



the SEMINARIAN

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TO THE EDITOR:

In the discussion between Dr. Bergendoff and Mr. Huldshiner on "A Changeless Christ in a Changing World" the observer, who was inclined to agree with Mr. Huldshiner, came away with a dismayed feeling that the question was far short of resolution. Perhaps a treatment of the issue from a different perspective might be of some value.

Both gentlemen seemed to be somewhat dissatisfied with the present state of the church, but they disagreed entirely in recommendations for improvement. Dr. Bergendoff seemed to feel that the problem is one of the church's growing failure to fully comprehend its message. There need be little debate on this point. However correct Dr. Bergendoff is in his estimation of the basic problem, his suggested antidote is self-defeating. Increased contemplation of the Gospel and less concern with the attitudes and forces of the secular world can only obscure the Gospel. Mr. Huldshiner, on the other hand, offered useful remedies in calling for greater cognizance of the secular world. But he failed to recognize that the problem is not one merely of communication and that Dr. Bergendoff is correct in feeling that proper knowledge of the church's message would be decisive in enabling the church to communicate that message.

This writer would suggest that a complete confrontation of the secular world is precisely what best enables the church to truly recognize its treasure. A foremost lesson of church history is that the church is constantly tempted to become the servant of the world in which it finds itself and that it frequently succumbs to that temptation. The Lutheran Church provides ample instances of the absorption of the church by its environment. Through the Eighteenth Century the German church served as an arm of the state; its pastors represented petty monarchs as census taker, agent of military subscription and guardian of a political and social morality that appears reprehensible today. In the Nineteenth Century the European church continued to fill its role in "the alliance of throne and altar" and took upon itself the additional burden of sanctioning the social and economic prerogatives of the new upper-middle class. In the Twentieth Century part of the German church accommodated National Socialism to its message, as today a part of the same church has incorporated the teachings of Communism. In this century in the United States much of the church apparently feels responsible for upholding social and political justice as defined by the Republican Party. The most energetic attempts at intellectual distinctions between Law and Gospel have not been successful in preventing the Gospel from becoming distorted, confused and contaminated with the historically relative myths and causes of natural man. The church appears to have chosen the Second Commandment as its very own to break.

Escape from this deeply ingrained tendency is not found by concerted attempts to separate our concerns from those of the world, for this is an impossible task in any society that is not openly and militantly hostile to the church. To concentrate our vision on the message of the church alone remains an unattainable ideal. The church is in this world and made up of people of this world. We cannot absorb and envelop ourselves completely in the church and thereby be assured that our message remains distinct from social Darwinism, Prohibitionism, scientific materialism, Republicanism, liberalism, Socialism or whatever the case may be; for we and others in the church are necessarily imbued with attitudes of the secular world. The danger is when we know only the church and when that church is composed almost totally of Prohibitionists,

(cont'd on page 4)

FOOTNOTES (Praeparatio Evangelii)

This week you can write this column - I shall just put to you the type of question that usually calls forth a "footnote".

Why does main dorm's court look like a large waste basket most of the time? Why do we have such a problem with payments in the canteen? Why do the phones go unanswered when there is a room full of TV watchers?

Why are our comments sometimes less than charitable concerning our brothers here or anyone else? Why do we bitch so much about this or that professor? Why do we ignore each other at times?

Why are papers and sermons so often (always?) last minute affairs? Why don't we ever seem to get around to reading all the books and articles that we would like to read? Why do we find it so difficult to put that idea or gripe in print for the SEMINARIAN?

Why do we postpone into infinity the composition of that poem or essay for the Quarterly? Why did and does our interest in painting or music remain unexercised or miserably amateur?

Why do we entertain all the doubts of faith and every possible sin with the hospitality of our minds' finest hours? Why do we do those things which we would not do, and do not the things that we would?

George Weckman

DEVIL'S DICTIONARY:

BACCHUS, n. A convenient diety invented by the ancients as an excuse for getting drunk.

BAPTISM, n. A sacred rite of such efficacy that he who finds himself in heaven without having undergone it will be unhappy forever.

BRAIN, n. An apparatus with which we think that we think.

BRIDE, n. A woman with a fine prospect of happiness behind her.

BRUTE, n. See Husband.

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REVISED ADOPTED BUDGET 1962-63, Student Body of The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Anticipated amount of revenue for the academic year 1962-63	\$1630.00
Money transferred from	
Operating Principle	25.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1655.00</b>

ITEM

Benevolence	\$155.00
Student Equipment Fund	80.00
Student Aid	50.00
Student Government Supplies	15.00
Newspaper	20.00
Athletic Committee	120.00
Card & Gift Committee	10.00
Heyer Commission	60.00
Interseminary Movement	150.00
Publications Committee	300.00
Symposium Committee	75.00
Social Committee	70.00
Banquet Committee	200.00
Tape Recording Committee	20.00
Seminar	125.00
Bagger Event	200.00
Student Work Committee	5.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1655.00</b>

ANNOUNCEMENT

All students, wives, friends, etc. are invited to the annual Thankoffering Festival at Ascension Lutheran Church on Sunday, November 4, at 4:00 p.m. The speaker will be Prof. O. Fred Nolde. His topic is "Christian Responsibility in Relation to Immediate Emergencies." Dr. Nolde is a graduate of Muhlenberg College (A.B.), and holds the B.D. degree from Philadelphia Lutheran Seminary and the PhD degree from the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Nolde has had a wide experience in international affairs and is at present Director of Commission of Churches on International Affairs. His insights come from a long practical background. This is an opportunity we should not miss.

