoply of "Progress", the starvation of the world's masses. He has seen the rise of crime, frequent international incidents, the breakdown of modern morals. He has seen the rise of Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler and the gradual enslavement of man to the State. Now, all see the spectacle of Europe's masses horded into air-raid shelters, drowned by submarine raids, blown to bits by bombs. This macabre picture has become clearer and clearer with each passing day. It is so clear now that it has penetrated the minds of those formerly dedicated to the doctrine of "Progress to Perfection". The net result of this penetration of the weakness and lie of the philosophy of progression has been inevitable disillusion. Cynical agnosticism has taken the place of unbounded optimism, while progress has been exposed as a delusion. If you wish to see vividly the intellectual torment of disillusioned evolutionists, read Aldous Huxley. Almost every word that he pens drips cynical agnosticism as a blow-gun dart drips poison. Quite definitely, it seems, progress has halted its forward march to perfection.

But, Christmas is again close upon us with its Gospel message. In order to apprehend this message and utilize it for the good of all, we must examine ourselves. What we shall find has been outlined above; facing us all, however, is Christmas, A.D., 1940.

In order to bring order into this seemingly chaotic world, and in order to live as sane, mature Christians, we must rid the Christmas message of this humanly devised interpretation; namely, that Christmas gives us fresh impetus to establish the Kingdom of God on earth by our own efforts. We cannot evolve the Kingdom by human "progress". This "progress" is merely our feeble human excuse for ignorance, and a conscientious cloak for present sins and promises of future "goodness". The Christmas message reveals nothing save the struggle going on between good and evil, and God's means of defeating evil. By recognizing this struggle, we see the world as it appears in the sight of God.

The doctrine of Progress is a perversion of the Truth, which Truth being that the world is static. Human nature is the same from age to age; and God's revelation remains the same as yesterday. When we look to the Child of Bethlehem, the Cross looming up in the background, we can the more easily recognize the eternal struggle between good and evil. In fact, evil achieved its biggest victory when our Lord died on the Cross; but evil received its worst defeat when He rose again on Easter day.

Good struggles with evil in the hearts of men; and this struggle will continue until the end of the day of grace is come. This is patently so because we cannot, by our own reason or strength, come to believe in Christ or triumph over evil. So neither can we, by our own powers, cause the Kingdom of God to appear on earth. However, the Christ-child brought the invisible Kingdom with Him from God; and we who believe in Him as Savior are a part of that Kingdom, a Kingdom stilled "veiled by the Cross". It is only at the end of the days, when God so wills, that the visible Kingdom will appear with Christ's Second Coming. Until that day comes, good will war upon evil; evil triumphing at some time, again good being the victor. We must not forget, though, that the power of God, in the Holy Spirit, fights upon the side of good. Eventually the final triumph of good and the establishment of the visible Kingdom of God will be accomplished. It now only awaits the will of God to perform this act.

Thus, the Kingdom of God will not come through "evolutionary betterment". Things will get neither better nor worse in the future, but will remain as they are today. Whatever we do or neglect to do will not change conditions. Remember, though, that Christians have nevertheless both a promise and a duty: We must fight evil with the aid of God's power, thereby fitting ourselves, by faith, for the Kingdom come and coming as a gift of God. The Child of Bethlehem is the seal set upon God's promise that He will not abandon us to defeat by evil, sin, and death.

This is the message of Christmas: Cast aside progress and recognize instead the struggle between good and evil. Come to the manger with faith to see the promise of the eventual defeat of evil. Take heart from the manger, the Cross, the grave, and the empty tomb, and go forth to the spiritual battle refreshed and unharmed.

Proclaim this message to all men: Come to the manger and look upon the Christ-child; and know of the new hope and life that floods the world. There you will know that all will come about rightly in God's good time. Wait patiently the gift of the visible Kingdom that will come from God.

That is Christmas, A.D., 1940!

\* \* \* \* \*

Nothing is done. Everything in the world remains to be done, and done over. The greatest picture is not yet painted, the greatest play isn't written, the greatest poem is unsung. There isn't in all the world a perfect railroad, nor a good government, nor a sound law.

