

REPORT OF THE
16th STUDENT VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT
QUADRENNIAL CONFERENCE

Christ's
Kingdom
Is
Man's
Hope

CHRISTIANS IN A WORLD
IN STRUGGLE

CHRIST'S KINGDOM
IS MAN'S HOPE



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Compiled by
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QUADRENNIAL CONFERENCE

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PREFACE

THE SUCCESSION of the Quadrennial Conventions of the Student Volunteer Movement is unique. Since the first of the series, in Cleveland in 1891, they have presented to student generation after student generation claims of the world-wide mission of the Church. No other national student gatherings of comparable dimensions have so accentuated over so long a time the universality of the Gospel and the obligation and privilege of youth to dedicate themselves to witnessing to it to all men. Because of them thousands of students have either had their missionary purpose confirmed and made more intelligent or have received impressions which have led them to later decision. Still more thousands who have not become missionaries have had their horizons expanded and have either been introduced for the first time to the world-wide implications of the Gospel or have become better informed and have made a deeper commitment to the support of the missionary enterprise.

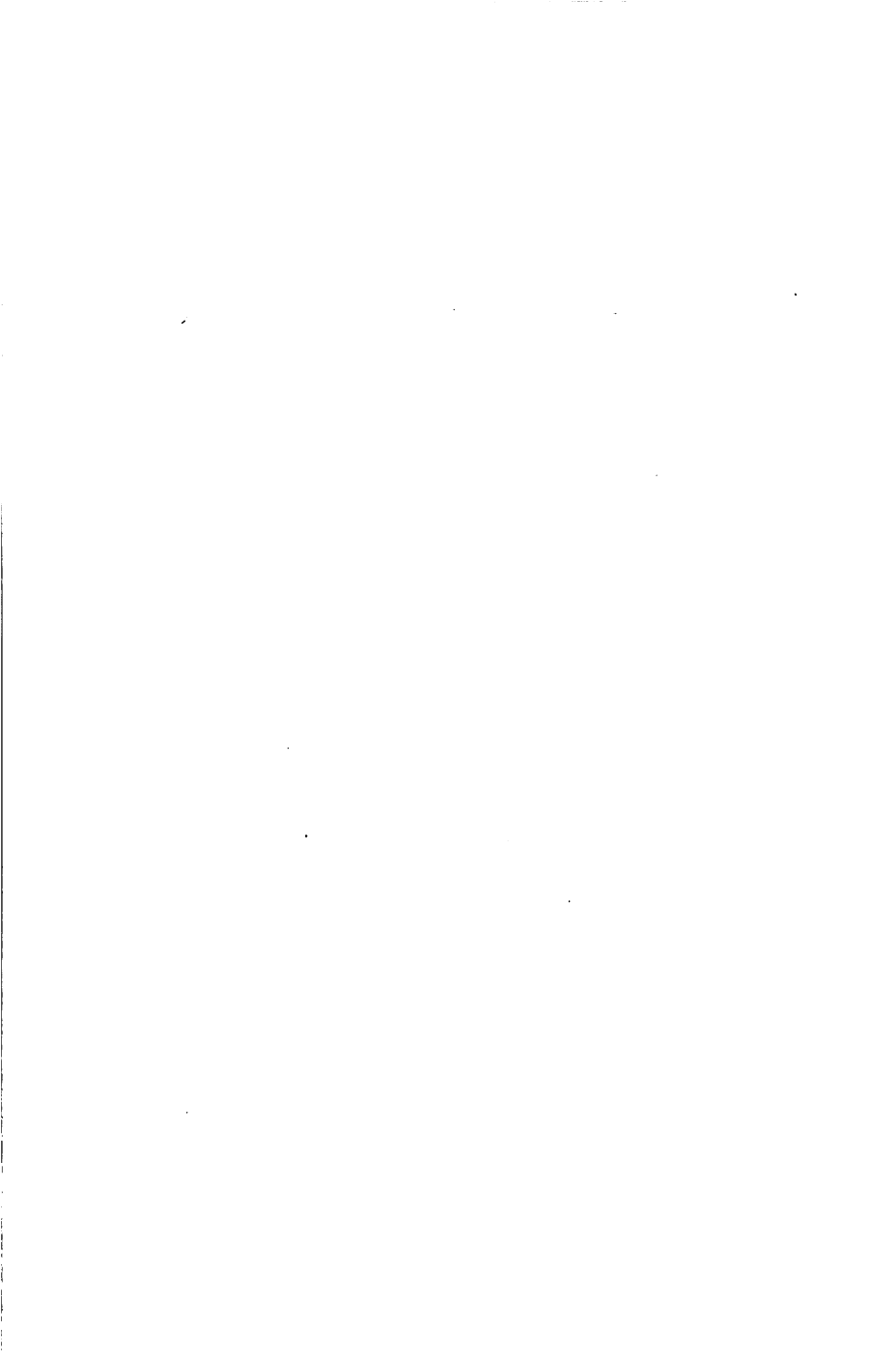
The Quadrennial which was held in Lawrence, Kansas, during the Christmas recess of 1951-1952 and of which the following pages are the official record, was one of the most notable of the series. I have attended more than half of its predecessors. Though one must beware of one's subjective reactions in seeking to arrive at a judgment, this particular gathering seems to me to have

been the most outstanding of those with which I have had personal experience. In the quality of its program it was certainly the equal of any of those which had gone before it. The presence of the many students from other lands gave the assembly a peculiarly ecumenical complexion. What impressed me especially, however, was the attitude of the students. There was, of course, the ebullience of youth, much of it lighthearted and fun-loving—as has always been true. However, underlying it were a seriousness, an openmindedness, a willingness, and even an eagerness to come to grips with the deepest issues presented by the Christian faith and the relevance of Christ to the present world situation which seemed to me to be above the average of previous conventions, especially with those of comparable size. Notable was the quite spontaneous dedication of life on the last morning. The final results of Lawrence, 1951–1952, cannot be appraised for many years, until the lives there touched have made their contributions over the decades which lie ahead. Even then they will be known fully only to God. Yet to one who, like myself, has seen so many earlier ones, this particular Quadrennial stands out as a most heartening landmark.

KENNETH SCOTT LATOURETTE
New Haven, Conn.

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PART I

Students Face the Christian Mission

A PERSON could not have visited many student Christian groups on college campuses of the United States and Canada during the spring of 1952 without being curious about what mysterious forces had recently been at work. For he would meet many individuals and groups with a new sense of the world mission to which God is calling the Church at this critical moment. And when he asked the source of this new insight he would be told about a great student conference which met at Lawrence, Kansas, during the Christmas vacation of 1951.

One traveler heard a student say in speaking to a college club:

My thoughts and beliefs, my actions and very life were changed this winter. Because my religion had been something I had not really thought about or truly doubted or prayed for, because it had been something that I had heard and not experienced, it could not be a real force in my life. Although I had always attended Sunday School and church, and in later years youth rallies and chapel services, I had had the feeling that the minister or speaker was not speaking to me. I would listen attentively to what he said, but I guess I thought that he was talking to the back wall or the hymnals or the person across from me—I don't know. But this winter, over the Christmas holidays, I went to the national Student Volunteer Movement Quadrennial Conference at Kansas—and I had my eyes opened to a lot of things.

Christ's Kingdom Is Man's Hope

This whole conference was centered upon one person—Jesus Christ. Everything, from the time that we arrived until we left, was focused upon that one center: platform addresses, “mincon” (*miniature conference*) discussion groups, Bible study, firesides—all of it. And one was constantly hearing, from every source and every speaker, “Witness for Christ!” . . . “Proclaim Christ to others.” . . . “Reflect Christ in *your* life.” And I was astounded! I’d never heard those things before and I’d been going to Sunday School and church for years.

But at that conference, one did not merely hear these things; one saw them—in the speakers and people there, in the discussions and spirit of the thing. I saw that Christ was not only a man who had lived and died many years ago; he had lived and died for me—and you—and the whole world. And he is living still! . . .

I heard people out there at the conference talk about a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, about giving one’s life to him because of this personal meeting. And I was shocked and surprised again! I wondered whether they weren’t a little queer and whether something wasn’t wrong somewhere. But before the conference was over, I realized that nothing was wrong. For I saw that when one has a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, his whole life becomes different. Christ leads you out into a path which is a little bit higher and a whole lot different from the one on which you have been walking. It doesn’t mean that you have to be a minister or a missionary. But you now realize that whatever you plan to do with your life or in it, you must do it for Christ.

At Lawrence I accepted Christ as my personal Savior. This is what I learned at the Quadrennial. And there I first experienced my religion, so that my thoughts and my actions and my very life were changed.

Other statements from students in colleges from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean indicate that something quite unusual and unique took place at Lawrence:

—It has been a tremendous experience—for it has been a true expression of our affirmed brotherhood and unity in Christ.

—This is the most wonderful thing that has ever happened to me in my whole life.

—The conference gave me a greater realization than ever before of the need for each of us to be “missionaries” wherever we are, and of what my part is in God’s purpose.

—The conference at Lawrence, I feel already, is having and will have a big part in shaping my future. In many ways it was the most significant thing in which I have ever participated.

—The conference was very helpful to me in restating my faith in Christ and in strengthening my purpose to give my life as a missionary. The message given us of America’s perilous place as a leader should be brought home to every person in this country. It was very relevant to me and to the present time.

—I felt that the conference was very real, and much more than an emotional experience. I personally was much impressed with the content of the program.

—I have gotten a clear view of the world struggle and the Christian’s job in it.

—My friend and I didn’t feel especially inspired or elated when the conference ended, but since we have returned to our campus with its bull sessions and discussion groups, we have begun to see how much the conference did for our thinking. Now we have become enthusiastic.

Typical of the deep seriousness of some decisions is the experience of a student from the Philippine Islands whose brother had been killed by the Japanese during the war.

The Philippine student wondered, as he came to the conference, if friendship between his people and the Japanese people could ever be restored. As he sat in a discussion group he was confronted with Christ's answer, "Love your enemies." He has decided to bear witness to the truth of the Gospel by going to Japan as a teacher.

Because the Lawrence conference spoke profoundly to so many delegates, numerous campus groups are feeling its impact in a variety of ways. A letter from a student from one of the Ivy League campuses said:

I am encouraged in my own thinking by the fact that neither my friends nor I find it easy to pass off the demand implied in the Lawrence thinking. For some time I have been concerned, along with many others, about the almost total lack of any missionary thinking on our campus, despite the fact that we have many persons here who are or who have been intimately connected with mission work. There is here, as elsewhere, a real separation among the religious organizations which makes both co-operation and communication difficult. . . . As a result of this situation, some penetrating thinking has been done.

A Japanese student from Denison University wrote:

The S.V.M. Quadrennial Conference was the most inspiring conference I have ever attended. Its ecumenical fellowship was a glorious experience for each participant. After getting back to the campus we participants from Denison University had a prayer meeting on Wednesday morning to remember the previous experience of fellowship, and we shall continue this prayer meeting.

Some twenty delegates from a Missouri college met following the conference to see where they could best make their Christian witness on campus. They decided it was in

their student government. The previous year only one party presented a slate for student government offices and less than 13 per cent of the campus voted. These delegates organized a second party and held a series of platform discussions on parties and candidates. More than one-half of the student body voted in this year's election.

A group of delegates from the University of California at Berkeley meet each Wednesday noon for prayer.

From Canada comes this word:

Kansas still stands out as a mountain peak experience for all who attended. Our group has continued to meet weekly, using as a basis for study the material presented by Charles Ranson. For several, their understanding and choice of vocation has crystallized, and decisions have been made and continue to be made.

The few experiences here recorded are typical of those of hundreds of students for whom the Lawrence Conference was the beginning of new patterns of thought and life. They stir one to form the question, "What was the nature of this conference which had such profound effect on the lives of a widely diverse group of students?"

If one were to put this question "What happened at Lawrence?" to a resident of that Kansan college town, he would probably be told that a large interdenominational student conference was held on the University of Kansas campus for five days from December 27, 1951, through January 1, 1952. To be more precise, this was the 16th Quadrennial Conference of the Student Volunteer Movement for Christian Missions.

The Character of the Group

Part of the answer is in the character of the group which came together. The twenty-one hundred delegates had

gathered from 476 colleges and universities across the length and breadth of the North American Continent, with delegates from every state but Nevada and Wyoming and from every Canadian province but Newfoundland. Over two hundred were foreign students temporarily studying in the United States, from more than fifty different foreign countries! There were 21 from Germany, 14 from Korea, 32 from Japan, 18 from India, 13 from African countries, 10 from the Near East, 11 from Southeast Asia, and 9 from Latin America.

The conference newspaper, "The Quadrennial," discovered that the group included a Philippine composer, an African chieftain's son studying engineering, a psychologist and his wife from Pakistan, a medical missionary doing a health survey of the forbidden kingdom of Nepal, an Austrian social worker, a dietitian from Thailand, a Chinese scholar and translator, and a nurse, a teacher, and a pastor from Korea.

The presence of this large representative group from other countries would have been a major contribution in itself, but there was something still more impressive. The foreign students did not come as guests to listen; they came as full participating delegates, for this was not an American conference with foreign guests but a conference of Christian students of many races and nations from the colleges of North America. Many new and illuminating insights came from the lips of the foreign students as they told about their home churches. And they helped many to understand the world struggle "emotionally" as Tracey Jones, Conference Secretary, aptly put it. Their part gave the conference a note of realism as it talked about the whole church and the whole world.

The Canadian delegates numbered 114 with a group of 17 from as far as British Columbia.

The United States delegates were widely representative with the several largest state delegations as follows: Ohio 135, Illinois 132, Kansas 126, Pennsylvania 105, Texas 95, and Minnesota 69. It was significant that more than 110 came from the Pacific Coast. The largest campus delegations were from Kansas University 49, University of Illinois 32, University of Minnesota 31, University of Nebraska 29, Iowa State College 28, and University of Texas 26.

The delegates came from 45 denominations. The larger denominational groups were Methodist 451, Presbyterian U.S.A. 382, Lutheran 215, Baptist 182, Presbyterian U.S. 178, Disciples 132, Congregational 122, Episcopalian 93. Many came from the student Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., and C.A. groups over the country.

There were 231 adult leaders from Canada, the United States, and many other countries. These leaders included student pastors, missionaries, and mission board executives, both home and foreign.

They came from many nations and many churches, and for five days they lived in an ecumenical fellowship in real flesh and blood. They expressed the *wholeness, unity, and universality* of the Church as they lived, studied, worshiped, prayed, and played together. Many students said that for the first time in their lives they *really* experienced and understood the ecumenical fellowship.

Most delegates had some church affiliation or connection, but they represented a tremendous variety of beliefs which cut across all denominational ties. Some were previously committed to Christ and came to deepen their understanding of their faith; some, like the story already told, were Christian by name only; some seriously questioned the need for a missionary movement within the churches; others had not heard of its existence.

The Questions Brought to the Conference

No matter what he believed or where he came from, each delegate arrived full of questions. Two girls from the College of the Sequoias said they did not feel satisfied with themselves; they felt a need for a purpose bigger and stronger than anything they knew—something that would really challenge them to live as they had never lived before. They came from one of the lush garden spots of the world, where all the physical comforts of life had failed to give them real satisfaction.

Two boys from Wisconsin State Teachers' College came with a desire to learn how to be better Christians as merchants. "I figure God needs Christians in business as well as in pulpits," one of them said, "and there are a lot of things we can do for God as business men that preachers can't do."

A bus load of students had plenty of time to talk as they traveled fifty-four hours over the snowy passes of the high Sierras and the frozen western plains. The most significant questions they asked one another were both those which had been stimulated by the reading of the conference study book, *That They May Have Life*, by D. T. Niles, and those which had grown out of their own experience. At times the conversations would rest on honest skepticism. "What right have we to take religion to other people?" . . . "What is God's purpose for the world?" . . . "Does the Biblical record fit into the rest of history?" . . . "What is God doing now?" Then, at other times the discussion would assume positive answers to the basic questions and ask, "How do we confront the world with Jesus Christ?" . . . "What is the nature of our Christian fellowship which makes it significant?" . . . "What is the immediate objective of the World Mission

of the Church?" . . . "What is my part in all this?"

Part of the power of the conference lay in its preparation. Behind it lay a great tradition of national Student Volunteer Movement Quadrennial Conferences, going back to the meeting in Mount Hermon where S.V.M. was born. Each of the conferences had a theme which reflected the temper and issues of the time in which it met. "The Evangelization of the World in This Generation" was the watchword of the convention at Cleveland in 1891 when students were leading the church in expanding the missionary movement. Later, in 1906, when the missionary enterprise was more strongly organized the theme was "The Modern Missionary Crusade." After the disillusionment of World War I the tone changed, and Indianapolis, 1923, had the theme "Christ and World Problems." Amid the uncertainties of the early forties the themes seemed tentative and searching with "Christian Community" at Wooster, 1943, and "Christian Frontiers" at Lawrence, 1947.

When the planning committee for Lawrence, 1951, began work two and one-half years before the conference, it sought for an emphasis which would be both true to the essential genius of past Quadrennials and relevant to the new world of the midtwentieth century. "After these years of uncertainty and searching we must make our conference a positive affirmation of our faith," said the planning committee. "Even the theme must stand as a witness to our belief in the kingship of Christ." The committee also noted that the prevailing mood of our time—on campus and in our society—was marked by a complete lack of any hope. Out of much soul searching and many long discussions came the conference theme "Christ's Kingdom—Man's Hope." The subtheme of the conference, "Christian Witness in a World in Struggle," stressed

the necessity of expressing our faith in practical terms in the kind of world in which we are set.

This conference was seen as concerned with only one question, "What is the job to which God calls his Church today?" To answer that one question it studied three others:

- a. What is the Christian mission as we know it in the Christian faith?
- b. How is the Church performing its mission today, and how should it be changed to make it more closely related to our Biblical faith, and therefore more effective in the world?
- c. How can I as an individual find my place in this mission to which God calls the Church in the world of 1952?

At an early point in the work of these committees, a series of study books and pamphlets was published to help delegates prepare themselves for the questions and discussions at Lawrence. A survey which recorded the major questions about the world mission that students asked most often, resulted in a series of eight study pamphlets, "Students Ask About Missions":

1. *Why Force My Religion on Others?*
2. *Why Not Our Own Backyard First?*
3. *Isn't the Missionary Job Already Done?*
4. *Aren't Missions a Form of Western Imperialism?*
5. *Do Missions Serve Modern Needs in Up-to-Date Ways?*
6. *Can a Divided Church Do the Missionary Job?*
7. *Can Christianity Out-Perform Communism?*
8. *How Do I Know I'm Called?*

Later in the spring of 1951 a study book on a theology of evangelism, *That They May Have Life*,¹ by D. T. Niles, was published and distributed among the student movements and mission boards. A second book, *That All May Be One*,² by James Edward Lesslie Newbigin, giving a narrative account of one missionary's work in South India, followed in the late fall. At the same time a topical series of Bible studies on the missionary vocation, "The Good News" by Paul S. Minear, was published. Still a third book, *Now*,³ told in Reader's Digest form the story of the work of home missions.

Still another contributing factor which made Lawrence meaningful was the larger pattern of contemporary events within the churches of which Lawrence was a part.

