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IMPACT OF BULTMANNISM
ON AMERICAN LUTHERANISM

Dr. Herman Sasse

IN MEMORIAM: Dr. James A. Nelson
Rev. John Jungemann
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BOOK REVIEWS

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* M. H. Otto, Managing Editor, %Bethany Lutheran College, *

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THE IMPACT OF BULTMANNISM ON AMERICAN LUTHERANISM, WITH
 SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HIS DEMYTHOLOGIZATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

by Dr. Herman H. Sasse

The article which appears here under the name of Dr. Sasse was a lecture he delivered to a free conference of over 100 pastors, teachers and laymen in Mankato, Minnesota, on March 8, 1965. It was an informal lecture and Dr. Sasse has not had the opportunity to check this material which was taken off the taped record of his lecture. This conference was sponsored by Bethany Lutheran Seminary of Mankato.

This topic which you have assigned to me should be dealt with by an American, for you American theologians know better than I do what the actual impact of modern European Theology, especially of Bultmannism, is. But, it might serve for the clarification of the situation of our Lutheran Church and theology if I spoke to you, from my own background and experience, about the church-historical importance of this movement and what it means for you and for the Lutheran Church throughout the world.

In order to understand Bultmann, one must understand the history of European, and especially German theology, in this century. It was not accidental that Bultmann edited and augmented with a new preface Harnack's famous book, What is Christianity?, in 1951. This little book, lectures which Harnack had given at the turn of the century for students of all the faculties in the University of Berlin, had a meaning similar for the twentieth century as Schleiermacher's addresses had for the theology of the nineteenth century. In this book the liberal theology found its climax. There is no other publication which had such an impact at that time on the English speaking world. Translated into many languages, Harnack's book became the great catechism of liberal theology for modern protestant theology, in this country as well. But when Bultmann edited this book to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of its appearance, he wrote a preface in which he stated his divergence from Harnack. He in strong terms disassociated himself from the liberalism of Harnack, which was based on an optimistic view of man and of the world.

Bultmann did not want to be a liberal. A liberal is a man who believes in the ability of man and mankind to solve their own problems and who believes in progress. Harnack's theology had found its expression in the famous statement that "the nature of Christianity

is love for God and the neighbor." Jesus is the Son of God, because he has a knowledge of God as no other man has. No one knows the Father but the Son. This is for him the meaning of "Son of God." In other words, Jesus is, for Harnack, one of the great religious geniuses--as every great genius, a genius of simplification. He has destroyed the false idea of God as being a God of wrath. Harnack came from the school of Ritschl who had established the optimistic view that the human soul is able, by way of religious experiences and ethical development, to establish here on earth an ethical society which might be called "The Kingdom of God." The faith of Jesus is the belief in God the Father; not the Son but the Father belongs in the Gospel, the Gospel as Jesus has proclaimed it. The great historian of dogma did away with the dogma of the church; dogma was something which was of transitory importance. As the church of the ancient world had to develop certain forms of constitution to preserve the Gospel in the world, so it had to develop the dogma as the hard shell of philosophical thought and philosophical formulas to preserve the Gospel in the world. The Gospel is nothing else but the message of God's eternal love for mankind, and men's salvation through accepting this love....

Now, what has happened in Europe? I remember the third of August, 1914. The University of Berlin was celebrating its commemoration day. The third was the day that King William III had established this university as the great university in which the ideals of Germany should be realized. At the time of Napoleon, when Germany was at the lowest ebb of its political existence, the power of the mind, the great power of German idealism, was to renew the German nation. This was the idea that the great University of Berlin was founded on. It was on this third of August that the commemoration was held in the great assembly hall. Outside, on the avenue, the troops marched; war had broken out. And on the platform, one could see the great masterminds of German science. There was, for instance, my great teacher, Wilhelm Mollendorf, the teacher in classics. He couldn't stop the tears; he knew what was going on. Beside him was Ehlwart Norden. Norden, was my teacher in Latin, and every New Testament man knows him as the investigator of the liturgical language of the ancient world. Already on the day when the assassination of the crown Prince of Austria became known in the end of June, 1914, he said to us on that Monday morning, "I am not able to concentrate myself on a lecture in Latin." (he used to give his lectures in Latin because he wanted to have the students who really took their subject seriously) And then, he started into his lecture in German. He said, "This will be the great catastrophe of Europe." Now this catastrophe came. We saw the faces of Harnack, of Deissmann, of Karl Holl, the colleague of Harnack; we saw the great scientists and medical men--Bonhoeffer and others; we saw on the lecture platform Max Planck, the great physicist and the creator of the theory of the quantum. He gave his academic address as an Archimedes, not regarding what was going on in the military and political world. He spoke on the great problem of the principle of causality in modern physics--"Must this principle be given up?" You will remember that this was the age of the great transition in science. In 1905, Newton's view of the world was definitely smashed by Einstein's theory of relativity. The question was, "Can the principle of causality be maintained?" Planck came to the conclusion, "We must maintain it for the time being, but there might come a time when physics has to give up this principle." The time came in 1927 when Heisenberg with his new theory, showed that there is no absolute causality and that the laws of nature are laws of statistics rather than laws of absolute validity. I mention this to show you that this is a century of tremendous changes.... This was also the time when the great eschatology was rediscovered by Albert Schweitzer and led him to give up his great career as a theologian and to go into the solitude of the primitive forests in Africa. It was a time of terrific revolution.

Now, this revolution became quite evident in the following years. Three years later, on the thirty-first of October, in the same room, a celebration was being held.

The University celebrated the 400th anniversary of the Reformation. Karl Holl was the speaker, and he gave his famous address: "What Did Luther Understand By Religion?" From this thirty-first of October, 1917, the rebirth of Lutheran theology dates, not only in Germany, but also in Scandinavia.

Karl Holl had been a colleague of Harnack. He was a great scholar--in many respects greater than Harnack, in whose shadow he always stood. He was a great man in Patristics. His edition of Epiphanius is famous, even among the philologists, as one of the greatest editions of an ancient author. He was an expert in the history and doctrine of the Eastern Orthodox church. He knew Russian and read it fluently. He was at the same time the great man who tried to revive the studies of the Reformation. And it was his great disappointment that in those years that he stayed in Berlin, no one showed any such interest in the Reformation. He wrote a little book, shortly before the First World War--Luther's doctrine of Justification: What Does It Mean to Modern Man? He tried to show that Luther's doctrine of justification is the doctrine of the New Testament. It is in the New Testament that Jesus appears as the Savior of sinners. This fact distinguishes Christianity from all other religions. In all other religions, God wants relationship with the holy man, with the saint. You must be holy to have contact with God. But Jesus seeks the sinners: the Gospel is for sinners; Christianity is a religion for sinners; justification by faith is THE Gospel. This message was not understood by anyone except for a few faithful pupils in the time before 1914. Why Not? First, it is against all reason that a sinner can be nearer to God than a righteous man. And what is a sinner? The doctrine of sin and grace seemed to be dead in those years of liberalism and progress.

But now in 1917, there was a completely different situation. The year 1917 was the great turning point in the history of Europe. Never, perhaps, has Europe started a new year in such anxiety and despair as the new year of 1917. It is worthwhile to read the newspapers and church papers of that time. The war could not be decided. In vain, the Central Powers and the Allies had tried to smash each other. The fronts were fixed and nothing could be done but to throw into the fire of the great battles more and more human lives without any result. In neither Flanders nor in France nor on the Eastern front could a decision be made. All European nations lost their youth; the blossom of the European nations was killed in these vast material battles. It was a time of despair.