-- Lincoln Stoffons



# War and the Christian Man



"I do not think I  
could kill a man"

by Morfan Edwards

"It is a terrible thing to take human life. The conflict between man and man and nation and nation is tragic"\* The firing squad system of execution is not so horrible because ten men shoot at a victim and no one knows which gun had the deadly missile in it. This is a humane way of executing social justice, when it is just that. Dropping a bomb from the sky into a crowd does not seem to be so terrible as long as the gunner is sure he is on the side of justice and right, because he does not have to stand face to face with his victims in their tragic death. But to stand on the battle field face to face with a man --- to raise your own gun to your shoulder - - - to pull the trigger - - - to watch him fall - - - just because he is on the other side! It is a terrible thing to take a human life!

"I do not think I could kill a man, not even on the battle field." There are hundreds of thousands of Christian men who grasp this same sentence when they think of war, and their own turn in the line of battle. Could any Christian, any Christian, any follower of our Lord, any man who loves, any man who sincerely believes "Thou shalt not kill", sign his name on the paper which puts him on call to defend righteousness with the force of arms without praying in a gasp, "Oh God, I go because I think it is necessary, but I do not think I could kill a man, not even on the field of battle?"

In this sense every true Christian is a conscientious objector to war. Does it follow then that every Christian ought to place his name on a petition under the caption 'I Am a Conscientious Objector'? Does it follow then that every Christian ought to get his picture or name in the daily paper as another 'Conscientious Objector'? Are men who feel that it is a terrible thing to take a human life organized conscientious objectors, or are they Christians?

A follower of Ghandi may feel that he should display himself as a man of conscience, as a conscientious objector. A follower of Christ, one who reads and studies the whole of his Gospel, one who submits his life to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is usually satisfied to call himself a Christian. Such a man will not depend entirely upon his conscience, but will pray that his human conscience may be tempered and guided by the Word and Spirit of the Father of all. He knows that the conscience which tells him not to fight, even for the right, may be warped by human fear and weakness (cf. I Cor. 8: 7 ff). He does not depend entirely on his conscience, but in fear and trembling, and at the same time, in complete trust, he says, "Yea, though I walk through the valley

of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

If we recapitulate what we are trying to say we will arrive at the following thoughts. The really sincere conscientious objector has only one scriptural command on which he can base his objection. That is the command "Thou shalt not kill". Therefore the conscientious objector is no different from every other Christian, but he is not content with simply being a Christian like all the rest. He wants to be a 'Conscientious Objector'. The sincere Christian who recognizes the power of sin and evil in the world, and the individual's responsibility to fight against sin and evil, prays that he might be able to fight for right without having to kill. On the other hand, the conscientious objector is sure of himself because he depends only upon his own conscience. It tells him to refuse to fight irrespective of the right or wrong of the cause. He ignores the experiences of the ages of civilization and the consciences of thousands of other Christians. He depends entirely upon his own immediate conscience.

In all fairness we feel that the conscientious objector who wants to be known as such is self-righteous. He is not satisfied to be just another Christian who struggles with the problem of how he can fight for right and at the same time avoid killing. This problem of the centuries and of life itself is no problem for the conscientious objector. His own conscience has solved it for him.

Can a man depend entirely upon his own conscience and not be guilty of self-righteousness? We do not think he can, because the conscience itself is not reliable. The human conscience can be weak, warped, immature, and inclined to evil, it can be trained, moderated, improved, and enlightened. It is not the ultimate authority, but rather the penultimate whose accent and emphasis is dependent upon and influenced by the will of the Ultimate. The Ultimate is God. The word conscience means 'co-knowledge-with' and in the case of the Christian, conscience is 'seeing-with, knowing-with, understanding-with' God. We can hardly depend on the human conscience alone without being self-righteous.

Can a conscientious objector deny that he shares the sin and guilt of society in time of peace without being self-righteous? How can men and women who share the guilt of society in time of peace absolve themselves from the communal guilt of society by abstaining from common action in time of war without being self-righteous? \*

We do not want to be unkind, but we ask sincerely, "Can a man be more than a Christian by being an out-spoken and declared 'Conscientious Objector'?"

Aren't we all conscientious objectors to killing our fellow men? But when we turn our consciences upon ourselves and see how much responsibility for the sins of society fall upon us as sinful individuals, and how much responsibility for correcting our own and society's wrongs, can we refuse to do our part

simply by calling ourselves 'Conscientious Objectors'? Or wouldn't we rather whisper in trembling trust to our God, "I am a sinner and therefore I share in the evil of this world. I want to fight against the evil which I know is against Thy Will, but I don't think that I could kill a man. Be Thou with men when that necessity comes to me!"