The increasing importance of the ecumenical movement within the Protestant world with its resultant formation of national councils of churches and recently the World Council of Churches, along with the success of older Student Volunteers in planting the Church in nearly every country of the world, has completely changed the context of the world mission. The time has been ripe to rethink the nature and methods of the Church's mission. Hence the mission councils in the International Missionary Council initiated a two-year study on "The Missionary Obligation of the Church." Many of the leaders on this nearly completed study brought the best thinking of their group both to the planning committees and to the Lawrence Conference. Students as well as these leaders went directly from Lawrence to the 1952 Assembly of the Division of Foreign Missions at Toronto, Canada,

¹ New York: Harper and Brothers.

² New York: Association Press.

³ Lucy M. Eldredge and Mary Margaret Brace, Editors (New York: Friendship Press, 1951).

taking with them the thoughts and materials that were a part of the S.V.M. Quadrennial. The various parts of the study going on around the world are to be drawn together at the International Missionary Council, meeting at Willingen, Germany, in July of 1952.

The same kind of interchange and exchange is taking place with the leaders of the Division of Home Missions. The conference was planned and executed as an integral part of the whole fabric of the Christian Church, with student movements and home and foreign mission boards joining their forces in it. It was an impressive demonstration of the strength of the churches working together.

Of course, the great measure of the conference strength was in the meeting itself.

At the conference, delegates listened to platform addresses by Dr. Charles Ranson, General Secretary of the International Missionary Council, on the missionary obligation as an inherent part of the Christian faith. He and Dr. John Mackay, President of Princeton Theological Seminary, emphasized the fact that a person's ultimate hope makes a tremendous difference in the way he views the Church's mission. Following each morning address the conference divided up into more than 150 "mincons" (*miniature conferences*) where many questions of platform content and personal faith were discussed in intimate family style. Evening addresses centered around the Church's present witness and future task in various geographical areas of a world in revolution. Eduardo Mondlane spoke on Africa; Surjit Singh, on India and South-east Asia; Frank Laubach, on world literacy needs; Maria Isolina Suiffet, on Latin America; John Badeau, on the Middle East; Truman Douglass, Thelma Adair, and Gerald Hutchinson, on North America. Discussion and questions were carried further in hundreds of individual

interviews and in the vocational and geographical seminars.

The growth of the amazing conference spirit was much helped by the morning worship led by S.V.M.'s chairman, E. Fay Campbell, and by the singing led by Rosa Page Welch.

The program, the representative character, the traditions, the planning and the context all put together still give far from a complete explanation of what happened at Lawrence. As the time passed quickly by, the straightforward presentation was stirring an intense response. The Holy Spirit was at work.

For some this response came in terms of a vocational decision while talking with a conference leader; for others a whole new area of life suddenly opened during a period of quiet Bible study and devotions; for a great number, the time of commitment came during the watch night service; a much smaller minority were not clear about their response until several days or weeks had passed after the conference; a considerable group, however, made a very specific and public response on the final day.

The Conference Deals with Racial Discrimination

One evidence of the kind of response of the delegates came out of an unfortunate series of incidents in the town. The occasions were cases of racial discrimination against conference delegates who were refused services in restaurants and hotels because of the color of their skin. As these unjust situations became known and were discussed in the "mincons" there developed what might be called a "conference conscience" which demanded some positive evidence of the relation between their faith in Christ and the practical and specific problem of race relations in Lawrence. The conscience of the conference was trans-

lated into Christian action by the steering committee, made up of representatives from all sections of the conference, which drew up a statement to the point that right race relations are an integral part of the Christian mission. More specifically the statement pointed to the communities from which each delegate came where unrighteous race relations exist, asking each person to "repent of our involvement and to resolve that we shall be instrumental in our home communities in ending racial segregation." (Note: the entire resolution is included in the Appendix.)

Origin of the Strong Prayer Meeting

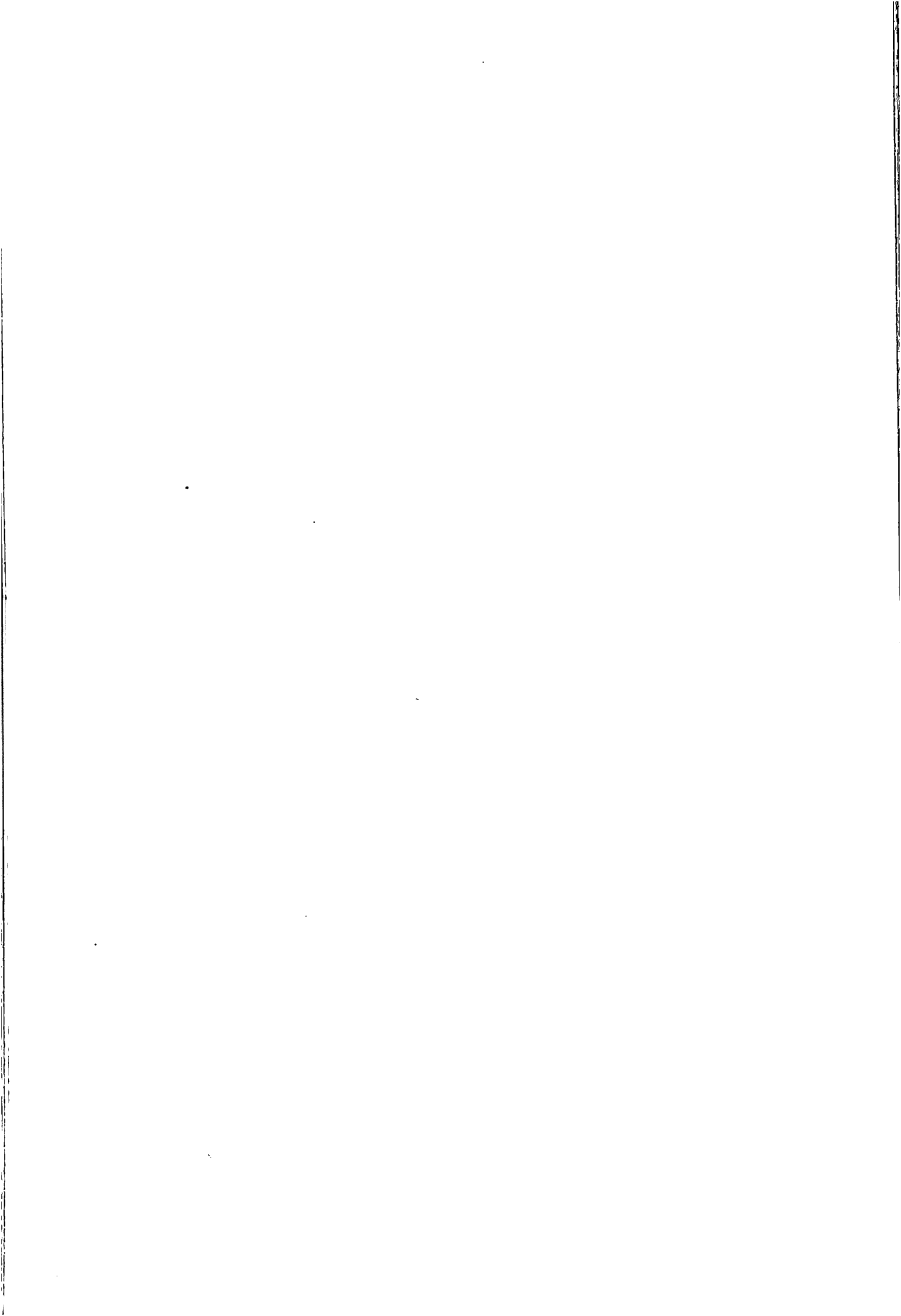
No effort had been made to develop emotional pressures, but there was an increasing indication that God was speaking to individuals, and there was an expressed desire for a group commitment to God's call. There was no time on the docket and there was no convenient meeting place, and on the last day everybody would be busy packing and leaving. But the steering committee, in spite of these obvious problems, resolved to announce a short meeting for those who had made decisions and who would like to pray together before leaving the conference. At the closing meeting in Hoch Auditorium it was so announced, and the conference bowed for the final benediction.

As the twenty-one hundred students streamed out of the last meeting of that 16th Quadrennial another smaller stream began to flow into Strong Hall. While Fay Campbell, S.V.M. Chairman, and Ted Johnson, S.V.M. General Secretary, led in a simple commitment service of prayer and portions of the Bible, repeated by the whole group from memory, the three hundred seats in the auditorium gradually filled up and latecomers had to stand. After a

period of silent prayer and individual sentence prayers, which were not the wordy expressions of the overly pious but solid expressions of repentance and hope, the students who had signed S.V.M. commitment cards quietly filed to the front and left their cards with Ted Johnson, then stepped out into the Kansas winter, their heads held high and a new light in their eyes.

Several of the senior leaders at the Quadrennial, who met for prayer together after it was all over, expressed the opinion that the Strong Prayer Meeting was "something quite without precedent since the beginning of the Student Volunteer Movement at Mount Hermon in 1886." The Strong Prayer Meeting is now spoken of by some as an act of God on the first day of the year 1952, at Lawrence, Kansas, which may become just as significant for our time as the Haystack Prayer Meeting at Williams College 146 years ago.

Lawrence, with the great tradition and careful plans behind it and the leading of the Holy Spirit within it, has brought and will continue to bring students of this generation to a commitment to and a deepened understanding of the world mission to which God is calling us in the Christian Church at this moment in history.



PART II

The Christian Mission Is Revealed in the Purpose of God

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Biblical message of the conference is included in the following four sections which set forth the place of the Christian mission in the purpose of God. Dr. Mackay's address, "Christ's Kingdom—Man's Hope" was the theme for the entire conference. Although this address came at the last evening meeting, just before the watch night worship, we have placed it first in this part of the report because it summarizes so powerfully the content of the entire conference.

Dr. John Alexander Mackay has been president of Princeton Theological Seminary since 1936. A graduate of the seminary (B.D. 1915), he was born in Inverness, Scotland, graduated from the University of Aberdeen, and went to Princeton on a fellowship. While in Peru as a missionary of the Free Church of Scotland, he founded the Anglo-Peruvian College in Lima, received a Litt.D. from the National University of Peru and taught at San Marcos University in Lima. In 1932 he became secretary for Latin America of the Presbyterian, U.S.A., Board of Foreign Missions. He was president of the Board of Foreign Missions from 1944 to 1951. He is now a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, chairman of the International Missionary Council and of the joint committee of the two organizations. He has written numerous books in both English and Spanish, and founded the quarterly Theology Today, serving as its editor until 1951.

SECTION 1

Christ's Kingdom—Man's Hope

JOHN A. MACKAY

I want to make clear two simple affirmations: the first is that Christ must reign in the church today; and the second is that Christ shall reign over mankind tomorrow.

Christ Must Reign in the Church Today

Jesus Christ must be regnant in the fellowship of those who profess his name, in the company of the redeemed. Being regnant in the church, he must reign both in the Church's message and in the Church's mission.

Christ's Reign in the Church's Message

Now what is the message of the Christian Church in which Christ must be regnant? A simple word suggests itself, the "Gospel." We must understand what the Gospel is, for it would be quite disastrous if we were to leave this conference with any doubt in our minds as to what the word means.

Well, what is it? It is "good news," "glad tidings." Good news about what? Is it good news about man? No. The news about man is not good news, it is bad news. In the past thirty years man's stock has gone down in the world market. Because of what man has done, and because of the characteristics revealed about man in history and

psychology, and other subjects, man has been unmasked, and we can no longer think of him romantically. The heart of man is unspeakably bad and will lead to unspeakably sordid things if certain checks are taken away. The human heart is filled with an overwhelming cupidity, an urge to possess, an overweening craving for power. Man wants to be a god, a little god in his own right; he wants to owe nothing to Deity. When he is found out he indulges in a universal self-righteousness that tries to justify itself by saying that he is not responsible for his actions, or that the responsibility lies at somebody else's door. There is no Gospel about man. He is a fool who trusts in man, as recent history demonstrates.

Not about man but about God is the good news. To say "There is a God" is good news, for then we see a world of order and within it a place for man. But to say there is a God is not enough. There may be order, but it leaves one cold. There may be meaning in an ordered universe, but it does not inspire enthusiasm.

If I say "God is love," that is better news. To believe that God is love is to believe that there is a Supreme Being who is interested, who cares, who is sympathetic, and who is never guilty of doing harm; but that is not enough, it is not the Gospel. It is not the Gospel for this reason. This God of good will, does he love only nice people, lovable people? Does he love me who has a record of sin? That is what I want to know.

But if I say, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life," that is the Gospel. It is the Gospel for two reasons. First, because the core of the good news about the Deity is that his interest in man, his concern about me, was a costly thing. He gave himself in Christ. The Gospel is inseparably bound up

with an act in history. God became the God-man, Jesus Christ. Through man and a truly human nature he realistically faced life and evil in human nature head-on. Because Christ faced the sinister and evil forces in the human heart and in the world, he paid the cost, he was crucified. But by being crucified by the representatives of a pure monotheism and the soldiers of an international civilization he gave himself also for human sin. Those same forces of evil found no fault in him, the Pure One. The Divine One died as the representative of a new humanity and rose from the dead to fulfill the divine purpose. By so doing he introduced a new cosmic fact into history and created a new type of human community of which he became the Lord.

This is the Gospel: that Jesus Christ, my Lord, triumphed, and that I, in him and through him, can also triumph over the evil of my own nature and over historical forces.

The Good News—a Meeting with Jesus Christ

How do I know—how can I demonstrate the fact—that this is the Good News? Here is what might be called the personal or, if you will allow me to say it, the lyrical, though not the sentimental, side of the Gospel. "That whosoever believeth in him"—what does that mean? Not only to believe merely what he did, but to commit myself to the one who was dead and is alive forevermore, I respond quite seriously to that objective, that historical fact, in terms of one of the greatest affirmations of all time: "My heart I give thee, Lord, eagerly and sincerely." These words occur in what is known as "Calvin's Crest." They interpret the meaning of a tremendous emblem, a flaming heart upon the palm of an outstretched hand—"My heart I give Thee, Lord."

The good news, lyrically or subjectively speaking, is a meeting with a spiritual reality—with Jesus Christ who lives. In that meeting, Christ takes over. . . . That is the good news which keeps the eye clear and the heart from becoming bitter, and which will brace one up for whatever is to come. This, as I understand it, is the Gospel, for Jesus Christ is Lord; the God-man is my Savior and my Lord. The "Gospel" is the ultimate fact about spiritual reality; it is the Good News about Jesus Christ.

Christ's Reign in the Church's Mission

Now Jesus Christ must be regnant in the Church's *mission* just as he must be regnant in the Church's message. What is the Church's mission? To bring the whole world to Christ—that is the supreme task of the Christian Church; to make known to all mankind—lettered and uncouth, black, white, red and yellow, democrat and communist, proletariat and capitalist, that God has entered into life and history, and that there is good news for man. That evangelistic task—as we call it—constitutes the supreme mission of the Christian Church. It is to make Jesus Christ known, not as an idea but as a reality, and by word and personality to introduce people to Jesus Christ so that there may take place a great encounter between Jesus and the human spirit everywhere.

It is part of the Church's mission, in which Jesus Christ is regnant, to practice the spirit of Christ. Now let us be quite clear about this. No one can be loyal to the Gospel, no one can be fully a Christian if he is a mere talker. He may be the most wonderful Bible scholar, he may be the most orthodox person, but neither his Bible study nor his orthodoxy will make him a Christian or save him unless he has also the spirit of Christ; because unless he has, he is "none of his."

No ideas, however good, will save anyone. It is only the encounter with a living person that does that, and that encounter means the infusion into our spirit of Christ's spirit. The Church must practice the spirit of Christ. What does that mean? It means that the Church as a whole, and at all times everywhere, must be devoted to those works which reflect the spirit of Jesus Christ. Who says that medical mission work and educational mission work and agricultural mission work and such expressions of the spirit of Christ are carried out only to make the preaching of the Gospel possible? That is a dishonor to Jesus Christ; he did not work that way.

He spoke as never man spoke, but he was no mere talker, and after a day's talk he wouldn't let the people go home to digest his ideas unless they had some food within them. Educational work, medical work, and agricultural work are good in themselves. They always have a place as an interpretation of the Gospel which makes them possible, for they are the manifestations and overtones of the spirit of Christ who "went about doing good." And I venture to say, in the light of Christ and his teaching, there never can be any form or expression of the missionary work of the Christian religion that is not interested in doing good among people in a physical way and not merely talking to them about their souls.

But I would add this: to make the spirit of Christ regnant does not mean merely to express his tender concern, his compassion. It also means to express his angry concern wherever injustice is being committed. Never let us forget that wrath is also true to the purpose of Jesus Christ, that on occasions his eyes blazed. The eyes that wept blazed; the hand that fondled infants and blessed bread and touched diseased people, wielded a lash in the presence of exploitation and injustice. I venture to say that the

spirit of Christ can never be regnant in the Church if the Church is not deeply concerned about human justice. There are times when the Church's eyes must blaze with holy indignation. But what it does and what it says in anger must be done in the spirit of Christ.

Jesus Christ moreover can never be regnant in the Church unless we reach—it may be by degrees—a position in which there is absolutely no racial discrimination within the Christian Church and in which the Christian is never comfortable in any society where such discrimination prevails. He will never cease to protest against anything that is unworthy of the fact that God made man of one blood and that with the blood of his only Son he redeemed us all into a holy fellowship of faith and made us members of Christ's body.

Christ must reign in the Church's mission, in such a way that the Church may be filled with his prayer. What is his prayer? "That they all may be one." That is not an expression of pure sentimentality. There will be in the Christian Church all the rich diversity that there is in nature, that there is in the human family. I do not mean that there will ever come a time when organizational structures will all become one structure. I have set myself resolutely against the concept that the Christian ideal is one unified ecclesiastical structure. We are not going to Romanize Protestantism. I know too much of what that particular doctrine of the Church leads to. I've seen it in Spain. Where you equate nationality and religion, you produce a sepulcher. There will be a rich diversity within a Christian mutuality; there will be co-operation between Christians in which the gifts of the Spirit will abound and in which we shall give the right hand of fellowship to all those who bow their heads in allegiance to Jesus Christ, however different they may be from us in the manifesta-

tions of their faith and in the expression or interpretation of it.

But let us be quite clear about this: the Church, like the world, is subject to self-righteousness. Self-righteousness often emerges in sacred spots, and our most sacred place is where we Christians sit down together to commemorate the dying love of Christ and to be partakers of his body, and enjoy his living presence. I say this calmly, deliberately—within the context of the ecumenical movement and as a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches: in my own judgment it is ecclesiastical self-righteousness and unwarranted sacrilege when any Church group denies access to the Lord's Supper to any other. Now this situation will not be altered easily. I understand and sympathize with my brethren who, because of conscientious scruples debar me and other Christian brethren from Holy Communion. But I don't believe Christ would do it, I don't believe Paul would do it, I don't believe we should do it. I believe the time is coming when we shall cease doing it, in the truer unity of the faith and in the better knowledge of the Son of God.

Now I pass on to my second affirmation which comes, in a sense, as an appendage to the other.