But, then, on Good Friday of this year America entered the scene and Wilson, in his famous speech, ended with the words, "America can do no other, God helping her," and declared war on the Central Powers. Also in the spring of 1917, the Kerensky Revolution took place in Russia and was followed by the Bolshevik Revolution in October. I remember that day. On the 31st of October, the same day when Holl had given his famous address to the university and church dignitaries in Berlin, we had our service on the front. The preacher, a member of the consistory in Magdeburg, was chaplain of our division. I shall never forget that wet, autumn day in Belgium, when we were assembled before we went into the great battle of Passchendaele that this man preached on Luther as a great German leader. And then he came to his main topic: "We must win the war; and there are three great men who guarantee the victory; these are the Kaiser, Hindenburg and Ludendorf." (We used to call this his trinity, and I as a candidate of theology had always to listen to the comments of the people who had to listen to such sermons; this was the Prussian church of that time.) After the service, the Lord's Supper was celebrated; some people went to receive Holy Communion, and then we went up to Passchendaele. We were a hundred and fifty men, fully equipped and a full company. On the sixth we came back and six men reported. The others were killed or had disappeared in the fire, the water and the gas of one of the worst battles of the First World War. When we came back, we heard of the Russian Revolution.

This was the year of destiny for Europe. The two great world powers of the future-- America and Boshevik Russia--had entered the scene, and the history of Europe was changing. What did this mean for theology? The students who went into the battle-fields of the First World War with Harnack's theology, lost this theology. You can perhaps live on this in happy times, but you can't die with it, and so, the liberal theology and the optimistic view of man died in the catastrophe of the First World War. It was followed by the revolutions in Germany and in Austria and it was followed by the political reprisals. At that time, Germany was the battlefield; Russia tried to make Germany communist, and the years of distress, of hunger and inflation were destroying the last of what had remained of optimism.

In those years a great revolution began in all fields of life: in the field of theology too. On the one hand, we who had been students of Holl suddenly began to realize that the Lutheran Reformation meant something also for modern mankind. "Man is nothing, and nothing is left to us but to despair of ourselves and hope in Christ." This word of Luther's became important to our generation. We began to study Luther, the Confessions, and the Bible.

This Lutheran movement found its parallel in the Reformed Church. Here I must mention the great name of Karl Barth, who became the leader of the great movement. You must never forget that in the twenties, a whole generation of German theologians had disappeared. Switzerland and Sweden had the theologians, and so the great Swiss theologians took over the leadership. The Swedes took the field of Luther research, but a deeper movement arose in Switzerland. Karl Barth, was, as you know, the son of a Reformed professor of theology. His father was professor of ancient church history and the New Testament in Basel, a conservative man. Karl Barth had studied before the First World War in Basel. In Berlin he had studied with Harnack, and in Marburg he was brought up in the highest form of modern theology of that time--the great historical and liberal theology of that era. His friend, Eduard Thurneysen, his contemporary and his neighbor in the Swiss parishes in which they served, had gone through the same development. Both were at the same time men well trained in philosophy and interested in public affairs. In Switzerland at that time a religious socialism was arising out of the heritage of Hermann Kutter. In the last analysis, it goes back to the two Blumhardts in the 19th century. The older Blumhardt in Guttenburg and Bonn was the one who had rediscovered, in an era of liberalism, the Jesus of the Gospels. He was the man, who by personal experiences in pastoral care came to understand Jesus as the healer, the man who expelled the demons. It was one of his great experiences that when he was in his congregation, there was a sick girl who was obviously possessed by a demon. He exorcised her and with a terrific cry, "Jesus is Victor!" "Jesus ist Sieger!" the demon left her. After that, for Blumhardt, the Kingdom of God was a reality. "Jesus is Victor"--the young Swiss theologian had learned that. Blumhardt's son had transferred that into the field of social politics. He joined the socialist party because he was of the opinion that the victory of Jesus must be won also in the field of the social life. Karl Barth, through this influence, became a religious socialist, a member of the socialist party and has always remained a socialist which explains so much of his nature.

These two men, Barth and Thurneysen were in their way unique persons. These were two preachers for whom the one great task of life was the sermon which they had to preach next Sunday. In the time before the First World War, the great problem of practical theology had always been, as the title of a famous book says, "How do we preach to modern man?" How do we communicate the Gospel? This question did not exist for these two men. Their only question was, "WHAT do we preach?", "What shall I cry?" This question was born in the hearts of men who with their whole heart were nothing else but preachers of the Gospel and did not want to be anything else.

This brought about the great turn. It is in a certain way the turn from subject to object. The theology of the 19th century was centered in the subject. Schleiermacher's theology was the theology of experience--"what I experience." "I and my experience; I the Christian am to me, the theologian, the proper object of my science," was the theological program of the great Hofmann in Erlangen. At the beginning of this century theology was the science of religion--of Christian religion. But now the great change took place. For Barth and Thurneysen not religion but the objective Word of God as they found it in the Bible was the task, the object of theology, and consequently, the task of the preacher.

Now, you may say, and rightly so, (and this is a limitation indeed) that they never have reached a full understanding of the nature of the Word of God. But it was a beginning--that suddenly they recognize that theology is not the science of the pious man, not anthropology, but in the strictest sense, is knowledge of God; and since God is, for us, here in this Word we have to turn from the subject to the object; the Word of God. (This, by the way, corresponds exactly to the changes which were going on in philosophy. There also the change from the subject to the object was noticeable; in metaphysics, too. Or it corresponds to the great parallel movement in the Catholic Church, the Liturgical Movement. "Not my personal feelings in the service, but that I as a member of the ecclesia grans take part in the objective prayer of the church liturgy." This was the parallel in the Catholic Church, and it was a great change.)

Now, the preaching of these two men, Barth and Thurneysen, made theology. Karl Barth first published his commentary on Romans in 1919. He wrote it in Switzerland in his parish near Zurich when on quiet nights one could hear the thunder from the front in the Alsace. This was a challenge; if you want to understand Barth's theology, you must understand it as nothing else but a challenge. He himself said, "All theology, both Thurneysen's and mine, is nothing else but a question mark and a margin note to all theology." In his Epistle to the Romans, he asked: "Has von Leitzmann," who had written a commentary on Romans, "ever tried to understand what Paul wants to say in this epistle to the Romans?" The clash was there. This clash, which then became a theological event, found its expression in the great discussions between Barth and Harnack in the Christliche Welt, the great liberal weekly in Germany. The division became quite obvious; Harnack was shocked: "This is no longer science!" He had devoted nearly a whole life as a great scholar to give theology the status of a real science and to be recognized also in the other faculties. "But this is no longer a science to speak of the Word of God. Science cannot know about this. Christianity can be an object of scientific research, but this is preaching." Karl Barth said, "This is theology." Now, this is exactly what the church fathers had wanted. The church fathers were not interested in a Christian theology, but in the dogma of the church, in the doctrine of the Bible. The great schoolmen of the middle ages like Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventura and before them, Anselm, were interested in the Word of God--in the revelation of God and NOT in human religion, whatever their philosophical shortcomings might have been. This was also true of the Reformers, Luther and Calvin. This new theology now brought about a new awakening of the study of the Reformers, a new study of the Bible. One has to have gone through the experience of the Twenties to know what this really meant to the theologians who had come back from the First World War. It was the great turning point.

There are in the history of the church men who have had the task of making challenges. A great theology is not a theology against which nothing can be said but is a theology which says something. A great theology is one which brings a movement into the world. It may be, of course, that this theology is loaded with errors, and it may be that the man who proclaims it does not understand fully what he is talking about. But it is still a

great event. You must be broadminded, brethren, in this respect. You see, Karl Barth, with all his limitations, (which I know better than any of you) belongs to the great men of his era--like Einstein or like Planck in science, or like other great men who are significant in philosophy or history, who brought about change.

Now, Barth's theology, when he was called to Göttingen, first as professor of Reformed theology and then to Munster for the chair of systematic theology and then to Bonn, produced the great dogmatics which you know. If you want to understand this dogmatics in which his own development expresses itself, you must understand that this is an attempt to build up a new theology corresponding to the Glaubenslehre of Schleiermacher.