Yes, quietly and with trembling, we are conscientious objectors to killing our fellow men. But when we look at the whole picture of sin and evil, hate and greed, and our own part in that sin and evil, hate and greed, we feel that noisy conscientious objection is no solution.

\* R. Niebuhr, "Why the Christian Church is not Pacifist! p.45

\* This thought comes from "The Idea of a Christian Society" by T.S. Eliot.

---

## CAN A MINISTER BE A PACIFIST

—————  
 Morgan Edwards —————

Some kind friends criticised me for being too vehement and dogmatic in the last article which I wrote for the 'Seminarian'. After reading the article as just another reader of the whole paper, I felt that these friends were being fair and honest in accusing me of being vehement and dogmatic. However, if you will remember, I directed my opposition against the self-branded "Christian Pacifists". I said nothing about the sincere (with double emphasis) conscientious objector.

In this article we shall again direct our opposition against the "Christian Pacifist". By the Christian Pacifist we mean those who assert that all warfare is categorically forbidden to followers of our Lord. In other words, the Christian must be a pacifist because our Lord forbids His followers to take part in war. This assertion is not scriptural, nor does it seem to be the result of intelligent and unselfish reasoning on the part of a Christian man who acknowledges his own sin, and his own guilt for the sins of the society of which he is a part.

Therefore, we say that there is no such category as "Christian Pacifism". No Christian believes that he is to steal from his brother, whether he do it in an alley with a black jack, or in an office with pen and ink. No Christian believes that he is to store up much excess grain and food in his own barn while others starve. No Christian believes that he is to kill his fellow man. No Christian believes in war. Every Christian believes that he is to live in peace with his fellow men. These beliefs make men Christians, not Pacifists.



A man may be a rationalistic or humanitarian pacifist if he chooses to, just as he may be a Republican or Democrat. Then he must defend his pacificism on reason and humanitarianism, and not on the Gospel. At the same time he may be a Christian, but being a Christian does not necessitate his being a pacifist, and his pacificism does not make him a Christian. Christianity and Pacificism are not synonymous.

My vehemence in the last article was directed against those men who are first of all pacifists, and secondarily Christian. It was directed against those pacifists who are not fair players. They want to be rationalistic or humanitarian leaders, and successful ones, so they are not above distorting the Gospel of Jesus Christ in order to apply it to their own cause, and in that way to gain authority and prestige for their own cause. It was directed against those pacifists who try to tell the world and the Christian ministers, too, that all Christian ministers must be pacifists. It was directed against those pacifists who want only enough of the Gospel to defend their own cause.

We repeat, it is all right for a man to be a pacifist if he wants to, just as it is all right to be a Republican, Democrat, or Humanitarian. But a Christian minister ought not be branded as a pacifist, nor should he preach pacificism. Surely a minister, a steward of the "mysteries, the kingdom, and the grace of God" is called to a more permanent task. A Christian minister hates war, and he must be continuously fighting against the causes of war. But he cannot be a sensational flag waving danner of war, and he cannot be a cowardly retiring safety seeker. A Christian minister is definitely opposed to war, and he is responsible for eliminating the causes of war, but he does not start at the same point as the pacifist.

We might take other examples to bring out what we mean. A Christian minister is clearly opposed to prostitution. However, he does not wave the banner and lead the hunters who go to catch and condemn the prostitute. But because he sincerely believes the sixth commandment he begins with the men who demand and make prostitution possible. He preaches to individual men and women every day of his life the commands and truths of God's word. He is as much interested in the soul of the prostitute as he is in the soul of the man who will be prevented from this sin simply because the house is gone. Buring down all the houses of prostitution will not eliminate the sin, but bringing men and women to Christ, who will transform them into new men and women, will. This is the minister's job. He must begin at the beginning.

We might take prohibition as another example. The minister does not lead the temperance parade. He does not wield the hatchet. He knows that he can do little good simply by making much prohibition noise. Greater evils arise as long as men are not changed. Bootlegging for example. The minister must lead in changing the drunkard, and he is responsible for reforming the bootlegger, too. He must be active and aggressive, but he must begin at the base of the evil. He cannot be a sensationalist, and he cannot be a flag waver. He must hold fast to the lessons of the ages and the permanent truths which they teach, for he must deal with permanent truths.

And so it is in the problem of war. We know that war is wrong. But the minister does not begin his crusade against war by waving the banner of pacificism when we are in the midst of war. He must make new men, who do not want war, by bringing them to the Christ who transforms them. The gospel of Christ is not a gospel of sensational pacificism. It is a gospel of Peace with God for those who believe.