Christ Shall Reign over Mankind Tomorrow

Jesus Christ must reign in the Church today—he shall reign over mankind tomorrow. When comes the tomorrow when Christ shall reign over mankind? We naturally think of the tomorrow which dawns in eternity, so much expressed in our apocalyptic literature and in our hymns. He shall reign, it is true, in the lives of the blessed dead, when time and history shall have passed into eternity.

But I am not satisfied with that tomorrow alone as the sphere of the reign of Jesus Christ; I want to affirm that

Christ shall reign over mortal man in history. Now we must have no romanticism about this. We know that no evolutionary force, nothing inherent in the historical process is going to bring in the kingdom of God.

The reading of history shows us that there is in history a dialectic. History is no flower garden—history is a battlefield where God is in deadly struggle with the forces of evil. As judge, Christ reigns over mankind in history because no historical personality or group can succeed in going counter to the spirit of Jesus Christ and escape the consequences. Now that is one of the remarkable discoveries of the deeper study of history in our time—that dialectic, that gravitational pull, whereby those who want to enthrone themselves in high places and become little gods eventually tumble down and lick the dust. We Christians should rejoice in the fact that this revolutionary era is teaching that no one man or nation can seek sovereignty as a deity and get off with it. When man tries to be a God doubt is produced in the human heart, disintegration is created in human society, and the effort results in the hopeless situation that we now have. If history proves anything, it is this: it re-echoes the Biblical truth that no one can obtain absolute security.

Christ's Kingdom to Come in History

More and more as life goes on—and it is not due I think to senility but to a deeper understanding of history and Biblical truth—there is to me something very sweet and Christian in the idea of a millennium. History is going to vindicate Jesus Christ; there is going to be a consummation of the Gospel worthy of the Cross and the Resurrection. This may not be through the natural processes of history, nor perhaps through the ordinary preaching of the Gospel, but through the overwhelming manifesta-

tion of the power of Christ in history so that earthly rulers and all the forces of history become subject to his will. It may come after a very revolutionary time and after mankind has been beaten to its knees. This process may be necessary before men will recognize that there can be no terrestrial power that does not take Jesus Christ and his law seriously.

He shall reign. What I am saying is this: I do not believe it necessary to postpone the Kingdom and any real manifestation of God's power beyond history. Christ shall reign over mortal man in history. We know not when—we know not for how long; but, inasmuch as he became man and became subject to the forces of history, it is my profound conviction that it is within history that the Gospel will be vindicated and its most glorious day will come. For that reason we as Christians can live and die in the hope that the radiant forces of the universe are with us. We can say that within history there shall be a worthy manifestation—an overwhelming manifestation of the power of the risen Christ. Whether it be a personal return or a personal presence, I believe that in history there shall be an equivalent of the reign of Christ.

Establishing the Church Throughout the World

If we believe that, then what is our task as Christians and members of the Christian Church? It is not necessary to say that the ordinary ministration of the Christian Church is not to bring in the kingdom of God—the kingdom of Christ. No, we build the Church, but we do not build the Kingdom. The Biblical way of putting it is that we “prepare the way of the Lord.” We prepare for his coming again, opening highways and byways that he may come. Then what do we do? We are to establish the Church in all parts of the world. The “Beloved Commu-

nity" is the place where the existence of the Kingdom is realized, where people love one another—where they serve the highest together and prepare the way of the Lord. Nothing can be more important than to love and serve thus now, and we can do it, feeling that the "radiant forces of the universe" are with us. We can dance and sing as we go into all the earth, into other frontiers of society, whether among the people and buildings of Manhattan, or the Canadian Northwest, or any place in Africa or India or Asia or the islands of the sea. Go as members of the Christian Church to establish communities where Christ shall be regnant. Be dedicated to this mission in the hope and with the revolutionary expectancy that the Lord in whom we believe and the King whom we adore shall come and shall establish his peace. Do this and greet tomorrow with a cheer.

Some of us will go abroad in the greater missionary movement of the Christian Church. I say "greater" because we are now going not as mere pioneers or missionaries; we are going as "partners in obedience," with national Christians in all parts of the world who are the leaders of the Church in their country, and many of whom are far abler intellectually than we are and far deeper spiritually. We are going as "partners in obedience" in that great fellowship of saints. The younger churches are going to need all sorts of people from Canada and the United States, and from one nation into another nation will go those to whom God has given special gifts and capacities to help them in their work.

Other of us are going to remain here. Not all of us are going to be engaged in full-time mission board service. But the important thing is to accept our vocation as a task from Jesus Christ. Whether it be medicine or whether it be farming, or whether it be business, you must ask the

question—how can I prepare the way of the Lord, to make it easier for his coming and to make him better understood against the day when the manifestation of his power breaks?

Giving Yourself to Christ

So that is where we are. The end of the road is here, and the beginning of another road opens before us. How are we going to cross the threshold of the new year? I can think of no better way than, in our human weakness as people who feel they need something that they don't have themselves, to say in terms of the great confession, "My heart I give thee, Lord, eagerly and sincerely."

Will you allow me to ask this: if this that I suggest means nothing to you will you try it—venture on it? In the calm witness of my own life, and in my reflection upon Scripture and the lives of other Christians, this Lord Jesus Christ the King will not let you down, if you are willing that his Kingdom should come in your life. The moment that you say, "Thou, servant of the Lord, come in," the moment that you say, "Come, oh, come to my heart, Lord Jesus," that day will be a new day, you will cross the threshold of a new life, you will have a gentleman for your life companion—a Savior with whom you can feel at liberty but who will never take liberties with you. Your heart will have a fullness, your eyes will have new brightness, and your whole personality will respond to him who said once yesterday, and says now, out of his eternity, "Follow me." For eternity is now, and the life everlasting must begin now, and it can begin now and go on forever and forever and forever.

"Thou, O Christ, art worthy; thou, O Christ, art able. Take us as we are, make us what thou art, what we long

to be, what the world needs us to be. Lord Jesus Christ, we give ourselves to thee. Take us for thine own name's sake now and forever. *Amen.*”

THOUGHT PROVOKERS

1. What is the Gospel?
2. Has man made any significant progress in the last three thousand years? If so, what? If not, why?
3. What is the supreme task of the Christian Church?
4. Can the Church practice “closed communion” and still manifest the spirit of Christ?
5. Can the Church be officially or practically segregated by races and have the spirit of Christ?
6. Give other ways in which the Church expresses its self-righteousness.
7. How can you “give yourself to Christ”?

EDITOR'S NOTE

The three major morning addresses of the conference were given by Dr. Ranson on the Christian Hope, and they make up the next three sections of this report. These addresses provided a general framework for the conference and were the subject of much discussion in the "mincon" and other small groups.

*Dr. Charles W. Ranson, General Secretary of the International Missionary Council, was born in Ballyclare, Ireland, in 1903. Educated at Methodist College, Queens University, and Edghill Theological College in Belfast and Oriel College at Oxford, he was ordained in 1929. The major part of his life has been spent as a missionary in India where he has served in several special capacities, such as the secretary of the National Christian Council of India, Burma, and Ceylon. Returning to England in 1946, Mr. Ranson became director of social and economic research of the International Missionary Council. At its Whitby meeting he was chosen to be its general secretary. Widely traveled, he is a fellow of the Royal Economic Society of the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London. His books include *A City in Transition*, *The Things That Abide*, and *Renewal and Advance*.¹*

¹ The publishers and copyright years of the three books are respectively: C.L.S. in India, 1938; C.L.S. in India, 1946; Edinburgh House Press, 1948.

SECTION 2

The Ultimate Hope

CHARLES W. RANSON

The Christian mission is rooted in the Christian faith. It derives its primary motive and meaning not in the needs of a given generation or the dilemmas of history but in the purpose of God—that “eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Ephesians 3:11) To seek it elsewhere is to be exposed to the relativities of history, to the perils of a shoddy sentimentality and, ultimately, to the bitterness of disillusion.

That is why, in these morning sessions, our concern is with the meaning of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. We shall not, of course, discuss the Christian faith in a vacuum. To do so would be to distort it, since it cannot be understood apart from history. We shall not, therefore, ignore the facts which challenge faith. We shall not shut our eyes to the revolutionary ferment of our time. We dare not evade the vast panorama of need and of fear, of perplexity and despair, which forms so much of the context of contemporary history. But we shall try to see it all in the light of “the hope set before us” in the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Why Hope?

When I was invited to give these morning talks, I asked a student what he would talk about if he were given my

job. He thought for a moment and then said, "I think I should try to answer the question: *Why hope?*" That is precisely what I am going to attempt. It is a tough assignment, for I cannot ask this question merely as a kind of rhetorical peg on which to hang a lot of neat and ready-made theological answers. I, too, have known the pangs of doubt as to whether it *is* an answer. I therefore invite you to join me not in a passive banquet in which you are expected to swallow all the morsels that fall from this platform, but in a strenuous pilgrimage in which *together* we seek the grounds of the Christian hope.

As we set out on our quest we shall need fixed points by which to steer a course. We shall begin with the assumption that the meaning of history can be found only if we reckon seriously with that which lies beyond history. If we take account merely of the boisterous winds which blow around us, if we keep our eyes only on the rocks and shoals and currents of contemporary events, we shall only make shipwreck.

As we seek to find the grounds of hope, our fixed points shall be these:

- (a) what God has done—by his mighty acts within history
- (b) what God is doing—in the life and witness of the community of faith
- (c) what God will do—in that final victory to which the Christian looks forward in hope, in which he already participates by faith, and through which Christ's kingly rule shall be universally acknowledged by the world which he has redeemed.

The last question of the Christian future is for most of us the most difficult, obscure, and controversial aspect of

the Christian faith. It is probable that for many of us it is the least familiar. For that reason, and for the more weighty reason that it lies at the very heart of the Christian understanding of history, I am going to begin at the end, by inviting you to consider this morning the nature of *the ultimate hope*. But in order to see the relevance of the ultimate Christian hope, let us first take a look at the anatomy of contemporary disillusion.

The Anatomy of Disillusion

A few months ago, while traveling in Great Britain, I picked up a copy of *The Time Literary Supplement*. This is a weekly journal, distinguished by the quality of its literary criticism. The issue proved to be a special number devoted to an analysis of "The Mind of 1951." This mind of western man as it is revealed in contemporary literature was exposed in a series of essays of unusual penetration. They dealt with fiction and drama, with history and politics, with art and science and religion. The article on religion was the dullest in the bag. The most lively comments on religious issues appeared elsewhere. In an article on political thought, for example, it was stated with the greatest vigor that all the really important political questions are theological. "All serious literature is today theological—to an extent that it has not been for at least three hundred years." "The fundamental questions have to be asked," said this writer, "and he who does not ask them is merely a bombinating bore." There are, I fear, still a number of bombinating bores about—and they are not all outside college campuses.

The attitude of this particular writer was perhaps unduly flattering to the complacency of the pious. But it did not tell the whole story. The total impact of this skillful diagnosis of the mind of 1951 is best summed up in this

sentence: "No one avoids dissatisfaction—it is the residuary emotion of the age."

"The air of elegant scepticism, worn so gracefully in the 1920's and the early 1930's has vanished." In its place is "an extreme malaise"—the malaise of disillusion—the residuary emotion of the age. That may be true of western Europe—is it true here in North America?

When I got back to the United States, I found that *Time Magazine* also had been engaged in this popular journalistic pastime of portraying a generation. It appears to have reached approximately the same conclusions as *The Time Literary Supplement*. In a portrait of a generation published in a recent *Time*, one finds the same two contrasted impressions. On the one hand, there is the assertion that "increasingly larger numbers are seeking their faith not in secular panaceas but in God." On the other, there is a devastating picture of a rootless, purposeless generation hagridden by a sense of fate which it cannot control and does not try to understand—its ambitions shrunken and its hopes dimmed by the belief that disappointment is life's only certainty.

How typical that is of the mood of this student generation, you will know better than I. I suspect that there is no such animal as a typical student. It is none the less true that there are prevailing moods and attitudes which at a given time tend to influence the outlook of the majority. At the present moment, there is evidence of a widespread mood of disenchantment which has cut so deep that it lacks even the energy of cynicism. It often expresses itself in the opportunism which seeks to seize whatever limited satisfactions life has to offer before the sword of fate falls.

How are we to account for this widespread paralysis of hope? A quick answer would be to refer you to the headlines of almost any morning paper in any part of the

world. But behind the hopeless muddle of external events there lie certain broad implications which, consciously or unconsciously, affect the contemporary mood. Let me suggest two, which, I believe, go to the root of much of our contemporary disillusion. One is the frustration of idealism—secular and Christian. The other is what Herbert Butterfield calls "a defect in the transmission of human experience." These two things are, as we shall see, closely related.

The Hope of Scientific Humanism

When I was a boy, I was an ardent student of the works of Mr. H. G. Wells. I don't know whether anyone reads him nowadays. There was a time when he was the principal popular exponent of scientific humanism, the prophet of romantic materialism. His *Outline of History*, in 1920, though scoffed at by professional historians, was a brilliant achievement which exerted a widespread influence. It was not, of course, an outline of history at all. It was the projection of the gospel of H. G. Wells onto a pseudohistorical pattern. That gospel was expounded in a long series of novels and other books which were written with great lucidity and a kind of cynical exuberance. It was embalmed in celluloid and shown in movie houses all over the world.

The Wells gospel was based upon certain clear assumptions. The only realities of which it took serious account were those which belonged to the world of space and time. The chief instruments of human advance were mass education, sanitary plumbing, scientific skill, and industrial organization. By a process of natural evolution, assisted by human ingenuity, humanity was destined to move onward and upward toward Utopia. Such was the Wellsian eschatology.

There were sceptics and dissenters. But they did not have the ear of the public—or its eye. Millions of people who never read a line of H. G. Wells were enabled to sit in plush seats and watch across the intervening darkness “the shape of things to come.” They saw a world full of charm, correctly shaded lipstick and interchangeable employers and employees. Golden lads and girls, in silken shorts and open-necked shirts, were able to live delectable lives, provided by science with innumerable conveniences. They could be seen shooting through the air at incredible speed (for space, like sin, had been conquered) and falling into one another’s hygienic arms in blissful content. Such was the Wellsian apocalyptic.

Behind this fantasy there lay a faith. Prosperity was an end in itself. Scientific progress was endowed with transcendental qualities. What was wrong with the world was not sin but lack of intelligence and imagination, and faulty techniques which could be corrected by education and by a widening application of scientific discovery. This gospel did not, of course, originate with Wells. But he brought it from the *salon* and the classroom into the marketplace. He gathered up and made articulate in the languages of the common man ideas which had been simmering in the thought of the western world for centuries.

There is a sequel to this story. As H. G. Wells grew older, he watched humanity stagger from one world war to another and saw science applied to human destruction on a staggering scale; and he began to doubt the natural goodness and wisdom of *homo sapiens*. A few months before he died, in 1946, he wrote his last book, *Mind at the End of Its Tether*.² Its substance, like its title, was the reflections of a mood of unrelieved despair. Wells’ last public utterance was a prediction of doom. The exuberant

² Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1945.

optimism was completely deflated, and the prophet of romantic materialism could see no future save one of cosmic suicide. The end of the human experiment was at hand—perhaps in a matter of months. In the biography of this man of genius we may read the story of a generation. If the present generation hears only

upon life's darkening slope

The ground whirl of the perished leaves of hope,

a large part of the explanation lies in that story.

It is necessary, however, to carry the dissection of the anatomy of disillusion a little further.

Professor Herbert Butterfield has pointed out in *Christianity and History*:

Owing to a defect in the transmission of human experience in comparatively recent times, many people, as they face the developments that are taking place in the world, feel that their expectations have been cheated—feel that the future is not what they thought they had a right to hope for.³

Most of us, I suspect, have been influenced by this "defect in the transmission of human experience." We have been taught to think of history in terms of a goal to be realized within history, and toward which the whole course of human life in time is moving in an inevitable progression. The panorama of the centuries found its meaning in terms of such progress.

From the 18th century onward, political theorists were happy to speak, as Christianity with its dimension of eternity had never done, as though every generation except the last could be regarded as a means to an end, provided that the last generation did obtain the promise. The logical conclusion of this assumption can be seen in Marxist thought.⁴

³ New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1950.

⁴ Butterfield, *op. cit.*

History was read as the rolling out of a red carpet along which some lucky future generation would tread to Utopia. The tremendous strides of modern science in the mastery of the physical universe encouraged the widespread hope that the goal was almost within human grasp. But instead of grasping it our generation has watched in helpless impotence and dismay as it has receded before a rising tide of catastrophic events. There was no room for catastrophe in our reading of history—hence the feeling that history has somehow played us a dirty trick. The last generation is not going to be the favored one. It is merely going to be the unlucky one, which will witness the final agonies of racial suicide.

Many Christians have shared in "the defect in the transmission of human experience." In consequence they share also in the sense of defeated hope which marks the secular thought of our time. They—like the men of the Renaissance—believed they had overcome the necessity for an awkward choice between the Hebrew faith in a God of History and the classical acceptance of a God of Nature. They reconciled the conflict between history as supernatural purpose and history as natural process by working for an interpretation of the kingdom of God as a *purposive process*. Christ's kingdom was conceived as a new order to be achieved within the processes of history, by the ardor and energy of Christian men. It was a kind of pious version of the dreams of the secular idealists. The world mission of the Church thus tended to be popularly conceived as providing the necessary spiritual dynamic for an essentially sociological task. Those Christians who have been influenced by this view of Christ's kingdom as purposive process have shared the disillusion of the times. They have found themselves in the midst of an apocalyptic age—lacking a relevant theology. Not per-

haps since the first century of our era have men been so conscious of living in the last times. This is an age to which the Christian gospel of hope should speak with a piercing relevance. Yet many of us are dumb—because our theological confusion has cut the nerve of our Christian purpose. We need to discover afresh the nature of Christian hope, if we are to find anew the meaning of the Christian mission in the world.

Christian Hope in the Bible

We can understand the hope set before us only by a return to the Bible, particularly to the world of the New Testament. For men and women of our generation who have been brought up in a world in which the autonomy of history has been regarded as axiomatic, that requires an effort of imagination and will.

The New Testament message is that Jesus Christ is the last word of God and about God. He is also the last word about history. "That beyond which nothing can happen has already happened." This strange and dramatic paradox is the burden of the New Testament message from beginning to end. "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the Gospel." (Mark 1:15) This was the "gospel of God" as our Lord himself first proclaimed it in Galilee.

The accent of urgency which sounds through this and all the subsequent preaching and teaching of the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles is that it points not only to something stupendous which has happened but to something which is about to happen. Those two facts, that which has happened and that which is about to happen, are bound together in New Testament thought and cannot be separated.

The Christian era and the Christian life are viewed in the New Testament as set between two poles, between the fact that the end has come and the fact that the end is yet to be.⁵ No great New Testament phrase can be understood apart from this double reference. The kingdom of God is at hand in the sense that it is here and in the sense that it is imminent. Eternal life is both a future hope and a present fact. Salvation is a present possession but also an object of full attainment only in the future.