The starting point in Dogmatics in the Word of God. If theology IS the Word of God, he says, then we must start with the doctrine of the Word of God. And so he gives the doctrine of the Word of God, speaking first of the Word Incarnate, then of the Word written in the Scriptures, and the whole proclamation of the Word in the Church. Intentionally, he puts Scriptures in second place, in order to avoid, as he says, making Scripture a "paper pope." He tries to understand the Word of God from the Incarnation of Christ. And his Prolegomena therefore contains the entire doctrine of the Holy Trinity; starting with the revelation in Jesus Christ, he goes to the full doctrine of the Trinity. From there he develops his doctrine of the Word of God and then moves to the doctrine of God, always the Triune God. God outside of Christ does not exist for him. It may be that we know something of the existence of God, but this is theologically of no importance. Everything is concentrated in Christ.

In the second part of the first volume there is a chapter which appeared in the first version of the dogmatics--"The Miracle of Christmas." Here Barth makes one of the finest defenses of the dogma of the Virgin Birth, and every theologian should study this chapter. He stands squarely on this dogma which means so much for him. For Barth, the incarnation is the important thing, not so much the cross, not so much the resurrection, but the incarnation. This is the great miracle, and the other great miracle is the bodily resurrection of Christ and the empty grave. In these points, he was really renewing the doctrine of the Church. It was astonishing to see, in Germany, for instance, after 1927 when he came out with his doctrine on the Virgin Birth, that suddenly this dogma again became a subject on which one could speak in good theological society. The best review of Karl Barth's Dogmatics is, perhaps, Berkouwer's The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth. (it has appeared at Eerdmans, in a paperback edition). The topic of Karl Barth's doctrine is grace--the grace of Christ. He sees it, for instance, in his doctrine of the creation; he develops the connection between Christology and creation. The doctrine of creation does not belong only to the first article but also to the second article, "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible, AND in one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom all things are made." This is the New Testament doctrine; this is the doctrine of Paul in First Corinthians; this is the doctrine of Hebrews, and this is the doctrine of St. John. "You can't understand the creations," he says, "unless you know Jesus Christ." And so, it is a Christocentric dogmatics. In Christology, Barth draws up a new scheme, always with grace in the center, to such a degree that the question has been asked, whether he is or is not a universalist. Emil Brunner is not quite wrong when he says that at least it leads to a universalism. Sin, Barth has never quite taken seriously--sin, devil, and death; sin, devil, this is all nothingness, das Nichtige. Here lies the great limitation.

Now, I don't want to go on with this; I want only to show you what this Dogmatics has meant in Germany, especially since Karl Barth is a charming person and a man of

tremendous influence on others. He was, what we call in Germany a Führernatur; he became the Hitler of the Confessing Church. (I remember at one meeting in Leipzig, the Lutheran bishops and the Reformed were in the same hotel, and we had to make a great decision. We had come to our decision and suggested this to the Reformed; "we have come to our decision; what do you say? do you accept this?" "Wait a moment, wait a moment." We waited an hour, and then, "What was your decision?" Then it came out; the telephone from Bonn had not come through. The leader had to speak.)

Now, how was it possible that this renewal of dogmatic thinking and emphasis on the Word of God could suddenly stop? This is the key question to the understanding of modern Protestant theology. How could it be possible that in the Second World War, Bultmann suddenly appeared in the foreground and became the leader of theology? Bultmann had been one of the co-workers of Karl Barth in his famous periodical Zwischen den Zeiten, Between the Eras. But Barth has broken with all of them, and rightly so; he had his reasons. Only his friend Thurneysen remained with him.

In the 1920's, Bultmann was professor of New Testament at Marburg. He was a radical critic of the New Testament and was one of the heads of the Form Geschichte school, which had tried to understand the New Testament, especially the Gospels, in the light of certain traditions--the form of logia and stories of Jesus. The method, which goes back to Gunkel and his investigation of the Old Testament, was transferred to the New Testament. It was a great school; Martin Dibelius, Alberts, and others took part in this way of investigating the Gospels.

The colleague of Bultmann in Marburg who taught dogmatics was Rudolf Otto. The students came from the lecture room of Bultmann where they had heard the New Testament lectures to the lecture room of Rudolf Otto. Rudolf Otto said: "Gentlemen, you don't know very much of the New Testament; let us spend the first weeks of dogmatics in reading the New Testament stories." So he read the Gospel stories and miracle stories. Rudolf Otto was one of the great scholars of the history of religion. He had a tremendous knowledge of the actual religious life in the orient. He knew the entire orient from Morocco to Pakistan and India. Years of his life had been spent in the investigation of these religions. As you know from his Idea of the Holy, he was a master in describing certain phenomena of religious life--the mysterium tremendum, the mysterium fascinans, and so on. Now, Otto said to his students: "If you read in the New Testament that Jesus had healed a demoniac or another sick person, you must not think that it is legend just because it does not happen in Marburg. There are many things that do not happen in Marburg but happen elsewhere and have happened in the past. For instance, miracles of healing have happened in Lourdes, in the sanctuaries of the ancient world, among the miracle working rabbis of Eastern Poland, and are still happening. Whatever the explanation may be, you cannot say that just because this doesn't happen in Marburg, it cannot happen at the time of the New Testament. However we explain it, such things have happened and are happening."

Rudolf Otto wrote his last great book against Bultmann's interpretation of the New Testament and tried to show that Jesus himself regarded himself as Messiah and the Son of Man. But Rudolf Otto died very early, and his objections against Bultmann were not followed up. He himself came from a liberal school, and it had not been pointed out that there is an essential difference between a healing miracle performed by a rabbi in Poland and the healing of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is a difference which the great historian of religion was unable to explain.

Bultmann at that time was working in his radical criticism of the New Testament; at the same time, he was working together with Barth. How was that possible? Bultmann

had rejected the old liberal theology of the beginning of the century. He had tried to express his own theology in the terms of the Reformation. He wanted to express in his theology the justification of the sinner. Whether he could do that is a different question, but in his terminology he was very close to Barth. But then the great divergence came, and Barth later wrote his third volume entirely against Bultmann, without even mentioning his name. It is here that we come to the great problem: "How was this possible--that Bultmann's theology could win the day?"

We as students who went into the First World War came from the lecture hall of Harnack and lost what we had learned from our liberal teachers. The students who went into the Second World War went as adherents of the Confessing Church, but in the Second World War they lost their Barthian theology and came back as Bultmannians.

It was not accidental that the decisive writings of Bultmann, which caused so much stir, appeared in 1941, just at the beginning of the World War: New Testament and Mythology. Again, we ask the question, why did Karl Barth NOT succeed in persuading the theology of Germany that you cannot do without the dogmatic content of the New Testament and of the Reformation? Why is it that after he had persuaded so many people, "yes, the Virgin Birth belongs to the Gospel and belongs to the necessary proclamation of the church, and the empty grave belongs to the realities of history" (in his first years he was doubtful about this, but in his Dogmatics he made it quite clear that without these things we are not redeemed)--but how was it possible that he could not maintain these things against the influence of Bultmann? My answer to this is that it is in his doctrine of the Word of God. His principle was the principle of Grace; God's grace is always free. It was a great return to the Word of God, when he and Thurneysen discovered the Word of God as object and content of the sermon and the object of theology. But what is the Word of God? "God in his free grace can make the proclaimed Word of the servant and the written word of the Scriptures to become to me the Word of God: Ubi et quando visum est Deo" (Augsburg Confession, Art. V. Trig. p. 44). This ubi et quando visum est Deo of the Augustana was one of the favorite words of Barth. Now, we know what the Augsburg Confession says--"through the Word and the Sacraments, the Holy Spirit is given... ,effects faith in those who hear the Gospel," ubi et quando visum est Deo; the ubi et quando "when and where it pleases God"; the freedom of God is not at that point that Karl Barth seeks it. It is not a matter of the free grace of God whether the preached Word or the written Word is the Word of God. But the freedom of God is at another point, namely that this Word, which is actually God's Word, creates faith. It may be that a congregation on the mission field hears the same Gospel, the same Word which for all them is the Word of God. But, some believe it and others do not. This is the mystery of the election; this is the mystery of predestination. Here we find the great riddle, and here is the freedom of God. But to say that the Word of God becomes the Word of God only when and where it pleases God is impossible. None of the Reformers would have said that. Here lies the great difference between Barth and the Reformers. He had always to correct the Reformers, but more and more, he who had re-discovered the Reformers kept his distance from them.