The minister is too aware of his own sin and his part in the sin of humanity to think that he can overcome the power of evil in this world by a gospel of non-violent resistance. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Victor of the Cross, can be the only victory over sin, evil, and war.

---

## A FALSE FAVORITISM

— Adam Polerack —

While the Selective Service Act was in its formative stage anticipatory protestations were being raised by the very people whom such a measure was intended to protect. Liberty-loving Americans, self-styled, began to seek ways and means whereby they could escape not only the military service which would be required, but even the registration for that service.

Long before the Act reached its final form, its designers were inundated by requests for exemption. Immunity was sought on a myriad of excuses. Among the most vociferous protestants were candidates for the ministry.

When the Act was passed by the law-makers of this country, it included a provision exempting all ministerial students from military service, although they were required to register. This provision, along with the theory underlying it, is essentially unsound.

Ministerial students owe just as great a debt to their government for protecting them as do the men preparing themselves for a secular career. To relieve them of their obligations to their country is as unjust to them as it is to their fellowmen who must shoulder rifles for a year.

What reason is there to exempt ministerial students? If a year of service with the military forces of the nation would run counter to their religious beliefs, would it not also be fair to exempt other men who hold to the same beliefs but do not happen to be studying for the ministry? To be entirely consistent, men who hold that it is unchristian to bear arms should attempt, at least, to persuade all others to the same course. But, no! That would be carrying the principle too far. Public censure would be strong. The result is, that one rule of Christianity becomes applicable to a few, but inoperative upon the mass of humanity.

Furthermore, it is a calamitous mistake to exempt ministerial students, because such exemption tends to widen the already existing

gulf between secular and religious thought on world problems. People will be reluctant to accept the religious leadership of men who have no knowledge of the difficulties and the problems which the majority of humanity is encountering. Service with his fellowmen will do more than any other act to broaden the minister's understanding of the needs and problems of his people during the time of a crisis.

There can be no doubt that this is a time of crisis. The flames of war which have engulfed a large part of the earth are ample evidence of a world-wide clash between two conceptions of life--a slave way and a way of freedom. The outcome of this conflict will determine, perhaps unalterably, the conditions under which this generation and many generations to come will have to live.

If war comes to these shores, the concomitant sacrifices and danger will have to be met with all the courage that can be mustered. To make America impregnable against the totalitarian menaces, every man, be he engaged in secular or religious work, will have to do his share in building and maintaining the bulwarks of this nation.

In peacetime the obligation to one's government can be met in unostentatious ways. But this is not peacetime; nor is it the time to countenance any 'moral softness'.

\* \* \* \* \*

"First of all before God learn humility. Be a seeker after Truth, and not always on the look-out for some confirmation of your own ideas. Study! You will not have such a chance again. Grow convictions, but avoid dogmatic utterance. Say what you know, but say it kindly. Never despise people. They are your specialty. Strive as you can to understand every man's point-of-view, that you may be of some service to him. Be a listener instead of a perpetual talker. Cultivate sympathy and a passion for it. Never betray a confidence. And above everything else, learn Christ, -- that in Him you may forever walk humbly with your God."

-- Dr. Paul E. Schorer to a young man entering the ministry.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Stray Thoughts

Happiness is like a jam; you can't spread even a little of it without getting some on yourself.

The men who try to do something and fail are infinitely better than those who try to do nothing and succeed.

Wealth lost, something lost; honor lost, much lost; courage lost, all lost.

To live in hearts behind is not to die.

Of the unspoken word thou art master; the spoken word is the master of thee.

Life that ever needs forgiveness has for its first duty to forgive.



# Chapel Devotions

by William Elbert Jr.

It is not the intention of this brief article to describe what Chapel life at seminary is like or to look at chapel services in the light of the number of men who attend regularly. Instead, I should like to bring before the student body some suggestions concerning the services themselves.

In our last Communion Service I felt a definite lack. It was The Service of our Lutheran Church, and yet, perhaps the most important part of the Communion Service itself was neglected. I refer to the preaching of the Word. I am sure that a short sermon, or even a sermonette would not prolong the service unduly. Instead, to my mind, it would more fully prepare us to partake of the Lord's Supper in a more spiritual and real frame of mind. A short sermon of a truly devotional nature is not too much to ask for in this, The Service.