Similarly it is true of Christian worship. The Eucharist—the central expression of Christian life and devotion—proclaims the Lord's death (that which has been done once for all). It is an act of commemoration or of "representation." But it also looks forward in anticipation of his coming—it proclaims the Lord's death "until he come." Jesus Christ is the first and the last, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

The gospel of God as set forth in the New Testament is not a tidy system of ethics, a way of life or a *vade mecum* for psychiatrists. It is a tremendous assertion that God "hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (Colossians 1:13) It is a proclamation of the kingship of one who is not merely a personal savior but a cosmic redeemer. Listen again to St. Paul: ". . . in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And

⁵ J. A. F. Robinson, *In the End, God* (London: James Clarke, 1951), p. 61.

he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should fullness dwell." (Colossians 1:14-19) Can you catch in those rolling periods the note of victory, the assurance of a kingship which cannot be shaken, the sense of a consummation already achieved yet still to be? Or does it merely sound to you like whirling words

full of sound and fury
signifying nothing.

One reason why many of us find this New Testament conception of the cosmic Christ alien and difficult to grasp is that we have jettisoned an idea which dominated the whole outlook of the New Testament. "This Jesus which was received up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven." (Acts 1:11) So spake the two men in white apparel, to the disciples who had witnessed our Lord's ascension. ". . . That blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13) is an essential ingredient in the world of New Testament thought, which was allowed to fade out of nineteenth century theology. It is no mere accident that with the fading of this central New Testament hope the clear New Testament vision of the Christ who is the Lord of creation and the King of history has also been dimmed.

We have continued to affirm in the words of the classical creeds the hope of the Church. "From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead," says the Apostles' Creed. "And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead" is the affirmation of the Creed of Nicaea. If we were to take a Gallup poll in this great gathering on the question: *What do you*

really believe about the second coming?—I imagine that we should get some interesting results. The truth is that the historic churches in recent times have virtually eliminated this article from the creed. They have failed to formulate a theology of the last things which is intellectually respectable. They have left the task to those whom Isaiah calls "the astrologers, the stargazers, and the monthly prognosticators." They have left it to the literalists, to the ecclesiastical eccentrics or the theologically illiterate. And so when anyone talks as I am doing today, he is likely to be written off as a pious obscurantist. (Just as many of you are saying within yourselves at this moment, *I wonder why this fellow is digging up all this weird dope.*) The answer is, Because it is impossible to see the Christian hope in its cosmic dimensions or to understand the Christian mission within history until we restore to a central place in our thought that note of expectancy which strikes throughout the New Testament: *Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

St. Paul tells us that "we are saved by hope." And that is quite literally true. Hopelessness means death—the death of the spirit. For when we cease to hope, we cease to live.

Something was dead in each of us
And what was dead was hope.

Those are the most devastating lines in Oscar Wilde's tragic "Ballad of Reading Gaol." And you remember that Dante wrote over the portals of the Inferno: "All hope abandon ye who enter here." At a moment in history when mankind is imprisoned in an Inferno of its own making, what have we as Christians to say about hope?

Most of us have learned to understand the Christian hope in two main ways.

We have thought of the hope of the Kingdom in vague terms as a process within history. The spread of Christianity, the winning of men to faith in Christ, the Christianizing of society, and the gradual achievement of harmony and perfection within the temporal order have had their place in this vision of the future. We shall see later that despite the vague utopianism of some of these ideas, they are not all invalid. But they *are* inadequate and they offer at best a feeble and truncated version of the hope of the Kingdom as the New Testament reveals it. Some of these temporal hopes have been shot from beneath us by the explosions of the contemporary history. That is why so many of us are dismayed and uneasy as we look to the Christian future.

We have tended to take refuge increasingly in the other element in the Christian hope, which has never been surrendered—the hope of personal resurrection and of the life everlasting. Recent Christian thought about the last things has been concentrated upon the fact and moment of death. It has tended thus to be a question of survival, of personal immortality. And when we talk of Christian hope we often think only on these things and in these individual terms. This also is something previous to Christian faith and hope. When John Wesley said, "Our people die well," he was bearing witness to a glorious reality of Christian experience. It is impossible to stand by a deathbed, lighted by the unconquerable hope, and not be deeply moved by the reality and the power of the Christian faith in immortality. It is a priceless element in personal faith. It speaks with power to the wistful question which men have asked in every age and which they ask today: "If a man die shall he live?"

Yet, the fact remains that in the New Testament the point round which hope and interest revolve is not the moment of death, but the day of the Parousia or appearance of Christ in the glory of his kingdom. Moreover, in the main stream of New Testament tradition this is first and foremost a hope not for the dead but for the living.⁶

The resurrection hope is not excluded. But the hope of the Kingdom which engaged the interest and expectation of the earliest Christians concerned primarily not their own prospects beyond the grave but the triumph of Christ the King of history. Their hope was primarily social and historical. It was only secondarily personal. They were wrong in their expectation that the consummation of history was to happen in the immediate future. Because of this error in timing it has been widely assumed that their whole outlook on history was just a piece of fantastic Jewish apocalyptic. This assumption was reinforced by the later assimilation of the Christian message to Greek modes of thought which viewed history differently and fostered an individualistic doctrine of immortality—and thus prepared the way for the modern outlook.

It is important to note three things. First, the whole trend of the best present-day Biblical scholarship is in the direction of a recovery of the New Testament view of history. Biblical scholars insist that we cannot begin to understand the New Testament, or the Apostolic gospel, or the mission of the Church in the world unless we see it in the light of the New Testament conception of the end of history.

Second, there are signs within the life of the Church of a revival of the ultimate hope of a recovery of that ex-

⁶ Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

pectancy which marked the outlook of the earliest Church.

Already out of the darkened skies the strange familiar words of the New Testament have come again like thunder-claps to the Churches of the persecution. . . . Christians in cellars and in concentration camps have sensed again something of what it means to live with the prayer—"Amen, come, Lord Jesus."⁷

The third thing to remember is that to perhaps a majority of Christians in Great Britain and America the New Testament idea of the last things is practically meaningless. We are therefore in grave danger of dismissing the revival of New Testament expectancy as continental obscurantism or an easy way of escape from our present historical dilemmas. I say "grave danger" because I believe our peril here to be real. We may miss the day of our visitation—unless we come to this question of the ultimate hope with open minds and hearts ready to allow the winds of God's Holy Spirit to blow away our prejudices and inhibitions and take the scales from our eyes which have been so long fastened on the temporal that they cannot discern the majesty of God's eternal purpose.

The Practical Meaning of the Ultimate Hope

What, then, does the recovery of the ultimate hope—that Christ shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead—mean for you and me and for our understanding of the Christian mission within history?

a. It does not mean that we shall "know the times and seasons which the Father has set within his own authority." That was our Lord's last word to his disciples

⁷ Robinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

when they asked him saying: "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you. And ye shall be witnesses unto . . . the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:6-8)

Expectation was to lead not to fruitless speculation but to world-wide witness. There was a task of tremendous urgency to be done. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world . . . and then shall the end come." (Matthew 24:14) Christ's followers are called "to throw themselves into this task with energy born of good hope, looking confidently for the day of Christ's glorious return." The good news is the affirmation that the eternal Lord of history has revealed himself within history in order to confront man with the final issue of his life on earth.

b. It does not mean that we have precise and detailed knowledge of the way in which God will wind up the historical process or of God's intentions for his people within that process. We are not to join the ranks of the astrologers, stargazers, and monthly prognosticators. Our Lord himself discouraged speculation not only about the end but about the course of history. "Are there few that be saved?" He parried that question by stressing the urgency of the issues involved in discipleship. "Strive to enter in by the narrow door; for many I say unto you shall not be able." There is a sense in which "only omniscience can know anything." Really to know anything we need to know everything.

For all reality and all history, and all human thought, are bound together in a single whole. Yet provided we remember

that humbling thought, some partial knowledge may be granted to us.⁸

We know nothing about the precise manner of the consummation. The language of the New Testament employed the symbols of Jewish apocalyptic to express something which defied the normal categories of human thought. But we do not, thank God, need to be intellectual giants or historical philosophers or learned Biblical scholars to grasp the mighty thing that the New Testament is talking about. God's victory is assured. He is King of history. That is the ultimate meaning of the ultimate hope.

c. This ultimate hope therefore does not mean a flight from history. Whatever else Christians are, they cannot be historical absentees, if they take their faith seriously. For Christianity takes history seriously. We shall be saying more about that later. Here, I will say only one thing. The hope of Christ's appearing, whatever else it means, means this: that history is not "a meaningless repetition of cycles." It is real. It moves to a climax. "There is not an infinity of time either for the race or for the individual." Two thousand years of history have passed since Jesus lived and died and rose again—and spoke of his return in glory. That should not dull the vividness of hope. It should, as Lesslie Newbigin has said, "deepen our sense of God's forbearance."

Every generation must be brought face to face with the end of history. In every age there is laid upon Christians the task—the urgent task—of confronting men with the crisis in which they stand and the need of decision.

⁸ H. H. Rowley: *The Missionary Message of the Old Testament* (New York: Carey Press, 1945), p. 10.

They dare not echo the parody of the well-known hymn:

Sit down, O men of God,
His kingdom he will bring
Whenever it shall suit his will;
You cannot do a thing!

No, they have a *mission* to declare the whole counsel of God. *We* have a mission to a world which has lost hope and purpose and which is baffled by the apparent meaninglessness of history. It is to proclaim the kingship of Christ in whom we see the meaning and end of history and in the light of whose coming—and coming again—all temporal happenings find their true meaning.

d. The ultimate hope is, thus, not a paralyzing phantom. It is a faith in the sovereign purposes of God, a confident assurance that Jesus Christ is Lord. It is a faith that will deliver us from fear, release us into the glorious liberty of men made free by Christ. Its rediscovery will thrust us out into the bewildering currents of contemporary history with a kind of Christian nonchalance, to pursue without panic but with a powerful sense of mission our high calling in Christ Jesus.

The central theme of this conference is *Christ's Kingdom—Man's Hope*. That affirmation is either a piece of pious rhetoric or a statement of sober fact. If it is nothing more than a rhetorical slogan, we need not take it seriously. If, however, it is an assertion of impregnable truth, then it must have dramatic meaning for everyone who knows it to be true. If, for example, you and I go away from this conference possessed by the faith that in the kingship of Christ is the hope of man, then we shall not merely "go away"

into a darkness quieted by hope.

We shall leave this place knowing with certainty that we are *sent*. We shall go as men and women for whom life has acquired a new meaning because it has become a mission. We shall go with the promise and the commission which the living Christ gave to his earliest disciples: "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." (John 20:21) And because we are vividly aware of the hope set before us, we shall know not merely why we are sent, but where we are going. And—what is perhaps more important for frail and faltering creatures such as we—we shall know that we do not go alone.

THOUGHT PROVOKERS

1. Give in your own words what Ranson believes is the ultimate Christian hope.
2. What difference is there between scientific humanism and pious humanitarianism?
3. What are some of the essentials of the faith behind scientific humanism?
4. How would you characterize the "prevailing moods and attitudes" of students on your campus?
5. In what way is Jesus Christ the last word about God?
6. How does Ranson's understanding of the goal toward which history is moving agree or differ from those of your professors in history or literature?
7. Why is Christian hope essential to an understanding of the Christian faith and mission?
8. Do you think that God intends to eradicate all evil from the world?

SECTION 3

The Saving History

CHARLES W. RANSON

Yesterday we considered "What God will do," as a ground of Christian hope. We began by the assertion that the Christian mission is rooted in Christian faith—a faith which asserts the lordship of Christ over the whole historic process—its beginning and its end. We tried to show that the meaning of history lies beyond history. But the Christian hope is grounded not merely in that ultimate victory which will happen in the future. It is based on something that has already happened. In the coming of Christ God has broken into history. It was Jesus himself who first interpreted his own ministry, death, and resurrection as the breaking in of the kingdom of God. In him God was at work within history, and the kingdom of God is here. Human history has a meaning not only because it is moving to a consummation. It has a meaning because it claims that Jesus Christ is the center of history.

It is impossible, however, to understand that claim unless we take account of the events which preceded Christ's coming. The unfolding drama of the history of Israel served to bring about a situation which St. Paul describes as "the fullness of time." "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son." (Galatians 4:4) The coming of Christ was the consummation of a

process. That process is a part of God's total design within history.

As we attempt to see the unfolding drama of the saving history with its culmination in that which is the center of all history, we shall, I believe, detect both in the process and in the pivotal center that which gives meaning to the contemporary Christian mission and purpose and direction to individual Christian life. The integrating factor in what God has done, both in the saving history and its culminating event, is his missionary purpose, through Christ, "to reconcile all things unto himself." (Colossians 1:20) We shall therefore proceed to deal with what God has done under these three points: the unfolding process, the central event, and the missionary purpose, which is the integrating factor.

The Unfolding Process

Those men who were eyewitnesses of his majesty saw Christ not as an isolated historical phenomenon, but as the Messiah whose coming was the fulfillment of Israel's hope. We cannot understand them, or indeed the ways of God with men, as revealed in the Bible, unless we take adequate account of their heritage in the history of the people of Israel. That history, as interpreted in the Bible, is not the story of the quest for God of a people specially gifted in the things of the spirit. It is, first and last, the story of God's action. The God of the Bible is a God who takes the initiative. The history of Israel is not the record of a human quest; it is the story of God's action in history in choosing a people through whom his redemptive purposes could be fulfilled.

When I lived in India I had a great many Hindu friends who regarded this idea that God had revealed his purpose through a particular people and had finally revealed him-

self in a human life at a given point in time, as frankly outrageous. It was not that they were unfamiliar with the idea of incarnation, for their own mythology is filled with stories of the appearance of the gods upon earth. It was rather a sense of outrage that the infinite God should choose a particular people for the revelation of his purpose in history, and that the whole meaning of things could be summed up in a single historical event and the life of one person. The Greeks shared the same feeling that the Hebrew Christian claim was a "scandal." And there are many modern people who tend to take the same view. They find it incredible that God, as they see it, should have favorites.

How odd of God
To choose the Jews

And they are repelled by the idea that the infinite and omnipotent God should have revealed his purpose fully and finally in the life of a Galilean carpenter.

Yet the Bible is quite explicit on this point. God is Creator and man is made in God's image. God acts in all human history, even when men do not recognize it. But the meaning of God's purpose within the cosmos as a whole is revealed specifically in God's action in the series of events which compose the Biblical story. At the heart of the story is the Chosen People, the Elect Nation.

One thing is clear throughout the Old Testament. The people of Israel regarded themselves as, in a special sense, the instrument of God's purposes in history. From both traditions regarding the origin of God's covenant with Israel, we can glean important facts regarding the nature of Israel's vocation and the character of God's purpose in relation to Israel. We note, for example, in the earliest recorded covenant, the covenant with Abraham, that the

note of universality is struck. The calling of Israel was not an end in itself. In this people "shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

We note further in the call of Moses that God was revealing himself as a saving God as well as an elected God. God was choosing these miserable slaves, in their weakness and helplessness, that he might save them. It was because Israel was weak and helpless that God could use her as the instrument of his revelation. Had she been a great and powerful nation she would have needed no salvation from Egypt that she could not have wrought for herself. But she was to be saved by no act that she could attribute to herself, and by one in which God's saving power would stand revealed.

And that leads to another point of crucial importance. The calling of Israel was not due to her worth. There is no evidence that Israel was better than other peoples. On the contrary, through the long story of God's dealings with this nation there is ample evidence of the perversity of Israel, or her stubbornness and her failure. God chose this nation because it was in deep need and therefore was not exposed to the perils of self-sufficiency and pride. The purpose of her election was that she might serve God, and because of her need she was serviceable to him. At a later stage, Israel too often boasted proudly of the privilege of her election, and in her pride forgot her purpose. Again and again the prophets had to remind the nation that the rejection of the purpose of election involved the abandonment of the election. There was a fuller purpose than the revelation of God which was implicit in the initial act of deliverance. There was a purpose world-wide in scope, which could be achieved only through Israel's willing service. That larger purpose appeared only gradually as the story unfolded. As it did

appear, the prophets of Israel assured her that if she failed to give willing service she renounced her calling.

Finally, we may note that Moses was in a sense the first missionary of whom we have any knowledge. God sent him to the Israelites in Egypt, not merely to save them and to lead them out of bondage, but to bring them to worship Him. The mission of Moses began with the great act of deliverance. But it did not end there. He led the people to the sacred mountain, where they pledged themselves in a solemn covenant to the God who had delivered them.

That covenant was not a sordid bargain, or a legal contract. It was the pledge of undeviating loyalty to God, made in gratitude by those whom he had delivered. And implicit in the making of that pledge was the conception of religion as man's response to the achieved salvation of God. . . . They chose the God who had first chosen them, and found the divine initiative at the root of their religion.¹

The prophet-nation became the pilgrim-nation, and through long centuries of faltering and failure, of repentance and renewal, of alternating blindness and vision, this nation, the chosen vehicle of God's revelation in history, moved forward toward a destiny to which it looked with expectant hope. We cannot trace the checkered story here. We can only pause to note that Israel's conception of her mission found its noblest and most mature expression in a poet-prophet whose writings are found in the second half of the book of Isaiah. This man probably wrote during the period of the Babylonian Exile in the sixth century before Christ. It is probable that he himself lived as an exile in Babylonia, but he is clearly

¹ H. H. Rowley, *The Missionary Message of the Old Testament* (New York: Carey Press, 1945), p. 17.

one of the greatest personalities of the Old Testament's story.

It is notable that the profoundest insights came to the people of Israel as a rule during their periods of stress and suffering and obscurity. The writings of the latter part of Isaiah expressed in the language of superb poetry not merely the certainty of the coming deliverance of the people of God, but a noble vision of Israel as a missionary people to the whole world. Its author wrote of the servant nation—its suffering and humiliation, its redemptive purpose as the bearer of the sin of men, and its ultimate triumph—in terms which have frequently been regarded as a clear foreshadowing of the passion and death of Jesus Christ. But the most notable feature of these noble prophecies is their reiterated assertion that God's salvation shall reach "unto earth's far end," and that Israel is to be the bearer of that universal message.

Nowhere in the Old Testament do we find the world vision more clearly expressed than in the writings of this unknown prophet. Nowhere do we find so clear a call to mission. Nowhere do we find the basis of that activity so rooted in the conception of redemptive suffering—a suffering which by its spirit becomes the most potent and active of all forces. There is abundant evidence in the Gospels that our Lord himself was deeply influenced by the writings of this poet-prophet, and indeed He declared that he was the fulfillment of the servant hope. And when, in the fullness of time, the unfolding process reaches its climax, God sent forth his Son—in a series of events which form the central event of all history.

The Central Event

The New Testament fastens the events connected with the coming of Jesus Christ quite firmly in the context of

contemporary history. "And it came to pass, in those days there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled." "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar"—and then the long list of local rajahs—Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod Tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother, Philip, Tetrarch of Iturea, and so on. One can hardly help feeling a thrill when one reads or hears read those passages. It is like an explosion, a catastrophic reminder that something of infinite importance took place at a finite moment of time. Christianity is dated religion. Its central event is firmly fixed in history. It is none the less well to remember that despite the eagerness of the writers of the New Testament to relate this event to the facts of temporal history, it is certain that the coming of Jesus did not even ripple the surface of those events. The birth of a child to an obscure Jewish family, in the stable of an innyard in Bethlehem was not a matter that was likely to be regarded as news or to reach the ears of the men who appeared to be determining the destinies of the Jewish nation.