Here lies the deeper reason why Karl Barth's theology has not been able to create in German theology a real return to the real and full Word of God. You can see this in the history of the so called Confessing Church which was a movement in Germany of Lutheran and Reformed men who did not want to sacrifice the Church of Jesus Christ to the dictator of Germany and to the political powers. Karl Barth took the leadership, and he was able to carry these people and to carry through many of his ideas as a program of this community. But he never could draw a borderline between orthodoxy and heresy. This is the tragedy of German theology. It appeared first when rationalism broke down in the 19th century, and when the old confessions were reborn the question was asked: Should the

rationalists who destroy the authority of the Word of God be excommunicated from the church? Schleiermacher said no. This was his program, and since that time it was the principle for the churches in Germany. They would not make any serious attempt to exclude heresy from the church. Now there was a time when Karl Barth saw this necessity, when, for example, he drew the borderline in Barmen between German Christians and heretics. There he excommunicated the German Christians who, according to his opinion, were guilty of the error that there are other revelations beside the revelation of Christ. (These German Christians couldn't care less how many revelations there are. "I want to be bishop," that was their dogma.) Not every sin of the church is "heresy." Was Judas Iscariot a heretic? There are worse things than heresies. So, he excommunicated them. But in the Confessing Church, all denials of the divinity of Christ of the liberals were tolerated.

I had made the first confessional statements for those Lutherans in 1933, and I said to Martin Niemöller, "We have made here a confession which is the basis of the emergency league of the pastors of the Confessing Church; We have repeated the Augsburg Confession and the ancient creeds. But now I find here in your Confessing Church that all the old liberals are playing a prominent role. At least they should be quiet." He said, "Oh, we are now at war and we all don the same gray uniform. Later, when the victory is won, then we can part again into our parties." I said, "I thought that the confession was your weapon and not your uniform."

You see, here lies the mistake of Barth; he was not able to draw a real borderline between church and heresy. When he went back to Basel, after he had been dismissed from Bonn, he was to live in full peace and harmony with all the heretics in Basel. For instance, in one parish there are two pastors; Pastor Thurneysen was an orthodox Reformed man and Pastor Wolthers declared openly to be a Unitarian; "The church must be so liberal," he said, "so Catholic, that the Unitarians have the right beside the Trinitarians." Barth could swallow this. And the last reason for this failure is his lack of clarity that the Scriptures indeed are the Word of God. Here lies the weakness of Barth and the reason for the victory of Bultmann.

Bultmann's writing, which appeared in 1941, is astonishing. How could it have such an effect? "The cosmology of the New Testament is essentially mythical in character. The world is viewed as a three-storied structure, with the earth in the center, the heaven above, and the underworld beneath. Heaven is the abode of God and the celestial beings, the angels. The underworld is hell, the place of torment. Even the earth is more than the scene of natural, everyday events, of the trivial round and common task. It is the scene of the supernatural activity of God and his angels on the one hand and of Satan and his demons on the other," and so on. Now, is it really true that this is the picture of the New Testament? That here is the earth, here is the underworld, here is heaven? How is it to be explained? In the ancient church of the fourth century, for instance, Athanasius through Augustine, there were men who lived in a century in which the great science of antiquity developed. They knew that the earth was a globe; they knew even the circumference of the earth, with an approximation of twenty per cent mistake. Basil the Great, in his exposition of the Hexameron, speaks of the stars: "Oh I would like to know what stars the people on the other side of the earth, the southern hemisphere, are seeing." No, it is not true that the New Testament had a view of the world which cannot be accepted. You have only to compare what the New Testament says of heaven and hell with the Jewish apocalypses where you get detailed descriptions of all the parts of the universe. And the Bible itself has a holy theory of relativity. "One day before God is as a thousand years, and a thousand years one day before God." It is not so that this is THE doctrine of Scripture. But why should we call this mythical? One of the greatest mistakes which has caused so

much trouble was Bultmann's strange use of the word "Myth, Mythical." This was something which already Rudolf Otto had told him--that there is a definite scientific concept of what is myth.

A myth is a story of a god. A myth is, for instance, the story underlying the cult of Isis and Osiris, the story of how Osiris is killed and Isis searches for the dead body of the husband. This is a story; this is a myth. But views concerning the structure of the universe are not myths. This is not a very happy use of the terminology. But for Bultmann,--and this is his real interest,--the great doctrines of the Bible, concerning the incarnation and the birth of our Lord; concerning His sacrificial death; concerning His resurrection from the empty grave and concerning His ascension, are myths, on the same level as the great myths of the mystery religions of the ancient world. This is, on the one hand, a destruction of the Christian dogma. But on the other hand, it is a great historical mistake, not to see the difference, say between Isis searching for the dead body of Osiris and the women at Easter going to the grave at Easter where they knew the Lord was buried. If you ask the adherents of the Cult of Isis and Osiris: "When has this happened?" that doesn't matter. The myth describes things that are not historical and have nothing to do with history. But in the New Testament all emphasis is on here it has happened on the third day. It was on Friday that Jesus died and was buried; it was in the fiftieth year of Caesar Tiberius; the Christmas story begins with Augustus; these emperors belong to the Gospel; this is history. You couldn't put this into one of the Oriental or Hellenistic mythologies. Why do we have Pontius Pilate in the creed? Why is he reserved this honor? Simply because we say: This has happened, this is history. As the Old Testaments prophets say, for instance, Isaiah, "In the year when King Uzziah died" this and this happened. This belongs to the nature of Biblical revelation as a historical revelation.

Now, the first great objection to Bultmann which must be made is this: this is not historical research. He investigates the sources, not as a historian, who tries to know what actually has happened, but as a prosecutor who tries to investigate and find out the testimony of his witnesses to show that they are wrong. But the sound historical method is to believe things until there is proof that they have not happened. Today, a great question from the standpoint of historical investigation of the Bible is being put to Bultmann and his school: How do you explain the origin of the great Christian faith with its doctrines? How do you explain the idea that Jesus died as the Lamb of God? Who is the first to have this idea? How do you explain the story of the empty grave? Is it accidental that nowhere in history, as far as my knowledge goes, has a Jew ever denied the empty grave? In the polemics between Christians and Jews, the Jews have never made the claim that the grave was not empty. They have an explanation, that the gardener stole the body, but they never have denied that the grave was empty.

This is the first great question to be asked from the point of view of mere history: How do we explain the origin of Christianity? After all, Christianity with its dogmas of creation, redemption and with its eschatology, belongs to the greatest phenomena in the history of mankind. Can we imagine that the dogma of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, could be the product of a small congregation? Can you imagine that this came into existence as an accidental thought? Or is there behind the Christian dogma of the New Testament one great mastermind, and is, perhaps, Jesus this mastermind? Is it not Jesus himself who regarded himself as the Son of God and who went to Calvary, to the Cross, voluntarily and who intentionally fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 53? This is the question which today is asked and there are indications that from the point of view of historical research, the weaknesses of Bultmann's theory are becoming obvious. You cannot do without assuming that Jesus himself claimed this.