## A RESUME OF DR. LAZERETH'S ADDRESS OF OCT. 10

Introduction: Professor Lazereth stated his position immediately. Theology is a task that is only pre-proclamatory, i.e., it is only the "boot-camp" before the battle. True theology, he states, is wrought in the battlefield of life. For it is precisely out in life that the living Word has its play and relevance. Hence, any "theological" treatment of Christian Ethics must be seen as delegating man's appraisal of the task. But ultimately it is the indwelling Christ that determines which task man will have.

Then Dr. Lazereth showed the need of discovering the validity of the Lutheran ethic, stressing that unless such monistic theologies as that of Barth are corrected, the Lutheran evangelical spirit is in danger of misunderstanding, both from without and within.

I. A Trinitarian Social Ethic: From this point, Dr. Lazereth laid out two main points. The first was the Christological nature of the Christian Ethic. The second was the Trinitarian Trend of this same ethic. Let us examine them in more detail.

A. The Christological Nature: The foundation of the Christian life is Faith in Jesus Christ as Savior. This Faith provides the power to live the Christian life, and the Love which is experienced in such a relationship with Christ gives one the direction. Dr. Lazereth insisted on an interaction between Faith and life. As he put it, "Faith gives life a religious meaning; life gives Faith an ethical opportunity." The living "in Christ", then, is "faithful deeds meeting neighbor's needs". Lazereth then goes on to show how the traditional Law-Gospel tension in the fallen world can be a guide for Christian "life-in-love". Because the world stands under God's judgment, there must be a prophetic stance and mission. This is the 'pilgrim' nature of each Christian who is and is not of this world. This is that prophetic no to a sinful creation. Nevertheless, the Christian also knows the power of the Gospel. Thus, from within he must witness to the Word, living as a Christian in a world that can never be a Christian World. Hence, the Christian swings what Dr. Lazereth called a "two-edged" sword.

B. Trinitarian Trend: There are three areas of concern here, but the real point of all of them is their witness to the fulness of a God who acts on man's behalf. This approach stresses the unity of God's Economy, and raises the hopes of Christians who look forward to the redemption of the whole of creation. Let us glance at each area individually, noting that it is only a verbal distinction and not a real one.

1. God as Redeemer: This is that paradoxical stance of Faith that we are called to be perfectly free and yet perfectly enslaved. We are freed from the slavery of sin to the service of God and our fellowman. This is a personal relation, a perpendicular confrontation, which in response expresses itself horizontally in Christian Love.

2. Sanctification: Because God declares man righteous, he also wills and makes man righteous. The Christian's response or 'leap of faith' involves a Copernican Revolution in one's life, whereby the self ceases to be the center of the universe, and God is seen as the focal point.

3. Creation: In the life of Faith, the orders of creation are now seen to be calls to service. They are not mere circumstances into which we have been cast. Nor are they of our own choosing. But in the light of Faith they are seen to be what God intends them to be, viz., opportunities to witness to the living God. Hence, in the life of the believer, the whole scope of God's concern is seen.



TO THE EDITOR (Cont'd)

or Republicans, or Communists, etc. It is then we unconsciously corrupt our message attaching it to irrelevant or antithetical ideals.

The best means by which we can understand the Word of God and put our trust in it alone is by a fuller confrontation and cognizance of the secular world. One effect of this widening of horizons, as Mr. Huldshiner suggested, would be to teach us humility where humility is due. We would learn, for instance, that the tradition of the Old Testament prophets like Amos and Micah is better exemplified by modern social idealists to whom Christ means little than by the Church. Fuller confrontation would not, however, diminish our confidence in our message, as Dr. Bergendoff fears. On the contrary, we would better appreciate the unassailable glory of God's Word; our faith would be succored. That faith grows as defensiveness diminishes is a truism; we could see how easy it is to be courageous when we discover that our message alone is unchangingly true.

A fuller awareness and exploration of the secular world can only, on one hand, dispel what we are believed to be the threats to our faith and on the other hand wash away the pitiful human aspirations that obscure it. Narrowness is our enemy. As we begin to appreciate the whole spectrum of social, political, economic, philosophical and cultural attitudes current in our world we come to see them only in varying shades of gray. One or the other might seem more efficacious for a particular place in a particular time. But the wider the acquaintance, the more we recognize worth in differing views, the more we truly confront the whole world of man's existence, the more we realize that we can put our faith in no cause of natural man. We come to trust in God alone as we see that no one else is worthy of our trust. And we are better able to know the true Christ because we are no longer able to believe with mental surreptitiousness that to imitate Christ is to be a middle-class American of Anglo-Saxon (preferably Saxon) decent, a loyal Republican and a pillar of some nice respectable suburban church.

George W. Freeman

A RESUME OF DR. LAZARETH'S ADDRESS OF OCTOBER 10. (Cont'd)

III. Criticisms of Lutheranism: In closing, Dr. Lazareth was honest in evaluating our Lutheran stance in previous years. It has been one of our personalism and narrowness of vision. It has looked inward to its own needs, and has not seen those either just around the corner, or just across the globe. Dr. Lazareth sees this personalism as but one of the many dangers today, dangers which threaten the Church's right to speak.

Douglas Werner

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT: "Oh, my fellow-students, the special study of theology and all that appertains to it, that is what the preacher must be doing always; but he never can do it afterward as he can in the blessed days of quiet in Arabia, after Christ has called him, and before the Apostles lay their hands upon him. In many respects an ignorant clergy, however pious it may be, is worse than none at all. 'The knowledge of the priest,' said St. Francis deSales, 'is the eighth sacrament of the Church.'" - Phillips Brooks, from his Lyman Beecher Lectures, 1877.

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"I cannot imagine even the most feather-brained nit growling through constipated Victorian hymns with maudlin tunes and pious doggerel and getting anything from them." PRISM, Oct. '62.