There is yet another important point to remember in view of the crucial significance which the New Testament writers appear to attach to the historicity of Jesus. We know very little about the Jesus of history. The English publisher, Douglas Jerrold, in his autobiography describes how he once wrote Dr. Inge, the former dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, inviting him to write a biography of Jesus. Jerrold records that he received a reply on a post card in a single sentence: "I regret that I cannot accept your invitation, as there are no adequate materials available for a biography of Jesus." Dr. Inge was right. As biography on any human model, the Gospels are hopelessly inadequate. We do not possess a full

account of the earthly life of our Lord. The Gospels contain the written record of the oral traditions upon which the first Christian preaching and teaching was based.

The earliest of the Synoptic Gospels, St. Mark, devotes nearly half its space to an account of the death and resurrection of our Lord. It tells us astonishingly little about his life either as boy or man. The earliest Christian preaching similarly concentrated upon the climactic events of our Lord's life. His birth is of course regarded as of great importance, but the Apostolic preaching tended to concentrate almost entirely upon the Cross and the empty tomb. A similar balance of interest is to be found in the earliest creeds of the Church. Both in the Nicene Creed and in the creed commonly called the Apostles', the affirmation of faith leaps directly from the birth of Christ to his trial, death, resurrection, and ascension. "Born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. The third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven."

Brief as the records are, however, we know what we really need to know. The main events stand out sharply in the written record. It is important—vitaly important—that we should take these events seriously, as history. If this is, as some would suggest, merely the story of an obscure Jewish carpenter who lived a life of extraordinary saintliness and beauty, we can test that theory only in the light of the records available to us. If, on the other hand, as classical Christian faith asserts, what we find here is

Our God contracted to a span,
Incomprehensibly made man

—then even more do we need to search the historical records. For this is none other than the true center of history

—the pivot around which all other temporal events must turn. We dare not erect a theory about Jesus Christ as the center of history, which disregards or treats lightly the events of his historical life.

Let us therefore look once more at this familiar story. And since familiarity breeds a dullness which is more dangerous than contempt, let us make a real effort to project our minds back across the centuries and see—or attempt to see—Jesus of Nazareth in his historic setting, and possibly as his contemporaries may have seen him.

Jesus of Nazareth stepped out into a world in which political, social, religious, and cultural movements swirled around him in bewildering fashion. He apparently took no part in the political movements. He did not appear as a social reformer. He did not teach a new system of ethics. He did not even claim to present a new idea of God. His thought of God is never defined with verbal precision. The highest cannot be spoken. But it can be translated into the acted convictions of living. So Jesus lived, as a man among men. The record makes that unmistakably clear. He was tempted in all points like as we are. He understood human frailty, he ministered to human need. He wrought many miracles, which appeared to set him apart from the ordinary run of men. Yet he knew the deep ties of human affection. All the evidence indicates that he loved those peasant farmers and artisans with whom he was brought up, that he loved his mother, and we may hazard a guess that he loved Nazareth, as you and I learn to regard one dear familiar spot as “beloved over all.”

We cannot understand this strange story at all if we read it merely as if it were the record of some pagan theopathy. Jesus was truly a human being. All the human emotions which we know he knew. He lived where we

live. Yet he so lived as a man that those who were closest to him during his earthly life were soon saying of him and to him, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

He did not live for long. Within a few short months his public ministry was ended, and he died as a criminal on a gibbet—between two bandits. There is no reason to suppose that he did not love life, as any normal, healthy young man loves it. Yet he went to his death with a sense of unwavering purpose. "Father, if it be thy will, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will but thine." He died in youth, the victim of those religious and political forces, into whose conventional patterns he would not fit, and which felt themselves challenged by his simple goodness and his supernatural claims.

What really slew him was the sin of men. He died amid scenes of beastliness, which even minds dulled by the familiarity of the story can hardly read without wincing. They lashed him until his back was raw and bleeding. They took a great heavy log and laid it upon his shoulders. He staggered along under its weight until he fell down in the dust of an eastern street. They dragged him upright and nailed him to that log; and while in his soul he bore the intolerable burden of human evil, his broken body hung limp and dying upon the cross. In that horrible scene we see the end of the human life of the man Christ Jesus. "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow."

He was dead, at the age of thirty-three, and he seemed to have left nothing behind him save a memory of matchless tenderness and the heartbreaking tragedy of frustrated hopes. Oh yes, there was something else. There were a few stricken and dismayed followers. One of them had betrayed him for thirty pieces of silver, and now

dangled by the neck from the branch of a tree, the victim of his own remorse. Another had denied Him with oaths upon his lips, and had gone out into the darkness, weeping bitter tears. The rest had forsaken him and fled.

Was that the end? We know that it was not; for had it been we should not be here today. The tale of the Galilean peasant would have perished with the passing years. The New Testament record indicates that with the death of the man Christ Jesus, the center of the story shifts from the Incarnate Lord to that little company of frightened men whom he had left behind. They did not know that his death was not the end. They "had trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." But with his death their hopes were dead. We can follow them in imagination as they slunk around back alleyways in Jerusalem, looking over their shoulders for fear of the Jews, apprehensive for their own safety, tortured by the baffling mystery of the events which they had just witnessed. And then something happened. These fearful, defeated, and desperately lonely men and women suddenly discovered that their Lord was not dead. As the first Easter sun broke through the clouds they knew, with a certainty which nothing could shake, that he who was dead now lived. In the light of that staggering supernatural fact, the true meaning of his life and death—which hitherto they had only dimly glimpsed—began to dawn upon them with all the brilliance of divine revelation. The resurrection for them meant nothing less than this—that history had begun again.

In Jesus and the resurrection the eternal world had broken into time. God himself had appeared. He had visited and redeemed his people. In Jesus Christ, in his words and acts, his death and resurrection, the kingdom of God had come among men; and the call to men was

thus to repent and believe the good news, to accept God's gift of forgiveness, and to enter the living fellowship of the new order. "That beyond which nothing can happen had happened." The powers of the world to come were now accessible in Christ to men within history. All history found its meaning in these events which had now become its center. The past and the future, the now and the then, were all summed up in an eternal *HIS*.

The Covenant and the Community

There are certain elements in the "saving history" which call for special notice here. The whole Biblical record is built around two central and fundamental facts—the covenant and the community. (Note—these are *facts*—not merely *ideas*. The Hebrews dealt always with the concrete.) But you cannot understand either the covenant or the community apart from three other related facts:

1. The covenant invariably implies a commission;
2. The commission is given to the whole community of faith;
3. The calling of the community finds fulfillment through the vocation of men and women with whom God deals as individuals.

A. Covenant and commission always go together. When God spoke to Moses on Mt. Sinai, we read that he said: ". . . Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye

shall be a *peculiar treasure unto me from among all peoples*; for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." (Exodus 19: 3-6)

The basis of this covenant was not anything that Israel had done. The deliverance from Egypt was unconditional. The covenant—based on that deliverance—was, therefore, founded on the divine grace. It did, however, impose obligations on Israel, which she was free to decline. The only constraint exercised was the constraint of gratitude. What were the obligations?

1. The first obligation was *to receive and cherish the revelation of God*. In the election of Israel and her deliverance from Egypt, God had revealed himself. The first purpose of her election was that by choosing and saving Israel, God might make known his character and his purpose in history. The first service of Israel was to be the custodian of that revelation.

2. A second obligation of the covenant was *to practice obedience*. "If ye will obey my voice indeed and keep my covenant, then ye *shall* be a peculiar treasure unto me from among all peoples." The first choice was undeserved; the maintenance of the covenant, however, imposes conditions. Obedience to the will of God is the corollary of acceptance of the revelation of God.

3. A third obligation was *to spread the knowledge of the God of Israel*. Around Israel's election and covenant, the whole Biblical theology revolves. And this third obligation stands out clearly as the unifying element in the long and patient education of Israel. A missionary purpose governed the calling of the chosen people. This fact—implicit in the early stages but only dimly apprehended—is integral to the whole theology of the Old Testament. It alone makes sense of the story. It alone exalts this

record of a "peculiar people" into the realm of a cosmic purpose, which gives meaning to all history. The covenant achieves its significance in the light of the commission.

What is true of the old covenant, shines forth with luminous clarity in the new. The central event—no less than the unfolding process which preceded it—has three implications: Revelation, Obedience, Commission.

"Unto me," writes St. Paul, "who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God who created all things, to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." (Ephesians 3:8-10) In this passage, the missionary purpose of the great apostle is put in its true theological context. It is also put in its proper cosmic setting.

The missionary vision of the earliest Christian Church was no accident and no afterthought. It is the integral factor which gives the New Testament its essential meaning and its peculiar *ethos*. The New Testament gains its unity not from a common form or a common authorship, but from a common purpose. It is the expression of a commission, implicit in a revelation. Its unity is that of a living thing and not of literary art. The living thing is a power, newly revealed and newly released in the human scene. The mighty acts of God in the birth, life, death, and resurrection of his Son our Lord mark the beginning of a new age in which mortal men can enter the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory of God—here and now.

Even if there were no explicit commission: "Go ye into all the world," there would be no escape from a mission-

ary calling. It is rooted in the covenant of the Old Testament and in the good news of the New. The missionary obligation of the Church is integral to the life of the people of God, for it takes its rise in the heart of God and in his purpose for the world of men.

B. It follows that the commission is laid upon the whole community of faith. The Church lives by mission as fire exists by burning. Neither in the old dispensation nor in the new has the whole community ever accepted the obligations of the commission. The calling of the community has usually been left to the faithful remnant. It was so in the days of old. It is, alas, so today. I shall have more to say about this later. Here I will pause only to point out one reason why it is so.

C. The calling of the community can find fulfillment only through the vocation of men and women with whom God deals as individuals. And individual men and women are free to reject the claim of God upon their obedience. They often do this by taking refuge in the collective.

The Missionary Purpose

Such is the saving history—as disclosed to us in the Bible—presented here in barest outline.

Through it all, there runs a golden thread which binds the whole story together. It is the thread of missionary purpose. Both in the unfolding process of Israel's history and in the central event, the one integrating factor is God's changeless *missionary* purpose.

In the Old Testament the whole story revolves around the choice of Israel and the covenant which God made with his Chosen People. But that story has little meaning unless it is seen as the vehicle of God's revelation of himself and of God's purpose to redeem a whole world. Israel

was the first bearer of the revelation and as such received a commission to spread the knowledge and glory of God among the nations. A missionary purpose thus governed the old covenant. It is the one factor which makes sense of the story. It alone exalts the record of a chosen people into the realm of a cosmic purpose related to *all* history.

What is true of the Old Testament and the old covenant shines forth with luminous clarity in the New.

The missionary vision of the earliest Church was no accident and no afterthought. It is the expression of a commission explicit in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. The New Testament is essentially a missionary book.

From the record of the saving history three things are clear:

First, God's missionary purpose is to be discerned within history. There is no meaning in the story unless that is so.

Second, the power to fulfill the mission within history derives from a faith and a hope that always lie beyond history. And when men take their eyes from that which lies beyond history they lose their sense of purpose within it. The complete fulfillment of the purpose cannot be achieved within history, for the simple reason that you cannot have a perfect kingdom consisting merely of contemporaries within one generation of men. God's kingdom embraces heaven and earth in all generations of men, through all the ages. And that is why the perfect fulfillment of the kingdom, the consummation of the Church, militant and triumphant, must embrace all the centuries and lie beyond history.

But the third thing, the process of fulfillment within history, is in the first instance through a commission given to the whole community of faith—the chosen people of

the old covenant, the Israel of the new covenant, the Church which is Christ's body. But God's call to the community of faith and the fulfillment of God's purpose through the community of faith depend upon God's encounter with individual men and women, like you and me.

God called Moses as he saw the burning bush and heard God speaking in the lambent flame. God called Paul as Paul met Him in Jesus Christ face to face on the Damascus Road. God still acts in personal encounter of precisely that kind in the fulfillment of his purpose through the community. And so, in this conference, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns and is here, may come to you and me as he came to Peter long ago by the lakeside, saying, "Lovest thou me?" If you and I can say as Peter said, however falteringly, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." Then we also may hear the living Lord say, "Feed my lambs." And we will go forth as those who are sent *in this generation* as partners in the continuing purpose of God within history.

THOUGHT PROVOKERS

1. What is meant by "the meaning of history beyond history?"
2. How would you explain God's choice of the Hebrews for his self-revelation to an ardent believer in the equality of all races and nations?
3. What was it that transformed the "fearful, defeated, and desperately lonely" disciples into a dynamic team of courageous preachers?
4. What is meant by the term "beyond history?"
5. Why is your relationship to God's "purpose beyond history" involved in the mission of the "Church within history?"

6. If Jesus did not participate in the social and political movements of his time, should we who are concerned about the world mission of the Church follow his example?

SECTION 4

The Redemptive Community

CHARLES W. RANSON

We have considered the ultimate hope and the saving history. We turn now to the redeeming community.

St. Paul sums it up thus in the words of a modern translator:

God has allowed us to know the secret of his plan, and it is this: he purposes in his sovereign will that all human history shall be consummated in Christ, that everything that exists in heaven or earth shall find its perfection and fulfillment in him. And here is the staggering thing—that in all which one day will belong to him we have been promised a share . . . so that we, as the first to put our confidence in Christ, may bring praise to his glory! And you too trusted him, when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. And after you gave your confidence to him you were, so to speak, stamped with the promised Holy Spirit as a guarantee of purchase, until the day when God completes the redemption of what he has paid for as his own; and that will again be to the praise of his Glory.

God has placed everything under the power of Christ and has set him up as the head of everything in the Church. For the Church is his body, and in that body lives fully the One who fills the whole wide universe.

So now you are no longer outsiders or aliens, but fellow citizens with every other Christian—you belong now to the household of God. Firmly beneath you is the foundation, special messengers and prophets, the actual foundation stone

being Jesus Christ himself. In him each separate piece of building, properly fitted into its neighbor, grows together into a temple consecrated to God. You are parts of this building in which God himself lives by his spirit.¹

That is how St. Paul summarizes both the Christian hope and the Christian mission. He states the facts with a brevity and clarity which is in contrast with the wordiness of these morning talks. But he treads the same course as we, in our faltering way, have tried to follow.

He begins, where we began, in this conference, with the ultimate hope—what God will do. “God has allowed us to know the secret of his plan, and it is this: he purposes in his sovereign will that all human history shall be consummated in Christ.” We noted that the completion of this purpose that “everything in heaven and earth shall find its perfection and fulfillment in him” lies on the frontier of history in the sense that it will not be effected until the end of history.

The fellowship of love which it is the divine plan to establish will not come into being *in its completeness* within history at all for it must be more than a fellowship of contemporaries.²

But it is no less important to note that though the kingdom of Christ can be perfect only in the eternal order, it is a reality here and now.

That is the meaning of the saving history, which we considered in our last session: what God has done. He has, from the beginning, been at work within history. He is not an absentee God. That is the meaning of the un-

¹ J. B. Phillips, *Letters to Young Churches* (New York: The Macmillan Company), Ephesians 1 and 2, in part.

² William Temple, *Christianity and Social Order* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1950), p. 53.

folding story of the chosen people and of its consummation in the coming of Christ. In Christ, history finds its center and its meaning. In him the kingdom of God broke into time. It is at hand in the sense that it is now accessible. Eternity is here. And this, says St. Paul, is "the staggering thing"—that in God's plan within history *we* have a share. We have that share, not by any process of intellectual comprehension, but by an act of faith and committal. Putting our confidence in Christ, Paul calls it. This is the narrow way of entrance to the Kingdom—an act of repentance, a turning around—in which I see that I am not the center of the world, but Christ is. An act of confidence in which I receive from Christ who lived and died and rose again, the gift of forgiveness; an act of obedience in which I become a partner in his Kingdom, and henceforth live as a citizen of two worlds. "So now you are no longer outsiders and aliens but fellow citizens with every other Christian—you belong now to the household of God." You are a part of the redemptive community, which is the chosen instrument of God's plan within history. And that leads us right to the heart of our theme today: what God *is* doing—here and now—amid the bewildering complexities of our time.

God is at work in the world in all history, for he is the creator and upholder of all things. But he is at work in a special way in the fulfillment of his missionary purpose to consummate all things in Christ, through the community of faith. "God has placed everything under the power of Christ and has set him up as the head of everything in the Church. For the Church is his body, and in that body lives fully the One who fills the whole wide universe." The Church is also described in this same passage as a building in which each separate piece, properly fitted into its neighbor, grows together into a temple

consecrated to God—a building in which God himself lives by his spirit.

The use of these two metaphors remind us of two important facts. First, there is no such thing as an isolated Christian. An eminent modern philosopher has described religion as what a man does with his solitariness. But that could never be an adequate description of the Christian religion. John Wesley was nearer the truth when he taught that there is no such thing as a solitary Christian. John Calvin said, "Those who have God as father must have the Church as mother." And H. R. Mackintosh, a modern Scottish theologian, put it even more sharply: "Just as you cannot say 'citizen' without implying the state, so the New Testament teaches, you cannot say 'Christian' without implying the Church."

But these metaphors remind us not only of the corporateness but also of the concreteness of the Christian faith. Archbishop Temple once said that Christianity is the most materialistic of all the great religions. The Bible is not a record of ideas about God. It is the story of the people of God. It does not deal with elusive abstractions such as ideas about how God acts. It describes in concrete terms how God's purpose is wrought out in history through a people. The emphasis is everywhere upon action—the action of a visible body.

Against this essential background of corporateness and of concreteness, let us look at some aspects of the Church which are directly related to our central theme. We shall consider the Church as the community of hope, the community of action, and the community of obedience. And we shall see, I trust, not merely that those three interlock into a unity which justifies the title "The Redemptive Community" but confront us with a challenge which demands our decision.

The Church Is the Community of Hope

A simple and unlettered cockney wandered one day into the Tate Gallery in London, situated on the bank of the Thames near the Houses of Parliament, and found himself standing in front of the original of G. F. Watts' masterpiece entitled "Hope." You are probably familiar with this well-known symbolic picture. It portrays the figure of a woman seated upon a sphere, representing the world, whirling through space. Her eyes are blindfolded, her hair in disorder, and her dress disarrayed. In her hand she clasps a lute, all the strings of which, save one, are broken. The unsophisticated Londoner looked at this picture with some bewilderment. He then glanced down at the plate on the frame which read "Hope, by G. F. Watts," and muttered, "I expect she 'opes she won't fall off."

As we look out on the uncertain future, are we sustained by any faith more substantial than a vague hope that mankind will somehow avoid falling into the abyss, that our world shall somehow preserve its precarious equilibrium and avert final catastrophe? I have met many who profess to be Christians whose hope is no larger than this, as they look out upon the troubled scene. Their only reply to the demonic forces which are loose in the world is a plaintive bleat on the need for brotherhood.

Contrast with this modern mood, the confidence of that first community of hope as it moved out into a hostile world. They had seen, as we reminded ourselves on Saturday, the unleashing of the forces of evil in the crucifixion of Christ. They thought that in his death their hopes were dead. But in his resurrection they saw his victory. They received at Pentecost the gift of the Spirit and became the new Israel. They were sharers of

an unconquerable hope and conscious participants in a divine purpose within history. They were witnesses to him who had come and who would come again. In that dual hope they found their victory. They knew that the decisive battle had already been fought, that God's victory in history had already been won, and

Though the strife be fierce
The warfare long—
The end was not in doubt.