Now, the second question is the question for us, the theological or dogmatic question. What Bultmann says makes all the great truths of the Christian faith, all the great dogmas, myths. Jesus was not the Son of God; he was not even sinless. Bultmann says that he would not even have to be a real man. He was not born of the Virgin Mary; He suffered and died; this is the only real historical fact we have. He did not rise on the third day from the dead. This is not the demythologization of the New Testament; it is a de facto de-dogmatization, a destruction of the Christian Kerygma, for the kerygma which remains contains nothing but an application of existential philosophy as a subject for Christian religion. This is no Christian kerygma any longer. This is what the Roman Catholic church sees today, and sees with a certain satisfaction. In the Protestant churches, if this goes on, the kerygma of the New Testament is dissolved, and with it, the Church of Christ dies. You cannot escape the dogma of the Church by declaring that this and this is myth and that what we retain is the kerygma. The kerygma of the resurrection of Christ is not a repetition of the importance of the cross which gives us the existential evaluation of our existing existence.

This is the great turning point to which Bultmann has led the church. We have to make up our minds. It is no use to overlook the seriousness of the situation. There is nothing less at stake but the existence of the Christian Faith. More and more people are beginning to see this, and I hope that in your circles too. The sickness of Bultmann's theology, which is a contagious disease, as in other countries, may with God's help lead to a process of new discovery of the kerygma of the New Testament, as the kerygma of the eternal Son of God who was made man for us men for our salvation, who died for us and rose again for us. This may be and will be, with God's help, the result of the debate that is going on.

NOTE: Extra copies of this article may be had at fifty cents a piece by writing to the Lutheran Synod Quarterly, 734 Marsh St., Mankato, Minnesota, 56001. Dr. Sasse's lecture on "The Lutheran World Today", given the same day, will appear in the September issue of the Quarterly.

Dr. Herman H. Sasse, was born and educated in Germany. He served in several parishes as a pastor and then became an assistant professor in Berlin, in the Prussian Church. In 1933 he was called to fill the chair of Church History, the History of Dogma, and Symbolics at the University of Erlangen. He took his doctorate in the New Testament field. Confessional reasons moved Dr. Sasse to resign from his church in 1949. Since that time he has been an instructor at the Immanuel Lutheran Seminary of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in North Adelaide, Australia.

Dr. Sasse is the author of a number of books, among them his well-known "Here We Stand" and "This Is My Body", plus several hundred articles.

IN MEMORIAM

(Synodical Convention Devotion)

By B. W. Teigen

Text: Rev. 21, 1-7; Hymn: 614, Jerusalem the Golden

We have set aside this afternoon to honor the memory of those who have departed during the past year, acknowledge with thanksgiving to God their gifts, dedicate ourselves with renewed faith, hope and service, looking for that blessed hope of the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

More particularly we are to think of those who have worked directly in the service of the church, although we are mindful of the many believers of our confession who have gone to their eternal reward during the past year.

DR. JAMES A NELSON

Dr. James Nelson died on March 3, 1965. He came out of retirement to teach chemistry and physics at Bethany when our regular faculty member, Mr. Calvin Johnson, received a fellowship to better prepare himself for the work at our school. Dr. Nelson came from a different background from us, but during the six months that he was with us he gave a fine testimony of his faith and to his love for the Word of God. The high-light in every day's work for him was the opportunity to go to chapel and hear the Gospel preached to the students and faculty. All the faculty members and students will bear witness to this as will many of the pastors who visited during the course of the year. Almost invariably, I would hear him speaking to one of the pastors of his appreciation for the preaching of the Gospel. And so we believe that for Dr. Nelson also the Gospel was the power of God unto salvation.

REV. JOHN JUNGEMANN

The Rev. John Jungemann died on February 27, 1965. He had served our congregation at Oslo, South Dakota for at least ten years. Pastor Jungemann was a fine example of the old, Missouri-trained pastor who came out of the old seminary. He had studied under Dr. Pieper and the other fine, confessional theologians which once graced the Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, faculty. Those who got to know him recognized him as one who was soundly orthodox, having a true missionary zeal and a genuine love for souls. During the last years of his life he suffered intense physical pain because of an incurable affliction, but we thank the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who had begotten him unto a lively hope in the resurrection of Jesus Christ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away. He too was kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. We believe that he is now in that holy city, the new Jerusalem, where God wipes away all tears and where there is no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, and where there is no more pain, for the former things are passed away.

PROF. GEORGE OLIVER LILLEGARD

Prof. George Oliver Lillegard was summoned from this vale of tears to the new heaven and the new earth on June 14, 1965. One reads the facts of Prof. Lillegard's life with more than passing interest because they are so varied. Born in Calmar, Iowa (1888) he attended Bode Academy, one of our many Lutheran high schools which our old Norwegian Synod founded, but which passed out of existence because of a lack of

genuine interest in Christian education. After completing his college education at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa (1908) he became a teacher of Latin, English, and History at another of our now abandoned Lutheran academies at Willmar, Minnesota. After teaching there for a year he entered the Synod Lutheran Seminary in St. Paul, from which he was graduated in 1912. He thereupon accepted a call to be a missionary in the old Norwegian Synod's China mission field being stationed at Kwang Chow, Honan, China. Returning in 1915, he attended the University of Chicago, receiving the M.A. degree in 1918 in the field of New Testament studies.

At this time Pastor Lillegard withdrew from the old Norwegian Synod because of its doctrinal deviations especially with regard to the doctrines of Conversion and Election, and he was one of the organizers of the 'Little Norwegian Synod' in 1918, after the three large Norwegian groups merged in 1917.

Impelled by the desire to serve the Lord again in a mission field Pastor Lillegard returned to China in 1921, serving as a Norwegian Synod representative to the Missouri Synod's Chinese mission. While on this tour of duty he continued his studies at the Nanking Language School for several years, becoming extremely proficient in the Chinese Language. In 1928 he returned to the United States, becoming pastor of the Harvard Street Lutheran Church, Cambridge, Massachusetts until 1952, when he took the call to teach in Bethany's Seminary department in the New Testament fields, for which he was so well prepared. He retired in 1962.

In remembering them that have the rule over us one wants to remember the talents the church had in Prof. Lillegard. In so doing, one cannot help being somewhat personal. In 1932 I read his paper on "Modernism". This was a popular and profound analysis of the modern leaven of unbelief which engulfed the conservative reformed theology but which at that time the American Lutheran bodies had largely escaped. His plea was that the Lutherans would have their eyes open and not go the way of the formerly conservative reformed churches. Unfortunately however, today Modernism in the guise of Neo-Orthodoxy has engulfed nearly all of American Lutheranism. This paper was soundly Scriptural, it revealed a wide level of learning and a humble acceptance of Scripture. Here, obviously, was a brilliant intellectual, who in humble faith subjected all his learning to the inspired Word of God.

During the ensuing years I always found Prof. Lillegard stimulating, soundly Scriptural, and genuinely interested in his church, the Scriptures, and the things of the kingdom of God and also of the world. He was a man of broad learning. It is not generally known that he carried on a running letter-writing exchange with the famous American agnostic, H. L. Mencken. Once Prof. Lillegard set forth the facts of the resurrection, how "Jesus showed Himself after His passion by many infallible proofs" (Acts 1,3), and then he asked Mr. Mencken what he was going to do with all this evidence. Mr. Mencken honestly answered: "I can't do anything with it". It was a stimulating thing to read the correspondence between these two brilliant men, but it was especially heartening to see Prof. Lillegard's desire to put all his brilliance under the Word of God.

We came to know Prof. Lillegard more intimately after he came to Bethany in 1952. His quick and perceptive mind continued to be much in evidence. He could spot quite quickly a weakness in your line of argumentation, and by the same token when it was suggested that he needed to take a second look at his, he cheerfully did so. His balanced Lutheranism was his great contribution to our church during these years. He too cherished most highly the true treasures which the church possesses: the Gospel of saving grace and the inspired Word of God. Anchored in these two truths he was able to counsel and strengthen the brethren in following the paths of Luther and sound Lutheran doctrine.