Secondly, I should like to suggest that at least once a week we have a short address by some member of the faculty. Perhaps Wednesday chapel time would be the best time for such a service. I feel that there are many of us who would look forward to these aids in our devotional life. One of the things about which men complain when they are in the active ministry is the fact that they have so few opportunities to become replenished and strengthened through participation as a member of the worshipping congregation of Christ's Church. How much more each of us needs to be strengthened by listening to God's Word through the heart and mind of a member of our faculty, as we prepare under their leadership to take up our life's calling. I hope that the members of the faculty will take such suggestions under consideration.

If such things should come to pass, there is something which all of us can and must do ourselves in participating in these services. The students who read the service would make that service truly a part of their own devotion and worship of God. Preparation, knowledge of the service, and an understanding presentation of the liturgy is essential. For those of us who are in the pews it is also essential that we regard the service not as a test of the oratorical abilities of the reader. To do so is to interrupt and perhaps to ruin entirely our communion with God and Christ. We too must have a devotional motive and not a critical one as we participate in these worship services. And we in the pews should also have a desire to hear whoever may be preaching not on the basis of classroom procedure nor on the basis of the mark received last semester. To do so is to deny the avowed purpose we have in attending this Lutheran Seminary.

I hope that this article will be taken in the light of the above emphasis, so that the fruits thereof will become a true aid to the devotional life here at Mt. Airy. If you feel that you would like to see such suggestions become a reality, feel free to mention the fact to a member of the faculty, for I feel sure that they desire to aid us in our devotional life in any way that they can.



# Adventures In Reading

by Alfred Sisk

Occasionally, when reading, one comes upon a book that treats of the spiritual life in such a way as to make the reading of it a religious experience. One senses the difference immediately. The author cuts through all the theological arguments and writes about things at the center where life is really lived. There is a timelessness and a timelessness about such writings, and one welcomes them as one welcomes an old friend.

During the past year I have read three such books. Over four centuries of time separates them from each other, and yet, were the three writers placed in the same room they would at once recognize in one another a common love for God through Jesus Christ that overshadows every other difference.

The first book is perhaps the best known: THE IMITATION OF CHRIST, by Thomas A' Kempis. It is the story of a soul that has been caught up in the spirit of the Christ. It tells, almost fearfully, about the joy that is experienced during those "high-tide occasions" of the soul. It tells also of the longings of the soul after peace and righteousness, of how the Grace of God must be guarded by humility, and how various obstacles keep us from arriving at Perfect Love. It is a simple book in the same way that Christ's teachings are simple. And it is a "prayerfully written" book by one who sought throughout his days to praise his Maker.

The writer of the second book is unknown. But the book, THEOLOGIA GERMANICA, reveals much of the author's character. This was the book that Luther chose as his favorite after the Bible and St. Augustine, and one can easily understand why. The keynote is Love. It is not so much written about Love as out of Love. Here is one who has felt God's Grace change his whole life and now attempts to recall the various steps for others to read. "I would fain be to the eternal what a man's hand is to a man." Complete selflessness is evident on every page, and all this that God might have the glory and the honor.

No doubt, less is known about the third writer and his book. One might suppose it strange to learn that it was written by a tailor who lived in New Jersey in Benjamin Franklin's day. But then, THE JOURNAL OF JOHN WOOLMAN is an unusual book. Once more we find how little time and place matter in the spiritual life, for here we find the same "child-like trust" that A' Kempis and the writer of the Theologia knew before him. As one follows the course of Woolman's life one can see the development and growth in grace. There is a faith that becomes unshakeable, and a love that runs quiet and deep.

These are books that live on and on. Sooner or later the searching Christians come upon them and know at once that he has found a fellow stranger and a pilgrim.





# IS THE CHURCH CULTIVATING YOUTH

by Karl Knisely

Is it the Christian Church which has failed in the world of today or is it the world which has become more immune to the power of the Gospel, thus resisting the Message of Christ? This is the honest question for which many Christian minds are demanding answer. Certain enough is the fact that there is something wrong, for we would be absurd to say that the Church, in 1940, has made the progress which Christ would commend as "Well-done."

We can't point the finger of accusation to Jesus. His offer of Salvation still remains for all. The potency of that Gift has not been lessened. And since it is the relationship of two—Christ and ourselves—and since Christ is not conceivably to blame—we are the ones at fault.

How? As we retrace our relation to the Church, we can't see any unusual or revolutionary change in our attitude, so that it must be that the trouble has been brewing for sometime. It must be a corruption which has appeared with such stealth and cunning, that before we have realized it, it has infested the very relationship between Christ and ourselves.