That's how a little group of insignificant people, without worldly power and admittedly deficient in culture, thrust out into an alien world and conquered both an empire and a culture. The community of hope, in the fulfillment of its mission, became the community of redemptive action within history.

The Church Is the Community of Action

God's purpose for the Church in the twentieth century, no less than in the first century or the fifth, is that it shall be the instrument of his redemptive purpose within history. God has placed everything under the power of Christ, and has set him up as the head of everything for the Church, which is his body. That Church is the vehicle of God's missionary purpose in the world—to sum up all things in Christ. Into this supernatural fellowship you and I are called. In it we become not only partakers of hope but partners in God's redemptive action among men. That, as St. Paul said, is truly "a staggering thing." It involves a total revolution in our thought about the Church. It involves a total revolution in our own lives.

It is vitally important to link hope with action. Only as we are held by the hope which lies beyond history are

we empowered for redemptive action within history. In the time of our success and security, we need to be delivered from self-sufficiency and utopianism. In time of disaster, we need to be saved from despair and defeatism.

Men talk today with sober realism about the possible collapse of western civilization. They sometimes forget that it collapsed before. They forget also that when that happened the one vital and creative force that stood amid the ruins was the Christian Church. The Church had conquered the Empire, but could not save it from the cumulative consequences of its own sin and decay. In A.D. 410 the barbarian hordes from the north swept into the city of Rome, and the light of civilization was dimmed for six hundred years. Yet the true light still shone in the hearts of those whose hope lay beyond history—the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. While Alaric and his tribesmen burned and plundered Rome, an aging bishop began to write a book. As Professor John Foster pointed out, a man of sixty writing at such a moment might well have written *Memoirs of the City of Rome*. What Augustine did write was *Concerning the City of God*.

“After the storming and the sack of Rome,” Augustine wrote, “my zeal was kindled for the house of God.” From that kindling zeal there was born in the midst of calamity a magnificent treatise on the Christian meaning of history; there was born also a new hope in the hearts of men and a new sense of mission in the life of the Church. It was the hope of that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, that enabled the Church in an age of disaster to fulfill its redemptive purpose within history.

Among the barbarian tribes which invaded the Roman Empire and put out the light of western civilization were

some of my Anglo-Saxon ancestors. They earned an unsavory reputation for savagery. A century and a half later there came a counterattack from the east. Missionaries from Rome were invading Britain, and they were led by another Augustine. Modern church historians have pointed out that the connection between the two Augustines is more than nominal and casual.

The second Augustine came [to Britain] because the first had believed, taught, and stamped it upon the minds of his successors that the kingdoms of this world may change, but the city of God goes on abuilding.³

In 1942, when William Temple became the ninety-sixth Archbishop of Canterbury he was enthroned in the chair of St. Augustine. During his enthronement sermon, he stated:

As though in preparation for such a time as this, God has been building up a Christian fellowship which now extends into almost every nation, and binds citizens of them all together in true unity and mutual love. No human agency has planned this. It is the result of the great missionary enterprise of the last 150 years. . . . Almost incidentally the great world fellowship has arisen; it is the great new fact of our era. . . .

Here is one great ground of hope for the coming days—this world-wide Christian fellowship, this ecumenical movement.

It is of urgent importance that we become aware of it, that we further it in every way open to us, and that through it we take our part in providing for the spirit of Christ the agency by which he may transform the world.

If you ask, "What is God doing today?" there, at least, is a partial answer. He is still at work in the redemptive

³ John Foster (Religious Education Press, 1944).

community, which is now for the first time in history, spread through all the earth. For centuries Christian men and women have affirmed their faith in the universal Church. They have done it in the words of the historic creeds: I believe in the Holy Catholic Church. They have sung it in the words of that great lyrical creed, "The Holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge thee, the Father of an infinite majesty." But for centuries such words as these have been only an affirmation of faith, an expression of hope and aspiration. It is given to us to live at a time when they have become an assertion of fact as well as an expression of faith and hope. The redemptive community is now a universal society. It has been given to us, as it was not given to our fathers and forerunners in the faith, to witness this great new fact of our era and to live within a fellowship that reaches out to the very ends of the earth. This has been made possible by the faithfulness and obedience of Student Volunteers in an earlier generation. And the task is not complete. It has only begun. But God speaks to us today within the context of a community of faith which is a world-wide community.

May I suggest that the significance of this great new fact of our era can best be seen in the light of two other facts.

1. The world has been unified physically as never before. The miracles of sciences have telescoped space and shortened time and brought all mankind together into a closeness of contact and an intimacy of intercourse never known before.

2. The world, though thus physically unified, is deeply and perilously divided, spiritually and ideologically. The tragedy of our time is that though "the world has become a unity, for that high destiny mankind is not yet fit." In

this kind of world, the existence of a transcendent, supranational fellowship is a fact of immense significance. It is in this kind of world that the Church, as a community of redemptive action within history, must discover the nature of its obedience in contemporary terms.

The Church may not save civilization today any more than it did in the fifth century. That is not its business. But I believe, in the context of contemporary history, the calling of God to the Church must be seen, as never before, as a world task—in which a universal Church confronts a unified but deeply divided world with the gospel of God—the message of Christ's kingdom, which is man's hope. To fulfill this calling to redemptive action in a world mission requires, I believe, that the Church must learn once more what it means to be, in literal truth, the community of obedience.

The Church Is the Community of Obedience

The use of phrases like "community" and "Church" often obscures the intensely personal character of Christian obedience. They provide us with a convenient escape in which we take refuge in the collective. Our concern here today is not with the obedience of other people. It is with our own obedience. We are met here as a company of Christian students. Two of the main occupational diseases of students are a tendency to be spectators and a touching faith in the value of abstract ideas. It is well, therefore, that we should remind ourselves that "the kingdom of God cometh not by observation." Nor does it come by abstract thought. Christian obedience is not assent to the right ideas; it is the result of direct encounter with the God who comes to us in Jesus Christ, and with the people of God—with that earthly thing, the Church which is his body.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized in such a gathering as this that men and women are not redeemed from sin by thinking in the right way about God. And redemption from sin is the real problem—your problem and mine. We are redeemed when we meet God in his judgment and mercy. And God meets us in Jesus Christ. He also meets us through his people, here and now. "In the form of an actual invitation into the fellowship of a body of people calling themselves the Church." Thus the Gospel comes to us in the actuality of an encounter with God's people. What that encounter will mean—must mean—for you in terms of vocation no one but Christ, the head of the Church, can tell you. But until you have faced the claims of Christian obedience, in terms of life and work, you have not begun to glimpse its meaning.

And now one final word. It is a word which I utter because of my own sense of failure in these morning talks. I fear that I may have failed to hold before you in sufficiently clear and simple terms the central truth of our faith, that Christian faith is born of an encounter with the living Word and with the Church which is Christ's body. So often Christianity appears to us to be a series of rather frightening demands—intellectual, moral, and spiritual—as if it were a new legalism, a new moralism. There is an old Welsh carol, which on Christmas evening I sang with my family around the piano, and which sets forth in moving simplicity the central fact and meaning of our faith—

All poor men and humble,
All lame men who stumble,
Come haste ye, nor feel ye afraid.
For Jesus our treasure
With love past all measure
In lowly, poor manger was laid.

Though wise men who found him,
Laid rich gifts around him,
Yet oxen they gave him their hay.
And Jesus in beauty
Accepted their duty,
Contented in manger he lay.

Then haste we to show him
The praises we owe him,
Our service he ne'er can despise,
Whose love is still able
To show us that stable
Where softly in manger he lies.

All poor men and humble,
All lame men who stumble,
Come haste ye, nor feel ye afraid.

That is the meaning of incarnation. That is the meaning of the redeeming community.

And because we too know ourselves to be both poor men and humble—and lame men who stumble—that is the place where we can find the hope of our calling and know that we are no longer outsiders or aliens but fellow citizens with every other Christian and partners in God's sovereign purpose within and beyond history.

THOUGHT PROVOKERS

1. What is God doing today? How?
2. How can the Church be the instrument of redemptive action in 1952?
3. If the Christian mission is not to save western civilization, what is its purpose?
4. If God is at work in all history, what is he doing behind the "Iron Curtain?"

5. In your own life how has your action been related to your hopes—both intermediate hopes and your ultimate hope?
6. Can you be a part of the Christian Church without being a member of a particular church?
7. Write a brief essay on “The Fullness of the Christian Hope.”

PART III

World-Wide Revolution Is Our Setting

OUR WORLD is in the grip of a revolution affecting more people and more nations than at any other time in history. What we mean by this revolution must be clearly understood. We must try to understand it sympathetically.

The Nature of Our Revolution

Our definition can be sharpened by explaining what we do not mean as we use the term throughout this report. We do not refer to the overthrow of one political power by another. The Communists use the word in that limited sense—we do not. Nor do we refer to a change in the control of society through the overthrow of one economic class by another, as illustrated in the phrase “dictatorship of the proletariat.” Our understanding of the word is well stated in the World Student Christian Federation Greybook, *The Christian in the World Struggle*, as “the rise of submerged classes, nations, races, demanding not simply amelioration of their lot, but participation in the total life of society.” The demands of these revolutions are not for power alone nor for goods alone but for *justice and the right to participate in the control of their own destiny*.

The desire to participate must be worked out in terms of ideas of community, and of work that has a place in

the total scheme of things. Tracey Jones points this out in speaking of the revolution as

a typhoon which moves with fury throwing into chaos all that it finds in its path. At the edge there is swirling, destructive force, but at the center there is no movement, stillness, a vacuum. The spiritual vacuum is like that at the center of a typhoon—it is a massive phenomenon with which we must deal.

He goes on to describe this phenomenon as

partly a vacuum of the mind, a vacuum of ideas. At the periphery there is a mass of ideas whirling around with great force, but at the center there is no point of integration, a vacuum.

It is partly a vacuum of the heart, a vacuum of loneliness. At the edge man finds himself attached to many groups, but at the center there is no community. A technological age has broken the old; nothing has taken its place. There is the frantic Brahmin assassin of Gandhi (the disintegrating caste system), there is the Chinese son who accuses his father of being a traitor worthy of death (the collapse of the family system), there is the African Negro who laughs at his ancestors who have departed (the breakdown of the tribal system).

It is partly a vacuum of the soul, a sense of meaninglessness where work no longer has purpose. At the periphery there is great activity—industrial expansion, scientific research, activity of all kinds—but at the center is a vacuum, for the work has no eternal significance. There is the intellectual in China and North America who remains silent not so much because he is afraid as because he no longer considers any individual action relevant to the herculean impersonal forces that move the world.

The Location of This Revolution

The very nature of the revolution of which we speak means that it is not limited to any particular nation or

part of the world. In a certain sense, the struggle of sturdy masses to take their rightful part in the shaping of history goes on everywhere. Labor-management conflicts in the United States are just as clear a manifestation of the world-wide revolution as the nationalist-colonial-guerilla conflicts in French Indo-China.

However, there are certain areas in the world today where basic human needs for food, clothing, shelter, and health are greater than in other areas, and it is in these areas that the conflicts are most intense. For the purposes of this report we shall concentrate our attention upon these areas: Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and North America—always keeping in mind that what is relevant there is also relevant in areas either mentioned briefly or not at all.

Opportunities for an Advance of the Gospel Provided by Revolution

Many among us have been dismayed and paralysed by the troubles and obstacles which world-wide revolution has brought to the Church. Actually we should rejoice at the new opportunities laid open before us by the breakdown of obsolete and outworn systems. Times of conflict, tension, and the development of new economic and political structures to take over the function of worn-out systems have always been opportunities for the expansion of the Christian faith into new areas of life. Dr. John R. Mott, a great Christian and one who has been at the center of the Church's life throughout the world for sixty-five years, pointed out the unprecedented opportunities of our time as he received a formal expression of gratitude for his years of devotion to the Student Volunteer Movement which he helped to found:

Never before in the history of mankind has God presented a group of young men and young women with such magnificent openings for the Christian witness as at this moment. What a glorious thing it would be to be your age again and to have the great joy of demonstrating my faith in Jesus Christ in the terrible revolutions in which your world is now engaged!

The ways in which the revolutionary nature of our world challenges the Gospel of Jesus Christ for *real* answers to *real* problems are an inescapable part of our study of the revolution itself. Dr. Frank Laubach, speaking from a viewpoint quite different from that of Dr. Mott, said essentially the same thing:

This enormous awakening presents missions with an opportunity they have not had since Christ walked the earth. The doorway to missions is wide open except behind the iron curtain. When they were asleep in their despair there was little we could do for them. Now we can help them because they want to be helped, but we must help them to solve the problems of hunger, disease, and education, and not simply talk.

The Revolution in Asia

The heart of the revolution of our time is located in Asia and Africa where three-fifths of the human race are illiterate, hungry, sick, in debt, and wretched. Said Dr. Frank Laubach, flaming advocate for a literate Christian world:

A stupendous revolution has taken place in the thinking of those three-fifths of the world in the past thirty years. In all previous centuries they have been in a state of sullen, despairing submission to their unhappy fate. Now they seethe with stupendous longings, often with murderous revolt, with a terrible passion to come up out of their misery.

They have changed from despairing submission to desperate resolution to come up. The masses of Asia are on the march out of their poverty and hovels and rags.

A more detailed description of the revolution in Asia is given by Dr. Surjit Singh, an Indian Christian now on the faculty of San Francisco Theological Seminary:

The situation in Asia is revolutionary and dynamic. What appeared to be a vast static mass of people is now on the march. The people seem to have acquired all of a sudden a peculiar sense of destiny, and their awareness of themselves in relation to the power structures of the world has assumed international significance. The focus of world attention is increasingly turning toward the countries of East Asia, for their decision in favor of political and economic order or of anarchy is likely to turn the tables in favor of world order or of world chaos.

The forces that have contributed to this revolutionary ferment are nationalism, imperialism, communism, democratic ideas, and a hundred years of missionary enterprise. The last two factors have made their contribution by spreading the ideas of civic freedom and the dignity and worth of the human person. However, more often than not, the missionary movement has sided with the forces of the status quo. Imperialism and communism are at loggerheads with each other for gaining control, for their own selfish ends, of the lives of millions of people. Nationalism, trying to guard against different kinds of external enslavement, sometimes becomes overzealous and throws away the restraints of rationality or becomes overcautious and withdraws into itself, and by isolation creates a vacuum in international relations, thereby becoming a potential danger to the security of world community.

The challenge of this situation is twofold: ideological and nationalistic. The ideological challenge is constituted by the enslaving ideology of communism and imperialism. These

are external forces trying to get control of the lives of the people. Communism poses as an ally of the people and their national aspirations, and imperialism poses itself as the benevolent guardian of infant people guarding them against the predatory designs of communism. The people are indeed frustrated because both communism and imperialism are their enemies. Both have ideologies which reduce men and women to slaves and cogs in a vast machine.

What is the Christian answer to this twofold challenge? Briefly, the answer is first at the ideological level. Christianity has to win the hearts and minds of men by giving them a well-thought-out Christian *Weltanschauung* (world view) which must be fully related to their theoretical and practical needs. Christianity must become a power in the lives of individuals and groups in order to combat the tyranny of slavery. Protestant theology has failed so far to provide a world view adequate to the total needs of the people. It has either become a mere preaching ministry and thereby lost contact with the world of human affairs; or it has been reduced to a pure and simple social gospel confusing humanitarian activities with the kingdom of God.

However, the young professor from India is not without hope. He further points out:

There are positive indications, however, that the Church is developing a world view which will meet the needs of different situations and that it is trying earnestly to answer the challenge. The Church must speak and act where social justice, political freedom, religious liberty, and human rights are in jeopardy. Gone are the days of neutrality. This coordinated approach of theology and Christian social ethics must become the basis of missionary theology and practical strategy.

Now for the challenge at the national level. The Christian world view, which is not the possession of any particular nation or people, but is the work of the Spirit of God through

the consecrated, co-operative endeavor of the younger and older churches, is to be appropriated and presented in the national setting suited to the needs and background of the people. The Christian fellowship around the world must show the power and the love of Christ in its life and practice. The Church union movement should be encouraged and extended so that the whole Church united may present its witness to a divided world.

In the ecumenical fellowship there will always be the exchange of leadership back and forth. If, however, the preaching activities of nationals from other countries is restricted there will always be opportunities in the spheres of education, medicine, and other technical labor. This may well be the new opportunity for the Church! There is a greater opportunity for Christ and the Church today than ever before, and it demands all our resources! It is certain that the God of Love, who is the Lord, the Creator and Redeemer of this world, will be with his Church as she thinks and works her way through the complicated problems of this age.

Revolution in Africa

Though the revolutionary ferment has been active for more than a century in Africa, we now see only the very beginnings of the upheaval and change which are bound to take place on that continent. Tensions between races and between the old tribal social system and the mechanical-urban culture will heighten greatly before subsiding.

Eduardo Mondlane, who was asked to leave his country because he, a Negro, was elected to represent his fellow white students at a national student conference, said:

Africa has been called the "white man's grave." Africa should be called the "human being's grave," for black men die there just as easily and just as rapidly as white men. Do

you know that three out of every four babies born in many places in Africa die during their first three months?

The lack of scientific knowledge has enabled harmful superstitious beliefs to spread and create confusion in social life. The fact that we did not know the cause of such diseases as malaria and pneumonia is responsible for the concoction of the idea of witchcraft and the spread of what social anthropologists call "black magic." This made African family life very nasty indeed. No one could trust another. A husband could accuse his wife of bewitching his child, a son could accuse his mother, grandparent or parent-in-law of bewitching him or his child, or his father or his mother. Many homes were broken on account of the idea that some people were able to "eat" others in a mysterious way.

Ever since the arrival of the Christian missionary, changes have taken place and are going on even today. In the realm of the spirit millions of Africans have embraced the new faith. Many of them are running away from this "darkness" and "shadow of death." The belief in the one God who is the Father of all mankind has tended to draw them together, breaking down the old barriers created by extreme tribalism, building up a new sense of brotherhood among people who were otherwise doomed to hate each other; for those who had lost hope in human happiness in this planet, this belief has given them a faith in a New World, which will be created when the Messiah comes for the second time, and in which all the saints will gather and sing, praise, and serve the Lamb for ever and ever.

If missionaries had come alone, the problems of Christian living today would be less complex. But, alas, the situation is now more complex than it was before. The coming of the Christian missionaries was soon after followed by European military conquests, motivated mostly by business enterprise.

Going on to portray some of the reasons for the predicament of Africans, this young Negro said:

About the end of the last century Africa was divided into small pieces of land and distributed among some European nations who had enough gunpowder and heartlessness to do the diabolic job of massacring poorly armed primitives. Different types of slavery were introduced. Millions of people were driven out of their traditional lands and given marginal ones. They were forced to eke out a living in hilly, rocky, and deeply eroded land without any hope of ever living a decent and human life at all.

New laws were introduced to control their activities; heavy taxes were extracted from their meager incomes without any type of representation; proclamations were made to force the younger men to go and work in the new mining areas, digging out gold, diamonds, and coal. As time went on, new industries sprang up in the different mining areas. These demanded more labor from the African population. As more Africans came in contact with Western life, new wants and desires were created in the minds of the younger generation. This was a pull by itself. As more men left their homes, less food was produced in the Native Reservations, and this meant starvation for the women and children left behind. The younger women followed their men to the industrial centers. This resulted in the creation of a new and acute social problem. The aggregation and amalgamation of hundreds of people from different tribal groups, speaking different languages, and following different customs and mores is the cause of the maladjustment of many people living in these industrial centers.