With all his intellectual brilliance and higher learning (and don't forget it was a first-class mind that God had given him) Prof. Lillegard nevertheless never became so dazzled by it that he made it his master. He was mindful of what the apostle Paul—that brilliant man—said to the Corinthians—a group of highly intellectual Christians: "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block and unto the Greeks foolishness. But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God because the foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (I Cor. 1,19-25).

I am sure that members of his former congregations including the Chinese mission fields, will testify that Prof. Lillegard was ever mindful of the apostle's words: "I therefore so run not as uncertainly, so fight I not as one that beateth the air, but I keep under my body and bring it into subjection lest that by any means when I have preached to others I myself be a castaway" (I Cor. 9,26.27).

May that mind be also in us!

This Steadfast Word, Lutheran Free Conference Publication, edited by Carl J. Lawrenz, Mequon, Wisconsin, 1964, 159 pp., \$1.25. Eight essays delivered at the Lutheran Free Conference held at Waterloo, Iowa, July 7-9, 1964.

The little booklet is a veritable compendium of theological literature which can be of great value to any one interested in reviewing the conservative Lutheran position on the doctrine of The Word. It also furnishes material for further exploration and study in depth.

The paper-back volume consists of eight essays given in the following order: "THE CONTENT AND PURPOSE OF SCRIPTURE", "THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE", "SCRIPTURE AS REVELATION", "THE INERRANCY OF SCRIPTURE", "THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE", "THE CLARITY OF SCRIPTURE", "BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION", "SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION IN RELATION TO THE CHURCH". These essays, states the preface by Editor Lawrenz, "were prepared and presented by eight different men representing widely separated regions and coming from the background of four different Lutheran Synods." We are told that it "seemed almost self-evident to the Arrangement Committee... that the doctrine of Holy Scripture should be the first subject matter taken up by the Free Conference" since "The various erroneous theories currently propounded by widely acclaimed theologians concerning the nature and authority of the Holy Scriptures are to a large extent responsible for the confessional indifference and deterioration which is plaguing also the Lutheran Church bodies of our country."

There is much confusing terminology in modern theological literature. One gets the uneasy feeling that the "widely acclaimed theologians", Bible scholars and theological professors of today, are "running scared", and that their many and confusing words are akin to the little boy whistling in the dark when passing the local cemetery.

But there is no whistling in the dark in these essays. Here we have straightforward thrusts by skilled swordsmen. The essayists confront the enemy of THE TRUTH with a

simple, straight-forward: "THUS SAITH THE LORD." This is the old Lutheran way, and we rejoice to see this evident in all representatives from these four Lutheran groups. No doubt this is what moved the editor, Prof. Lawrenz, to state in the preface: "Both the essays and the discussion showed an encouraging basic agreement."

The first essay: "THE CONTENT AND PURPOSE OF SCRIPTURE" by Pastor Vernon Harley of the Missouri Synod deals with the "problem" of "The Written Word and The Living Word." In a series of thesis and anti-thesis he shows how blasphemous is the modern theological assumption that the Scriptures "are a completely human book... spoken of as record, witness, and medium of revelation."

"THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE" is presented by Dr. Siegbert Becker of the Wisconsin Synod. Dr. Becker has a flare for incisive expressions and clear formulations. He sets forth the internal evidence of Scripture and gives answers to objections advanced against verbal inspiration.

In "SCRIPTURE AS REVELATION" Prof. B. W. Teigen of the E. L. S. deals with the "existential view of revelation" as presented in modern theology. He characterizes Neo-Orthodoxy as "nothing but Old Liberalism Writ Large;" he very effectively and convincingly sets forth how truly God has revealed Himself in the Holy Scriptures.

Pastor Allen R. Blegen of the A. L. C. treats "THE INERRANCY OF SCRIPTURE." He takes his bearings from the inspired words of I Corinthians 2:13 and states: "Since we cannot ascribe error to God, these writings must be errorless." Pastor Blegen shows familiarity with the writings of modern theologians, and clearly outlines why these ideas are in conflict with the Word of God. He includes a discussion of Modern Bible translations (p.84) We disagree with his endorsement of the R.S.V. Luther states the first qualification for a Bible translator is that he must be "pious" (fromm), a devout and honest Christian. We cannot separate "theological liberalism" and "scholarly integrity" when translating the Bible.

"THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE" is presented by Pastor John O. Lang, at that time of the A. L. C., now a member of the Wisconsin Synod. He sets forth Scripture as "The only authority" for faith and life. "What is in accord with Scripture is truth, and what is not in accord with Scripture is error."

Prof. Carl J. Lawrenz deals with "THE CLARITY OF SCRIPTURE." "Scripture asserts its clarity by everywhere presupposing it in its statements." The essay reviews some fundamental rules of hermeneutics and concludes: It is vital that we do not confuse this spiritual clarity of Scripture with its outward clarity, but that we keep both in their proper relation.

"BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION" by Pastor Kenneth Miller of the Missouri Synod discusses such matters as grammar, history, archeology and their bearing on the proper understanding of Scriptures.

The final essay: "SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION IN RELATION TO THE CHURCH" is a scholarly, carefully worked out discussion of the "canon" by Prof. Julian G. Anderson of the E. L. S.

With each essay there is a list of Bibliographical notes which will prove of value to anyone interested in further research in the subjects treated.

Order from Lutheran Synod Book Company, Mankato, Minnesota.

--H. A. Theiste

F. F. Bruce, The Letters of Paul, An Expanded Paraphrase. Grand Rapids, Mich.; William B. Eerdmans, 1965, 323 pp., \$4.95.

Modern translations of the Scriptures are one of the most popular kinds of Christian literature these days. Since Phillips published his "Letters to Young Churches" in 1947, scarcely a year has gone by without at least two or three new private translations appearing. Naturally, the quality of all of these new translations varies considerably, from poor to excellent.

Here, however, is a good one, made by a competent and conservative New Testament scholar. Dr. Bruce is Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis at the University of Manchester, England, and the author of a number of fine books. His little book, "The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?" is a classic of conservative scholarship.

As the author points out in the Introduction, this particular volume, the translation of Paul's letters, is the result of six years' of intermittent work in preparing lectures on the Pauline literature.

The translator is a Scotchman, educated in Scotch and English universities; but the American reader will find that his English is much less British than, e.g., the N. E. B. --i.e. much less filled with Britishisms which strike the American ear as strange. This reviewer, in fact, found no real Britishisms at all.

The translation is in thoroughly modern English, but definitely within the conservative tradition, never vulgar or common. The language and style can be characterized by saying that it is done into good idiomatic every-day English, but with a certain dignity of style. The style is really much more "American," in fact, than a good many translations this reviewer has read which were done by so-called "American" English speakers.

One thing which the Bible reader misses (at least at first) is the fact that there are no verse divisions at all, not even indicated in the margin. The text is simply arranged in paragraphs, separated by section headings (where the verses are indicated) which serve as an outline for each book. We felt that this outline arrangement (and it is arranged in full outline form) was most helpful and convenient in following the thought of Paul's argument.

Another extremely useful and commendatory feature is Dr. Bruce's arrangement of the letters chronologically - i.e. according to the actual order in which they were written, all of them being connected by a very brief, but excellent, biographical sketch of Paul's activities, taken largely from Acts. This permits one to study each letter in its proper historical context; and the average reader, I am sure, will be amazed at how much more meaningful and pleasant it is to read through the Pauline corpus in this fashion.

Any such arrangement of Paul's letters into a chronological scheme presents, of course, a number of problems to any New Testament scholar. Dr. Bruce's conservative position is shown, for example, in the dates he assigns to the various letters; and above all in the fact that he accepts fully the Pauline authorship of the pastoral epistles, dating them between 62-65 - i.e. during Paul's travels after being released from his first imprisonment. In general the author follows Ramsay's accepted chronology, being generally a year "lower" up to 57, but all scholars, conservative and liberal, agree that all such dates must be left with a year or two leeway on either side. Dr. Bruce's

only real departure from Ramsay's scheme is that he places the writing of Philippians in Ephesus, late 54 or early 55, rather than the commonly-accepted view that this was one of the epistles of the first Roman imprisonment. In this point we would disagree with the author, since the evidence for the traditional Roman view is so overwhelming, while the entire Ephesian imprisonment theory is founded on conjecture.