What is the disease? The writer first became conscious of it, when recently, he was stung with the remark "One doesn't need Christ to inherit eternal life". Imagine his chagrin when, in an effort to change such a falsity, he discovered that others in the group came to the rescue of the thought. An unhealthy situation! A group of young people assembled in a Christian Church, professing by their attendance to being members of the Church, and yet claiming that Heaven was possible to the individual without the intercession of the Christ!

These young people didn't feel that they were expressing unusual thoughts. They weren't sounding this heretical viewpoint because they thought that it was smart or just clever. It was naturally voiced as the composite belief of a segment of the Christian Church. And it was an important segment, for they were young leaders in the Church — practically all in the group were college educated and some held positions of authority in youth organizations affiliated with the Church.

Another fact led the writer to realize that the view which they expressed was more common than he had hoped. These young people were not social recluses. Through extra-church activities

as a group, they were coming in contact with other groups of young people. He knew that mutual exchange of ideas was the rule rather than the exception. From this fact, he was led to realize the commonness of the heresy which has attached itself to our young people. (It is with even more regret and pity that one meets the youth who has dismissed the thought of the after-life as a clever fairy tale.)

Yes, these young people felt that Heaven was attainable without Christ. The writer questioned them further. Just what did they mean? Without realizing it, Christianity had come to be nothing more than a philosophy to them. The Gospel had lost its reality. Goodness and merit were measured, not in relation to the will of God, but rather by proximity to a set of man-made rules. We must admit that the rules were quite Christian--the very highest--but they had been divorced from their Christian setting. No longer was it Christ who was teaching them what to do, rather it was environment, personalized in society, demanding that they follow these rules. These young people had accepted a portion, and a goodly portion, of Christ's teachings, but, unwittingly, they had rejected Christ.

The situation demanded further investigation. The writer was curious to learn how this attitude had affected the activities of the young people. He soon realized that their interests had come to follow a rather well-defined course of action. It was action, personalized in the word "Movement". Instead of worrying about their personal relation to Christ; rather than, through prayer and meditation, bringing themselves in humility before Christ--these young people had filled their lives with the activities of these "Movements". When we refer to "Movements" we have in mind group actions which have been set in motion to accomplish a certain goal. One need but read the newspapers and magazines to see how many such "Movements" there are--youth organizations to stop war, youth organizations to fight Communism, youth organizations to cultivate patriotism, youth organizations to fight poverty, etc. The intent of each group appears, at first glance, to be most noteworthy. It is upon closer examination that one discovers that there has been an unwarranted and unhealthy over-emphasis. For youth to devote all its spare time, and much otherwise needed regular time, to the demands of such "Movements" is a crime to the best interests of itself.

How can a young person arrive at a conception of his place in Christian Society, if he spends all of his time bellowing his objections to military conscription and heatedly attempting to win others to his view? How can a youth find Christ if he is obsessed with the idea of slum clearance-eating, sleeping, and drinking the idea--but all the while either failing or refusing to find time for meditation and prayer? If you doubt the existence of such conditions, visit most any college campus in Philadelphia, or in most any section of the country, and question the young people concerning their interests. The percentage is too high of those who have either no interests worth mentioning or are enthusiastically devoting their energies to the support of some "Movement". (Why are Student Christian Associations so unpopular on some campuses?)

Can something be done to change this unwanted situation? Definitely, yes. If the Church, instead of bemoaning the condition,

were to act, the condition could be remedied before further damage is done. We must not forget that the future of the Church must be entrusted to the youth of today. Just as weak as today's youth becomes, just so weak will the Church of tomorrow become. We must offer to youth a place within the church to expand its energies. There is no need that this energy should be wasted without the Church, when it is so sorely needed within the Church. Yet, because the Church is unable to hold the interest of its youth, the world is stealing much of this power, stored in the lives of youth, to use it against the Church and Christ. It is the Church's solemn duty to provide the place for youth to serve--a place where service is definitely dedicated to Christ.

When youth comes to realize its mistake, it will do so if the Church so instructs and leads, then the pendulum of young people's enthusiasm will swing toward the Church. The Church needs but to show to youth the truth of Christ's words, "Apart from Me ye can do nothing". It is then that the power of youth, which is being so shamefully wasted outside the Church, can be returned to the task of perfecting the construction of God's Kingdom.