The poor wages paid to them, and the inhuman dwelling places they are forced to live in after the long hours of toil one to two miles underground, have distorted all the human traits of most of these men and turned them into beasts. The moral lives of their wives at home have gone deep down due to the long separation from their rightful husbands, and the fear of the spirits revived by insecurity and partial starvation have driven many into incurable nervous troubles.

Among those who managed to get some education, mostly in the mission schools, there is a growing sense of frustration caused by lack of opportunities for earning a decent living. They are forced to accept a position of inferiority in all aspects of life. The flourishing slum conditions of most of our cities are the breeding grounds of tuberculosis and venereal diseases. The many laws that are being passed every day to control the activities of the Africans are the source of all the crime for which they are being accused.

I am positive that Christianity has the answer to most of our problems today. The trouble is that we only talk about what Christ stood for and are reluctant to put it into practice.

It is not enough to say that you love your neighbor if you only sympathise with him. I am sure that the priest and the Levite, in the parable of the Good Samaritan, sympathized with the unfortunate man who had fallen into the hands of the thieves. But since they did not help him, they were described by Jesus as not fit to inherit the kingdom of God.

Christ faced the problems of his time in a direct, positive, and practical way. The few missionaries and their converts who are working in Africa and other parts of the world, as well as those who support them spiritually and materially, are his humble servants. They are of all races, nations, and creeds. They are all working toward the same goal: to prevent man from losing hope in Christ's kingdom.

Revolution in the Near East

In the Near East the revolution is inseparably connected with the resurgence of Moslem nationalism and the conflict of those national interests with other national and economic interests struggling for geopolitical supremacy in this area often called "the crossroads of civilization."

Dr. John Badeau, President of the American University in Cairo, said:

The Near East is restless and troubled . . . yet what is wrong is not the current and easy answer of communism, nor merely the schemes of clever politicians. Beneath the surface stresses lie the profound movements of rebirth. A great and ancient civilization has awakened to modernity . . . not in some oasis remote from the world's life but in a central area where our Western world has driven in its stakes and claimed its interests. Inevitably Moslem rebirth and Western interests clash, and out of the clash comes the instability we see.

Here again the new situation provides a new chance for the Christian mission to demonstrate its relevance. As it demonstrates that its work and its concern and its message can offer real solutions to the problems raised by this conflict, then it will be heard. As it brings the power of Jesus Christ into the heart of these modern movements, it will have deep meaning and appeal.

The Revolution in Latin America

Here is a situation where the revolt is, among other things, directed against the Roman Catholic branch of the Christian Church. We learned at Lawrence, both from the platform and in the seminar on Latin America, that any discussion of the revolution in Latin America which fails to consider the Roman Catholic influence is leaving out the most important single ingredient of the Latin American mix.

It has been said that 85 million out of the 126 million people in Latin America are really starving—and starving in a land which if properly developed is capable of feeding the entire world. The three enemies of the people are well known, by all who have even modest information, to be landlordism, militarism, and clericalism. The greatest weight of responsibility falls upon the Roman Catholic Church in a double sense; first, for not having provided the Christian gospel as a foundation for all of

life; second, for itself being a conscious part of economic, political, and religious exploitation.

Those who know the situation say that nowhere in the world is there a greater longing for freedom and less chance to get it under existing circumstances. There is no more vivid example in contemporary history of the betrayal of the mind and heart of Jesus Christ by those who call themselves the Church. It was this betrayal to which Isolina Suiffet, a graduate student at the University of Illinois from Uruguay, referred when she said that the work of the Christian who goes out on the job

must be done with an open heart if it is going to be Christian. We want to bring the kingdom of God into being, and the kingdom of God is a kingdom of love which will not be real until it is brought up with love and through a sense of love; a love that will be not pitiful nor proud nor discriminating. *This kingdom of love is going to be presented to many people for the second time. It will be presented to people who were disappointed by it once—people who found behind the name of God a laugh, actions that were superstitious, actions that were of men, and men who did not know love.*

The betrayal of Jesus Christ by the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America has fostered the spread of communism in that it has prepared the ground for abject poverty from which there appears to be no escape, it has set the "have nots" in hopeless conflict with the "haves," it has established an authoritarian social structure in which freedom is stifled, and it has denied access to the truth for those in search of a way out. Communism is exploiting these intolerable conditions for its own ends, as it does in other parts of the world.

The opportunity for the love of Christ, manifested through lives committed to his service, is very clear. Miss

Suiffet gave one example of the high regard for such people in an incident she reported during her address to the conference. It was in a conversation between a prominent citizen of an important city in Colombia and a Protestant Christian:

“Go away,” said the prominent citizen to the Christian, “There is danger here tonight, and I don’t want anything to happen to you Protestants because you are helping our country so much. *You are a driving force.*”

The harvest is ripe, the people are desperate for a gospel relevant to the needs, a solid core of evangelical Christians already on the field are a driving force which needs help to bring the Latin American revolution into God’s hand.

Revolution in North America

But we do not have to go to Asia or Africa or the Near East to find symptoms of the world revolution. Though less violent and explosive, there are many great changes taking place in our own backyards and on our own front doorsteps which are both dangerous and full of opportunity. Though North America may appear more stable and secure to the superficial observer, closer scrutiny reveals that this area of the world is not insulated from the other more turbulent sectors.

There is a tremendous revolution going on in the techniques of rural life as mechanization, electrification, irrigation, and transportation are rapidly changing the established patterns. Pioneer families who carved their life out of the untouched wilderness now despairingly sneer at the “sidewalk farmers” who live in town in modern homes and drive out daily to manage large

mechanized projects in agriculture. These same pioneers cannot understand the desires of their children to be out and away from home "living a wild life" that can "bring no good."

Rural families produce the young men and women who go to the cities to make their living and take their place in society. Because of Church delinquency in rural areas we are feeding human delinquents, in both the moral and Christian sense, into the great population centers all over North America.

These technical changes tend to dispossess the less able rural families and to concentrate power and prosperity in the hands of the more able. Consequently we have the pitiful situation of these living on submarginal land where failure is inevitable, the sharecroppers who are virtually slaves, and the migrants who move from one desperate situation to another, never having a home of their own, nor education for their children, nor even the minimum medical care for the sick.

Collective rural enterprises and governmental controls are a part of this rural revolution where we have an entirely new set of relationships established between rural families and government. Has the Church thought of the spiritual consequences of the farm settlement projects on the Canadian prairies, the Tennessee Valley Authority, or the new Columbia River Basin Project?

Has the Christian gospel anything to say about orders from government to farmers to destroy one-half their peach crop or their pigs and potatoes when most of the world is hungry and many are dying for the need of food?

Mr. Gerald Hutchinson, with a background of leadership in the Student Christian Movement in Canada, a man who has dedicated his life to serve God through these

kinds of needs among rural people, states out of his own vivid experience that he has found the problems here to be the widest gateway he has ever known for the Christian witness to people of the land.

The City

Eighty-five per cent of the population of the United States now live in cities.

We have a thumbnail sketch of a great urban community, with its stirring masses and great needs, from Mrs. Thelma Adair, wife of a Negro pastor in East Harlem:

I can think of many things as I stand on the top of the fifty million dollar Empire State Building and look on my city. In the distance I see the George Washington Bridge and down the line below me is the greatest concentration of wealth and power in the world. Yes, more people, more knowledge, more skills, more wealth than anywhere else in the world. Now I have an understanding of that Bible passage that tells of the Devil offering the kingdoms of the world to Christ.

Or when I wake up to hear the *Queen Mary* blow her horn as she starts back to the old world; or watch the great planes from the observation deck of International Airport, and hear the announcer call flights to Manila, Japan, Africa, India, China, I wish I, too, could go. Then, I have been comforted with the words from that old hymn, "If you cannot cross the ocean and the heathen lands explore—you can find the heathen nearer, you can find him at your door."

In the public market and the docks when I see the great piles of food and articles collected by men from all over this world I understand that truly all men are brothers.

With 40,000 others in the Dodgers' ball park, I stand and cheer Jackie Robinson in his fight against prejudice and racial discrimination and find new courage to go back to my own little ghetto, inspired to fight for better schools, for cleaner parks, more police protection and better homes.

On Easter morning in front of our church we climb the hill for our sunrise services. From its height one looks out across the smoky apartments and realizes that below are seven million souls—souls lost in sin and shame. I know why Jesus wept when he saw the city, and I understand now just how brave was Paul, the blind tentmaker and missionary, when he went up to Rome, the New York City of his day, and said, "I have come to tell you about Jesus—for I am not ashamed of his Gospel. It is the power of God unto salvation if you believe."

There are thousands of communities throughout the world waiting and ready to receive the Gospel, waiting for Christian youth such as you. There is no welcome mat, and often men must be compelled to hear. The way of Christ is not an easy one, but with your training, your resourcefulness, your devotion, and your willingness to make sacrifices, the job can be done. Unless you and I tell the story of the Savior's love to them, there is no need for tomorrow.

The Communist Revolution

It is very significant that no part of the world revolution can be considered without coming face to face with communism as a dynamic force with an appealing ideology. Where discontent is not present communism sends its own missionaries to plant the seeds of unrest, to mature their growth and to win converts to their cause. Where discontent has not found a way to express itself in action communism shows the way and takes control. Where people are already caught in the social revolution communism steps in with the plan and the intent to take control as soon as possible. Everywhere its method is the same—it capitalizes on the revolutionary ferment and attempts to direct it toward its own ends, perverting the very nature of the revolution.

Whether we face it in Latin America, in the Near East, Africa, or Asia, its basic nature is the same. Richard

Shaull, student worker from Chile, pointed out these facts at the conference:

1. Communism is giving the disenchanted people of the world a specific philosophy of history which has meaning for them.

2. Communism is fervently evangelistic and has developed a devout corps of "missionaries" who sacrifice themselves completely—to the death—for their cause.

3. Communism has a utopian goal, a Communist kingdom, toward which they believe the "historical process" moves them with absolute sureness.

The magnitude of the opportunity for the Christian faith in this situation has been pointed out repeatedly. God's greatest progress with men has always begun during a period of judgment. The rise of communism which is developing in the world today is in part a judgment upon us. Communism continues to expand because the Church of Christ has failed in its two major responsibilities: First, the Church has failed in its God-given task of proclaiming the Gospel to all men everywhere. Second, in the places where the Church already exists, it has failed to relate the Christian faith to the everyday problems which people face. It has not presented the demands of Christ to be acknowledged Lord in all areas and aspects of life.

Hence the yearning masses in their struggle for more self-determination of their life are easy prey to Communist propaganda. In many places it is the only thing they hear which in any way speaks to their present condition and future hopes. Too often the Church has failed to see that God is at work in this situation and hence it has not encouraged nor given leadership to these people in their movement toward a better life. Consequently,

these people have not turned to the Church as an ally and champion.

This failure and the awareness that we stand under God's judgment places us in the need of profound repentance. Only after we know God's forgiveness shall we be open to the new and radical tasks to which God is calling us.

The primary task of the Christian Church is to make Jesus Christ pre-eminent in every human heart. When Christ comes into the hearts of revolutionaries they will become more highly empowered than before to struggle for the rights of the oppressed, and they will continue in that struggle as servants of Christ and according to his will. When Christ comes into the hearts of those who are the oppressors their energies will be turned toward making God's righteous love real in their relationships, and they will join forces with those whom they oppressed in a common struggle against sin.

THOUGHT PROVOKERS

1. How can it be said that one confused world is "an unprecedented opportunity"?
2. What are some of the factors which have contributed to the revolutionary storm centers developed in Asia?
3. Can we hope that the teachings of Christianity may affect the patterns of economic, social, and political life in Asia?
4. Is the program of your student Christian group helping its members to develop a "well-thought-out Christian world view?"
5. Do the demands of the world in revolution emphasize the need of a more united Church witness?

PART IV

The Christian Mission Calls Everyone

EVERY CHRISTIAN is called by God to make his own kind of witness in this world of chaos. In the words of many discussions at Lawrence, "The Christian mission is everybody's business." Everyone who accepts Christ as his Master automatically accepts Christ's mission as his mission, and Christ's mission is to redeem the world from sin and suffering.

That is to say, every Christian should find his life work as a meaningful part of God's redemptive purpose. He should be able to see his work as a definite mission to which God calls him. He should serve as tent revivalist or as town clerk, as city pastor or as coal miner, in Chicago or Colombia, as one who participates in the purpose and activity of God. It means also that every Christian should hold himself open to the call of God to some work other than what he is doing so that he may always be at the place where God is breaking out through him. Each Christian's response is always that of obedience.

All in the Same Boat

Such obedience to God puts one in a relation of partnership with Christ and with other believers. That partnership is the Church, the beloved community, the fellowship of the obedient. That Church is not only the instrument by which the witness is made, the Church is

a part of the Gospel itself. This does not mean that the Church is either perfect or completely effective—it is a partnership of sinners trying to know God's will and do it, always burdened with human weakness and in constant need of adjustment and renewal.

The conference looked at the Church—looked at itself as a part of the Church—to see what had been done and how its mission might be more effectively accomplished.

As individual believers, and as members of Christian congregations, we are "all in the same boat," and one of the outstanding experiences of the conference was that consciousness of all being together in a single enterprise. Our identification with the Church Universal and its mission was dramatized during one of our worship services as we sat facing an outline of the early symbol of the Church, which has now become the symbol of the World Council of Churches, a fishing boat with a cross for a mast. Peter the fisherman probably never imagined, as he sailed the Sea of Galilee with Jesus and the other disciples, a time when his boat would be the symbol of such a crew as that now represented by the World Council of Churches. Never before in history have Christians of so wide a range of belief and practice come together—given their pledge to stay together—all in the same boat. The boat is on its maiden voyage, headed into one of the worst storms in history with a crew of many different races speaking many different languages. The cross in the center of the boat is the sign of victory and gives assurance that we shall reach God's destination if our faith remains steadfast.

The task to which the Church moves is of such immense proportions in both its breadth and depth that it would be impossible to describe all the various ways and places in which it works or the implication of its mission.

One of the most obvious implications is, of course, that there is no real distinction between "home missions" and "foreign missions." Though mission boards may be divided administratively by such lines, they are a part of the same fundamental task. As vividly stated by Dr. Truman Douglass:

There is one mission, and in this revolutionary time all of us know that it is one, . . . for anyone living in what we think is a foreign mission field looks upon his field as a national mission field. To the foreign missionary his tasks look very much as our home missionary tasks do to us and vice versa. But the other concern, the other interest suggested by this simple parable, is much more directly personal; it suggests something of the only way we find meaning in this revolutionary time. It is not only a question of whether or not we lose our life—of course we are going to lose our life in one way or another. The question is how our life is to be taken away from us. If not in some catastrophic event it may perhaps be more tragic by being frittered away in the trivial and the meaningless. Whether our life is going to be taken away from us or whether given away; given to the enterprise of the Christian message, the Christian faith, and given in the only way in which it seems to me it can be given, without pride and self-consciousness and condescension; it is given in response to the great gift which has come to us and, in the repeating of which, insofar as its meaning and its personal implications are concerned, really is the substance of the Good News of the Gospel.

In the introductory pages of his book, *That They May Have Life*, Dr. D. T. Niles remarks it is impossible to follow Jesus unless we are willing to follow him into the big places and the small: "Those who follow him," says Dr. Niles, "must be willing to stand for him before kings and governors, courts, and councils where big plans are being made and where often action is sought to silence the Christ. But the most important is the willingness to follow him in his con-

cern for the obscure distresses of the least of his brethren. Heroic service and humble kindness both belong to the disciple of Christ."

If "the Christian mission is everybody's business," then there are no distinctions between the work of those who have responded by becoming clergy and those who have responded through other occupations.

The response of every Christian should be to "submit himself to Christ and prepare to serve him through a Christian occupation." What is a Christian occupation? It has been described by Tracey Jones, the Quadrennial Secretary, as

work which is witness to the name of Christ. Unless there is personal witness Christian vocation is lost. Second, it is work which reveals evidences of an imitation of Christlike service. Therefore, the work is always needful, all-absorbing, orderly and constant, and for the common good. Third, it is work within the fellowship of the Body of Christ, the Church. Outside some form of Christian fellowship, Christian vocation is lost.

Can we conclude from this that all forms of work—doctor, lawyer, manual laborer, clergyman, missionary—can be equally important as a part of God's redemptive plan for man? The significant factor is not one's particular skill or geographical location, but rather the nature of his worship (through his work) and the expression of that worship (through his work) in witness, service, and fellowship. Therefore any Christian in any occupation can be equally significant within the world mission of Christ.

The response of individuals to God's call has led to the development of missionary programs of many kinds. As people with certain professional training and skills have felt called to mission service, home and foreign mission boards have set up plans to use them. For many years

these boards have made it possible for their staff to live in frontiers around the world. The experiences of these years have demonstrated over and over that such work is an essential part of the Christian mission. But this past work of missions and the changing world situation have opened up many new areas. The need now is for qualified people with imagination and devotion who will create the new missionary pattern of the days ahead. The Christian mission already expresses itself in a wide range of work. At the same time those who serve must start from the wide range of work through which the Christian work is already being expressed.

Agricultural Evangelism

In the field of agriculture great masses, who before they were touched by the ferment of the present revolution had to be coaxed to try anything new, now are clamoring for solutions to the age-old problems of soil-depletion, hunger, and ill health caused by want.

The real task is to complement abundance of food with abundant living in each phase of human existence. Thus, the Christian seeks with all the knowledge at his command, to meet humanity's whole need. This means, in very specific terms, that as he teaches people to conserve and cultivate their soil, he witnesses also to conservation and cultivation of their soul.

This is an opportunity particularly because farm people's religious beliefs and practices are interwoven with their primitive methods of getting a living from the soil; when you change the one, you change the other. Rural peoples all over the world are today seeking change and a higher standard of living as never before. They are ready to give allegiance to anyone with a helpful solution to their problems. Thus the mission agencies of all the Churches rightly see that this is

the hour for a strong witness to the gospel of Christ and his understanding of the purpose and use of nature. The demand is for a great number of dedicated and qualified young people who will set out in the Americas and the world to serve God and humanity as agricultural missionaries. There is no more urgent or creative Christian job in our generation.

There are several kinds of work—such as teaching agriculture in a school or college, developing an extension service program among village people, serving as the agriculturist in a Christian rural service and training center, or acting as farm director of a mission school.