Another example of Dr. Bruce's conservative tendency is the fact that all the pronouns used to refer to Jesus are capitalized - e.g. He, His, Who, etc. This little detail creates a certain air of reverence which is missing even in the King James Version.

In only one instance do the translator's reformed views become apparent, and this in a footnote appended to I Corinthians 11:29, the famous passage dealing with the Lord's Supper. The footnote concerns the phrase "discerning the body," and reads as follows: "'Discerning the body' involves their showing consideration for one another and so giving practical expression to their common membership of the body of Christ, which is signified in their sharing the eucharistic bread." (p. 103). Any Lutheran, of course, would ask, "How does the word "discerning" lead to such an interpretation?"

We know that one phrase in the title - "An Expanded Paraphrase" - will immediately prejudice a certain number of readers who love the old King James Version. One gets the feeling that the word "paraphrase" is sometimes regarded as almost a "dirty" word in conservative Lutheran circles; and this is surely unfortunate. It should be understood that to paraphrase a passage certainly does not mean to change its meaning, nor should the assumption be made that any person who uses a paraphrase is somehow motivated by insidious motives. Dr. Bruce, for example, is a scholar of such conservative standing that no one would accuse him of being a modernist or liberal; and no one who reads his translation would be so rash as to say that he has changed Paul's meaning!

What is really involved here is the art and science of translation; and anyone who will take the trouble to investigate will soon learn that this is a topic which has been the subject of controversy for hundreds of years -- as far back as the days of Paul himself! There have always been those who have insisted that a translation should be literal - that it should conform perfectly to the grammar, syntax and idioms of the original language. It goes without saying that the perfect literal translation of this type is the inter-linear. It also becomes obvious that the King James Version, which most of the literalists uphold, is certainly no such crudely literal translation! Far from it! In fact, the most striking characteristic of the King James Version is the elegance of its English!

Aside from the literal translation, the only other kind is the paraphrase; and this also has always had its advocates - including such scholars as Jerome and Luther. The principle of the paraphrase is the opposite of the literal translation -- that it should conform perfectly to the grammar, syntax and idioms of the receptor language. Here, however, one can point to no one particular translation as the perfect example, since paraphrasing is all a matter of degree. Phillips is probably the most paraphrastic of all the modern English translations. That is to say, generally Phillips conforms least to the Greek grammar, syntax and idiom.

Presumably one should keep in mind what a "translation" is -- a bringing across of the meaning or thoughts of the author from one language (in which he wrote) to another (that of the reader). And all would agree that the important thing is to set forth in the clearest way the thoughts that the author was trying to convey. It also

seems self-evident, however, that the easiest way to do this for the average reader is to put these thoughts in words and language which He (the reader) understands -- i. e. in his own language, which means using grammar, syntax, vocabulary and idioms which are thoroughly familiar to him. In other words, the most effective translation is, after all, the paraphrase; and the ultimate aim of the translator must be to make Paul talk English -- modern, idiomatic 20th-century English -- to express Paul's thoughts exactly as Paul would if he were a modern 20th-century American.

This is the kind of a translation which Dr. Bruce has tried to produce; and this reviewer finds himself in complete harmony with Dr. Bruce's principles. Every translator, no matter what his principles of translation, will inevitably find himself facing certain difficult words, phrases and idioms which are almost impossible to render accurately from the one language into the other. The curious thing is that in such difficult passages every translator, no matter what his principles, must resort to paraphrase of some sort -- if he intends, that is, to produce something which yields any sense at all! And it is true that in such difficult passages the translator, or paraphraser, as Dr. Bruce, says, must inevitably introduce a certain amount of his own interpretation and exposition. Such problems, however, cannot be avoided by any translator; and how well such problems are solved depends entirely on the skill and ability and knowledge of the translator -- particularly how well he "knows" the author whose work he is translating.

Personally, we feel that Dr. Bruce has done an excellent job, and has produced a very creditable -- and helpful and enlightening -- translation of Paul's letters. It is our feeling that anyone will profit by reading this translation. The amazing thing is that, despite its title -- "An Expanded Paraphrase" -- Dr. Bruce's translation is really quite conservative and "literal!" The reader will be amazed that it is not nearly as paraphrastic as Phillips', or even the N. E. B.! It is clear, that is, that he is also trying to be as faithful to the original Greek idiom as possible.

One other point should be noted here before we leave this matter of "paraphrasing," since the translator takes pains to point it out in the Introduction. As he says (p. 9), it is not his aim simply to set forth side by side all the various synonyms by which a Greek word may be rendered -- after the manner of the "Amplified New Testament," or Wuest's "An Expanded Translation." It is not an expanded paraphrase in that sense. Dr. Bruce's expansion is "designed rather to make the course of Paul's argument as clear as possible." (p. 9). Here the translator is facing a different kind of a problem -- and a typically Pauline one. Every reader of Paul's letters knows how frequently Paul's thought suddenly jumps from one topic to another, with no warning. Sometimes sentences are left unfinished in doing so -- so-called anacoloutha. Often times parentheses are suddenly inserted. This is Paul's own typical style. In such cases Dr. Bruce has attempted to fill up these anacoloutha and ellipses -- in other words, to re-capture Paul's original flow of thought, and to do so in his own language and style. The reader will be greatly surprised at how few times he will be able to spot where it is that Dr. Bruce has so filled in the gaps, so well has he done his job.

Finally, it should be pointed out that this book will really do the impossible -- it will satisfy both the literalist and the paraphrist! For it is really two translations in one. Dr. Bruce's expanded paraphrase is printed on the right-hand, odd-numbered pages. Opposite -- on the left-hand, even-numbered pages -- is printed the text of the English Revised Version of 1881 -- the most literal English translation ever produced. This is done so that the reader can study and compare the two translations, produced on such opposite principles, and so judge for himself their relative merits and weaknesses.

And - as a further bonus - beneath the text of the E. R. V. are printed the complete notes of Drs. Scrivener, Moulton and Greenup, which were designed "to make Scripture its own commentary, a commentary which time could never supersede." (p. 13). Thus, if you do not have a copy of the E. R. V. on your shelf, with these very copious study notes, you get two for one.

Some idea of how "expanded" this expanded translation really is may be obtained by the following comparisons, where this reviewer selected four chapters quite at random and counted the exact number of words in each according to the E. R. V. and Bruce texts. The figures follow:

	<u>E. R. V.</u>	<u>Bruce</u>	<u>Expansion</u>
Romans 7	609	802	32%
I Corinthians 11	707	820	16%
Philippians 1	651	736	13%
I Thessalonians 5	312	484	55%

Romans 7, by reason of its many ellipses, and I Thessalonians 5, because it is the closing chapter, are sections where one would naturally expect a large amount of expansion; but it will be noted that in other sections the amount of expansion is really quite small.

Lithographically speaking, the publishers (Eerdmans) have done a good job, with a good cloth binding, good stiff covers, and good quality paper. This reviewer did not check carefully the accuracy of the E. R. V. text, nor the copious study notes. He did find four typographical errors in the expanded paraphrase -- "it is" for "is it" on page 103, line 5; "exculsion" for "exclusion" on page 151, line 14; "send" for "sends" on page 259, line 10; and "women" for "woman" on page 301, line 12.

If the reader has gotten this far in this lengthy review, he will know that this reviewer strongly recommends every preacher and well-informed layman to get a copy of this book and read it. At \$4.95 it is a real bargain!

--Julian G. Anderson

Martin E. Marty. Church Unity and Church Mission. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964, 139 pp., \$3.00.