Only a few schoolteaching positions are available. A more frequent need is extension work among village people, like the work of the county agricultural agent. The agriculturist meets with village and local leaders to help them plan and carry out programs for the improvement of soil, crops, livestock, and village life in general. He may often help in training national leaders and co-operate with other mission and government agencies.¹

Medical Evangelism

The medical missionary is known as one of the most effective carriers of Christ's message to millions of people who would otherwise never hear his name or experience his love. Healing the sick is just as inescapable for the Christian today as it was for Christ himself. The seminars on medical evangelism reiterated the cries of the sick of the world:

Wanted—doctors to go to small hospitals to handle medicine, to do surgery, and to teach in medical schools. *Wanted*—nurses to nurse in out-of-the-way places, to supervise, to teach. *Wanted*—public health specialists to go out into village areas to work with the people in development of public

¹ The Agricultural Missionary, Careers in the Christian Mission No. 1, published by the Student Volunteer Movement.

health practice and education. *Wanted*—medical social workers who will go into the homes of patients with a ministry of skill and the message of Christ.²

Educational Evangelism

The Christian Church cannot exist without those who teach the Bible and help to educate those who become Christians. The Church exists to teach and when it ceases teaching it dies. Jesus Christ was the Great Teacher who taught in a world not too different from our own where people longed for more than reading, or mechanical skills or scientific method—they crowded after Jesus because he taught them about their relationship to God.

Here alone do people learn the truth which changes their deepest motivations, brings them fulfillment instead of restlessness, and enables them to grow into the 'measure of the fullness of the stature of Christ.' If you are a Christian, you are born to do that kind of teaching wherever the Church needs it most.³

Literacy

Dr. Frank Laubach gives a vivid picture of the world's hunger for literacy:

There is now a perfect madness among the masses to learn to read because they know that our superiority to them is that we have secrets in books and newspapers and magazines which enable us to have abundance while they are destitute. When the missionaries open schools, the illiterate fill them to overflowing. The old people are not content for their children to learn. They want to read too.

Last century it was generally supposed that old people

² The Medical Missionary, Careers in the Christian Mission No. 3, published by the Student Volunteer Movement.

³ The Educational Missionary, Careers in the Christian Mission No. 2, published by the Student Volunteer Movement.

could not read, that their brains had somewhat ossified and their memories were too dull to learn to read. This is partially true of learning to read English because it is so badly spelled that the attempt is maddening for illiterate adults. But fortunately 95 per cent of the languages are far easier than English, having only one sound for each letter, not fifteen sounds as "o" in English has. In the last thirty years all the world has heard that an adult can learn to read in these phonetic languages as quickly as a child. To you this is mildly interesting but to those illiterate hungry masses it looks like the only door out of their misery. This is why whenever we announce a literacy campaign in advance we are thronged and often overwhelmed by the crowds that gather out of the bush by hundreds or thousands.

He describes how this occupation can be a persuasive evangelism:

Thus Jesus begins to fulfill these terrible longings of the multitudes to come up out of their destitution, and they love him. In three or four days they are ready to offer their lives to him. They know no theology. They have been exposed to the irresistible love of Christ and have surrendered to that love.

The nations are so nervously eager to satisfy their people that they have started to teach the people to read. In most cases they use the lessons which we made. Now some ten million are learning to read, but only a small fraction of these are taught by Christians. I do not like this. I do not want people to learn without accepting Christ. A bad man is more dangerous if he is educated because he can reach more people.

Missionaries with Technical Skill

The range of occupations and skills through which and in which students can give themselves in the Christian mission has been greatly extended. People trained in these various fields should be pressing mission boards,

asking them to help find the place where his or her particular gifts are most needed. Dr. Laubach suggested the kinds of skills needed when he said:

We must discover and train a larger number of American journalists who will in turn train native Christians in eighty countries to write simply and fascinatingly. We must guide them in establishing newspapers and magazines, and help them to get books printed. There must be the latest offset presses in strategic centers all over the world, and these must be supplied with hundreds of thousands of tons of paper, for there is a paper shortage in every country except the United States. The sheer size of this demand is enough to make the heart quail.

Along with literacy teachers and writers must go many other kinds of technical experts. Nine-tenths of the people of Asia and Africa are obsessed with hunger and the problem of finding a meal a day. So we need an army of agricultural experts to show them how to raise more food. The people of Asia and Africa are sick. We need doctors and sanitary experts to help them conquer their diseases. They need to know how to eat balanced food, how to have better homes and better clothing, how to have a wholesome family life and how to raise children. So we need to send experts with hundreds of different skills, with the secrets we know that they need to know.

How to Face Communism

The conference was convinced that every Christian today needs to know how to face Communists. While this is important for all Christians it is absolutely essential for those who are going into the "hot spots" in the world revolution. The seminar on "The Christian Church in the Soviet Union and the Communist Orbit" made the following suggestions:

1. We must know our Gospel and we must know the

Communist doctrine. Our situation demands far more than a church-school knowledge of the Bible and a newspaper knowledge of communism. The knowledge must be solid and tough, of a type which can take a beating on any intellectual battleground and emerge triumphant though bloody. This means the discipline of hard study as a part of our preparation.

For people going abroad such preparation is now being required by many of the sending churches. The Division of Foreign Missions is sponsoring a Study Fellowship on the Christian Approach to Communism. Some missionaries from the field are saying that it is criminal negligence to send new people out without such training.

2. We must know the Church at home and the Church already at work within the Communist orbit. The Church in both areas is the fellowship in which we work—it is a part of the Gospel—and we have a God-given relationship to it which must be understood in order to be felt and to be the community in which we are based. This means that we know the church in Russia, China, Poland, and other Communist-dominated areas as well as the church of our native home.

3. We must be ready to go into Communist areas and be ready to receive Christians from those areas into our fellowship. The dangers to those who volunteer for such a mission are clear: arrest, imprisonment, torture, and death are a part of the picture. Pioneers who can step forward into that kind of future are needed—shock troopers for the kingdom of God.

Definite Jobs in Definite Places

The seminars on the different occupations involved in the world mission of the Church nailed things down to specific numbers of people needed at specific spots:

openings for 119 doctors, 4 dentists, 99 nurses, 45 medical social workers and 9 technicians and administrators were examined in the seminar on medical missions. Requests for 734 teachers and administrators at home and abroad were discussed in the group dealing with educational missions. For general church work 626 people are needed. For agricultural missions 45 are needed. For business management and administration 48 are needed. A total of 1715 openings in all categories of work were known at the time of the conference, and these are listed in *Christian Horizons 1952* which gives details as to type of work, place of work, sending agency, personal and technical qualifications.

The General Qualifications

The kind of people needed in the Near East, as described by Dr. Badeau, are the kind needed everywhere:

There is only one thing that will make the Christian gospel contribute to the Middle East, and that is its ability to speak to the fears and hopes and sins and prides of our brethren yonder in terms of experience. When that is done, and when it is made clear in reference to the burning problems of the day that the gospel of Christ has a power of salvation for the things from which people want to be saved, then the Christian message will be relevant and pertinent and powerful.

It means that we must have a new type of missionary. In the first place, it calls for a person of ingenuity. He must have million-dollar brains on a missionary salary. In the second place, the new missionary must also be marked by high professional competence. We have had too much quantity and too little quality in mission work. . . . We haven't had nearly enough people who have gone out from the West to command the respect of the East because they were the best people that could be found. I am looking at this moment for a man with a Doctorate of Philosophy in Education who will

go out to become the recognized expert on education in Arab countries, and I want a man who is a double Phi Beta Kappa, because nothing less than that is good enough for this opportunity. Until we can begin to recognize that we need a Ph.D. in literacy before we start to teach the literate, that we need demographers and biochemists, and all kinds of people of the highest professional efficiency, we shall fail to meet the challenge of the new day.

In the third place, we need to reinstate Christian missionary scholarship. There was a time when the profoundest understanding of Eastern cultures and of Eastern language and of Eastern spiritual content came with the missionary movement. It is no longer true today. It is hard to find in the missionaries of the last ten years anybody who has really mastered Arabic "to the ground." Oh, I know it's a hard language. I've got a book now with a hole in the cover because my wife stamped her foot on this Arabic grammar when she was learning Arabic. We must have missionary scholarship.

And finally, we must have a new and transparent devotion to Christ so deep that those who touch our service, see our dreams, know our minds, will recognize that they are not ours, but his. Are you willing to do that? Are you willing to get a Doctorate of Philosophy to the glory of God? Are you willing to take your brains worth a hundred thousand dollars in industry and give them to the Arab world? If you are, Come, come, come!

The qualifications for those with specialized technical skills are very high. The kind of person too is just as important as the good training. Said Dr. Laubach:

These technicians must be of a certain quality. They must be democratic, and willing to sit among the hungry masses and get their clothes dirty. They must have a great love for these people and a Christlike desire to lift them up out of their misery. They must be completely color blind, forgetting about races or nationalities or classes. For they must be more than dispensers of knowledge. They must be friend

makers in a world which is being taught to hate us. They must be men and women of integrity and noble character, whom the people will admire. They must have faith in God and know how to pray.

It is very important for those who serve Christ through special technical skills to be a full and regular part of the Church, both at home and in his place of service. A life separated from the fellowship of believers cannot be fully Christian even though the technician serve with a high degree of love and sacrifice. A life of power and effectiveness depends upon a close relationship with other believers. Competence with the Bible, and understanding of his faith, and some ability to express his beliefs are just as important to evangelism in the field of technical skills as in any other.

We Are the Witnesses for Our Time

Men and women of integrity and noble character—men and women who have faith in God and know how to pray; men and women who are ready to lose themselves in Christ and his redeeming community! Twenty-one hundred of us prayed that God would transform us into such men and women. The answer came immediately for those who were willing to be obedient, and hundreds talked personally with leaders and personnel secretaries of the boards. Opportunities for the spoken witness were abundant, and students talked of their relationship to Christ far, far into the night. Hearts were opened, and students who attended the conference out of curiosity or a vague desire for spiritual comfort came to know Christ as their personal Savior. Others found their faith strengthened and their understanding deepened.

One of the highlights of the conference was the watch

night where students ushered in the new year of 1952. It opened with a litany of confession led by David Hoh, one of the student co-chairmen of the conference. In deep humility we asked forgiveness for the sin in our lives, for the many personal ways in which we had failed God. We asked forgiveness for the sin of the Church, of which we are a part, for its lack of power, for its selfishness, for its narrow-mindedness, for its lack of love, for its lack of concern for the salvation of the world. Our prayers made, we looked up at the large, roughly hewn cross alone at the center of the stage. As the last few moments of the old year ticked off into history, students from every nation, each in his own costume, came in, one by one, and knelt facing the cross where each one prayed in his own language. This continued until every nation represented at the conference was also symbolically represented on its knees before the resurrection cross—the symbol of our hope. The spoken prayers ceased as the bells tolled out the old year, and we entered the New Year in the glow of the spirit, seeing in those students from many nations before the cross a symbol of the time “when every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

And then the Spirit which had held us in silent prayer demanded expression. We stood as one person to sing the Hallelujah Chorus with joy and hope. Again, everybody sat down quietly to pray for a continuation of the power of the Spirit. Some remained in prayer for a long period, some for shorter periods, but for all the experience was one which will never be forgotten.

“Through that experience I have found my place in the world,” said one student.

“I have regained my appreciation of the importance of

the Church, and have been greatly impressed by the urgency of witnessing to the gospel of Christ in every part of the world," said another.

Still another student wrote, "This has been an overwhelming experience for me. I am thirty years old, have traveled considerably, and have been around enough not to be easily impressed. But the eagerness and sincerity of these people—the powerful vigor and faith of the Africans, the intelligence of the Indians, the unassuming piety of the Japanese and the Koreans, and the warmth and friendliness of the Americans—have given me a new and enriching perspective of what it means to be a member of Christ's family in the modern world."

A Conference That Began When It Ended

"The close of the program is not the end of the 16th Quadrennial Conference but its beginning," said E. H. Johnson, S.V.M. General Secretary, addressing the delegates in the morning closing session. "Now you go out to make the conference live as you express its demand on you in all your relationships and in your life work decisions. There is a direct message to take with you in the words which Paul wrote to the Philippi Christians:

I thank God for you Christians at Philippi whenever I think of you. . . . I feel sure that the One who has begun his good work in you will go on developing it until the Day of Jesus Christ. . . . I want to see your lives full of true goodness, produced by the power that Jesus Christ gives you to the praise and glory of God. . . . Let Christ himself be your example as to what your attitude should be. . . .

Yet every advantage that I had gained I considered lost for Christ's sake. Yes, and I look upon everything as loss compared with the overwhelming gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. . . . For now my place is in him. . . . How

changed are my ambitions! . . . I leave the past behind and with hands outstretched to whatever lies ahead I go straight for the goal—my reward the honor of being called by God in Christ.⁴

So the conference began indeed when it ended—in those deep prayers of commitment before the Cross at the first dawn of 1952, in the decisions that were made still later that morning in the Strong Prayer Meeting, and in the joyful witness now going on wherever Christ's spirit reaches out through these students who came to know him for the first time, or came to know him better at the 16th Quadrennial of the Student Volunteer Movement at Lawrence.

THOUGHT PROVOKERS

1. What does the statement "the Christian mission is everybody's business" demand of you?
2. What are the ways in which the Church can bear effective witness to Christ?
3. Name three ways in which it appears that God has prepared the world for a new manifestation of the Christian life.
4. Why should Christians committed to service and helping others have high technical qualifications?
5. How does one express his devotion to Christ in his studies?
6. How do you serve the purposes of God in your university life?

⁴ J. B. Phillips, *Letters to Young Churches* (New York: The Macmillan Company).

APPENDIX

Who's Who Among Speakers and Leaders of the 16th Quadrennial Convention of the Student Volunteer Movement

December 27, 1951–January 1, 1952

- ADAIR, MRS. A. EUGENE, Director of day care center for 120 children at Mt. Morris Presbyterian Church, New York City, where her husband is pastor
- ALLISON, MISS ANNA LESTA, Assistant Secretary, Student Volunteer Movement for Christian Missions
- BADEAU, DR. JOHN S., President of the American University at Cairo, Egypt, authority on Arabic language and literature and Islamic history
- CAMPBELL, DR. E. FAY, Secretary, Division of Higher Education, Board of Christian Education, Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., Chairman, Student Volunteer Movement for Christian Missions
- CONVERSE, MR. PAUL E., New York City, Educational Secretary, Student Volunteer Movement for Christian Missions
- CROUCH, DR. ARCHIE R., Director of the Westminster House, Berkeley, California, former Presbyterian U.S.A. missionary to China, author of "In His Hands," convention play on Korea and the Church
- DOUGLASS, DR. TRUMAN B., Executive Vice President,

- Board of Home Missions of the Congregational Christian Churches, author of "Mission to America"
- DURHAM, MR. G. EUGENE, Director of the Methodist Student Foundation, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois
- ELDREDGE, MISS LUCY, Director and Editor of the Department of Youth Work, Director of Personnel, Missionary Education Movement, Chairman, 16th S.V.M. Quadrennial Publications Committee
- ESPY, DR. R. H. E., Executive Secretary, National Student Council of the Y.M.C.A., Chairman, 16th S.V.M. Quadrennial Study-Program Committee
- FLORY, MISS MARGARET, Director Student Department, Board of Foreign Missions, Presbyterian, U.S.A., originator and director of Dramatic Worship Services and director of "In His Hands"
- GRANT, MISS BARBARA, Vancouver, B.C., Canadian Co-chairman of the conference, graduate of the University of British Columbia, now preparing for Church work at the United Church Training School in Toronto
- HILBERT, REV. LOU, Director of Wesley Foundation at Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa
- HOH, MR. DAVID, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, United States Co-chairman of the conference, now studying at Mt. Airey Lutheran Theological Seminary
- HUTCHINSON, REV. GERALD, former Canadian S.C.M. Secretary, now pastor, Telford, Alberta, Canada
- JONES, REV. TRACEY K., former Methodist missionary to China, 16th S.V.M. Quadrennial Administrative Secretary
- JOHNSON, REV. E. H., former Manchuria missionary, General Secretary, Student Volunteer Movement for Christian Missions
- LATOURETTE, DR. KENNETH SCOTT, Professor of Missions

- and Oriental History, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut
- LAUBACH, DR. FRANK, New York City, pioneer missionary educator whose mass literacy method has been used around the world in more than 200 languages
- MACKAY, DR. JOHN ALEXANDER, President of Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey, since 1936, expert on the Latin Countries
- McCONNELL, MR. J. J., Administrative Secretary, Student Volunteer Movement for Christian Missions
- MONDLANE, MR. EDUARDO, Portuguese East Africa, now studying at Oberlin College
- MOTT, DR. JOHN R., Orlando, Florida, Nobel Prize winner, founder and builder of most of today's world Christian organization, attending his 16th S.V.M. Quadrennial
- RANSON, REV. CHARLES W., General Secretary of the International Missionary Council, consultative body of Protestant missionary work
- SEABURY, DR. RUTH ISABEL, Missionary Education Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Congregational Christian Churches
- SINGH, DR. SURJIT, Professor at United Theological Seminary, Sharanpur, U.P., India, now Visiting Professor at San Anselmo Theological School, San Francisco
- TURNER, REV. DALE E., Minister, Plymouth Congregational Church, Chairman of the Lawrence Conference Committee
- SUIFFET, MISS MARIA ISOLINA, Montevideo, Uruguay, studying and teaching part time at the University of Illinois in preparation for teaching in Uruguay
- WELCH, MRS. ROSA PAGE, Chicago, concert singer, and

song leader at innumerable national church gatherings
YOUNG, DR. HERRICK B., Executive Director of International Houses Association, Chairman S.V.M. Quadrennial Administrative Committee

RESOLUTION
of the Steering Committee
of the
S.V.M. Quadrennial Conference 1951
Regarding Racial Discrimination

WHEREAS the Student Volunteer Movement is persuaded that right race relations are an integral part of the Christian mission, and

WHEREAS the Planning Committee for this Quadrennial Conference received from the University of Kansas assurances which have been fulfilled regarding the equal treatment of all delegates, and

WHEREAS incidents of racial discrimination in the community of Lawrence have occurred in the course of the conference, and

WHEREAS we are aware that local organizations are actively engaged in attempting to modify racially discriminatory policies and have taken advanced steps in improving race attitudes in Lawrence,

Be it resolved that the Steering Committee

1. Express its appreciation to the University of Kansas for its hospitality and to the community groups of Lawrence which have co-operated so generously in making this Quadrennial possible,

2. Express its deep regret that these unhappy incidents have been a part of the experience of some of our conference delegates,
3. Recommend to the Board of Directors that in the selection of a site for this great international and interracial student conference it
 - a. Continue its policy of securing assurances from its hosts that there will be equal treatment of all delegates in the common life of the conference.
 - b. Take great care in securing from local church and community leaders active co-operation toward providing for all delegates equal treatment in the community at large.
 - c. Hold the conference if possible in a state where civil rights laws are clear and potentially effective in matters of race relations.
4. Stirred again by these incidents of discrimination and recognizing that they are found also in our home communities, urge that we all repent of our involvement and resolve that we shall be instrumental in our home communities in ending racial segregation.

1951 SVM Quadrennial Preparatory Materials Students Ask About Missions

Eight Study Leaflets 10¢ each, 50¢ set.

1. "Why Force My Religion on Others?"
2. "Why Not Our Own Backyard First?"
3. "Isn't the Missionary Job Already Done?"
4. "Aren't Missions a Form of Western Imperialism?"
5. "Do Missions Serve Modern Needs in Up-to-Date Ways?"
6. "Can a Divided Church Do the Missionary Job?"
7. "Can Christianity Out-Perform Communism?"
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Lesslie Newbigin. An autobiographical account of the experiences of a Scottish Bishop within the United Church of South India.

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