The name of Dr. Marty is very familiar in our circles, and so should this book. Dr. Marty is a very prolific writer. In the year preceding this book, according to the jacket blurb, he wrote five books, and over the five years previous 300 articles. In fact, one cannot help feeling that this vast production has had a negative effect on this book. The reader has a feeling, both from the style and diction of the book, that the book was probably dictated from notes and then written out. There are also a number of annoying spelling mistakes in the book.

But it is not the misspellings which annoy the reader most. This is a rather strange book to come from a former Missouri Synod clergyman. Though he is teaching at the Chicago University Divinity School, he is still listed in the Lutheran Annual; his name also appears very frequently as a speaker at Missouri Synod functions, institutes, etc.

This book deals with areas of Christian concern which are of the utmost concern to every Christian: Christian unity and the fulfillment of the Christian mission to the world. The suggestions which he makes for the accomplishing of these purposes sounds very un-Lutheran. The spirit which Luther showed towards Zwingli and Marburg is absent or at least silent, and the old stand for unity, doctrinal agreement, is missing. There are new voices sounding out in this book, and they are not good.

When Dr. Marty looks at the visible church, he sees a welter of denominations and fragmented denominations. He sees little clergymen who are emphasizing and maintaining differences between denominations for the sake of denominational existence. He sees men squabbling and fighting over these little differences and ignoring the greater unity that exists among them as Christians. He sees the church fighting within itself and so failing to do the real mission which it is supposed to do. Dr. Marty states: "Yes, truth divides; but do denominational 'truths' in their current form represent the full Truth that is Jesus Christ?" (p. 138) His answer is no. So he continues: "Let us unite insofar as we have agreed; let us unite for the sake of mission. Let us then study and talk and learn and pray in order to agree." (p. 138).

Dr. Marty feels that the differences between all shades of Christians are not too great. "Viewed from the hope for perfect Christian agreement on divine revelation and the truth of the tradition let this be asserted: I do not believe that the central formal issue (the doctrine of authority) or the central material issue (the doctrine of grace) have been settled or have begun to be settled because of the new ecumenical spirit. . . . But viewed from the aspect of the world which is becoming self-enclosed apart from Christ, these fundamental differences are themselves razor thin." (p. 106) It seems rather strange to talk about unity of mission when there is an acknowledged difference of opinion as to what should be preached and as to what should serve as the basis for the preaching.

Dr. Marty does not like a strict confessionalism either, it would seem. He laments: "The partisan of the Westminster or Augsburg Confession is tempted to see his own as a full and final expression of divine truth; it forms a tent under which he presumes all biblical evidence and all Christian experience can be gathered. At the base of the Westminster Confession is a view of God's majesty which is not denied or contradicted by other groups. . . . At the heart of the Augsburg Confession is an understanding of God's grace which is not necessarily denied or contradicted by others. . . . Neither is, then, a full and final expression. Each belongs to events and experiences owned by a part of the Church." (p. 65) It would seem that he sees truth as a diamond with facets of all kinds, so that contradictions between denominations would be more apparent than real.

Bible passages are at a minimum in this book. Rather Dr. Marty seems to fall back on psychological and sociological interpretations of the divisions which have arisen within the visible church. When he does so, then the causes for division seemingly disappear. The end result would be a federal type of church, with divisions according to theological bent, but a unity basic enough to engage in a common mission. (pp. 112-113) Dr. Marty holds up the United Church of Canada as an example of denominations which surrendered their denominational existence for the sake of the so-called greater unity. (pp. 116-117) The reviewer can only comment that the United Church of Canada cannot be used as the best example of spiritual vitality and mission outreach.

What is even more disturbing in the book is his urging of a kind of "intellectual dishonesty." He encourages those who hold opinion similar to his to remain within their denominational groups and be "faithful to their disciplines," but, on the other

hand, to "work toward the ultimate death and transfiguration of these forms." (p. 126) While he acknowledges that this might seem objectionable to some, it will not be to those who have higher views than mere denominationalism.

The reviewer might have made additional comments on this book, but the above should be sufficient. Readers of this journal would do well to have a copy of Dr. Marty's book to read, for it will acquaint them with the latest fad in the approach to Lutheran and Christian unity which has appeared. It is evidently found in many places. It is to be regretted that Dr. Marty did not add a bibliography to this book, so that the reader who is interested in going on beyond it could trace the sources of the thoughts expressed in the book. The few footnotes do give some indication of books which influenced his thinking.

--Glenn E. Reichwald

Rudolph F. Norden, The New Leisure. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965, 105 pp., \$1.00.

This paperback is one of the first of a new series by Concordia Publishing House, in which a deliberate attempt is made to meet problems of current American life in the light of Christianity. In this volume the impact of modern technological improvements in making time available for living rather than making a living is clearly pointed out, and suggestions are made on the positive use of this time now available. While the treatment is of necessity more sociological than theological, readers will benefit from the discussion.

--Glenn E. Reichwald

William Beck, A Dialog About the Jehovah's Witnesses' Bible. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965, 15 pp., \$.15.

With the coming of warmer weather the fell ringers also come, among whom will be the Jehovah's Witnesses, ever eager to spread their peculiar theology. They also have their own translation of the Bible which they use in their proselytizing. Dr. Beck had offered a few thoughts in this tract to show certain mistranslations and theological biases in their translation, which, if corrected, show Russelism to be non-Biblical. A fair trade to offer to the next bell ringer who offers you an issue of the Watchtower!

--Glenn E. Reichwald

Frederick W. Danker, The Kingdom in Action. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965, 112 pp., \$1.75.

The author -- not to be confused with his brother William -- also teaches at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. In many ways he has written an interesting and stimulating book to arouse and encourage Christians in their responsibilities as witnesses and living testimonials to the Gospel. But there are threads running through the book which present different patterns. We are not accustomed to classifying Daniel with the apocalyptic literature of the second century B. C. (p. 22) We are not accustomed to speaking of Israel as God's people without definitely including the future Messiah. (p. 16) It would seem that he argues, under certain conditions, for open communion (pp. 78-79) and for a subjective, modern approach toward the theological formulations

of the fathers. He certainly differentiates through the entire book between the Church and the Kingdom of God. The material in the book served as a basis of a lecture series to a group of pastors in St. Louis. It is rather unfortunate that the text is not more complete so that all of the material discussed -- and certainly much more must have been said to judge by the terseness of the material -- might have been included.

--Glenn E. Reichwald

Harold E. C. Wicke, Catechism of Differences. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1964, 93 pp., \$.60.

This is a revised and enlarged edition of the same pamphlet. The major improvement is that it cites not only the historical doctrinal positions of the various Lutheran bodies, but it also deals with current theological trends. The question and answer format remains. The only complaint is that the list of errata in the text printed on the front page could not have been incorporated into corrections in the text.

--Glenn E. Reichwald

Bernard W. Guenther, et al., Architecture and the Church. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965, 85 pp. and photographs, \$3.25.

There is an amateur architect buried deep in the breast of all of us. All one needs do is to raise the question of how a church ought to be built, to bring this out in us. Unfortunately, too often we then have to live with the results. It was therefore most informative and interesting to read this brief manual by a group of experts, the Commission on Church Architecture of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. It contains many stimulating and valuable suggestions which would be of value to any building committee or to those advising on the building of churches. It might not only prevent mistakes, but also provide valuable foresight.

--Glenn E. Reichwald

Arthur W. Pink, Gleanings in Joshua. Chicago: Moody Press, 1964, 430 pp. \$4.95.

Arthur Pink was a noted English preacher and expositor. This book contains his extended comments on Joshua, a rather neglected book.

--Glenn E. Reichwald

Charles Caldwell Ryrie, Dispensationalism Today. Chicago: Moody Press, 1965, 221 pp., \$3.95.

Dr. Ryrie, dean of the Graduate School at Dallas Theological Seminary, presents a defence of this theological novelty which has always been rejected by the Lutheran Church.

--Glenn E. Reichwald

Robert D. Culver, Daniel and the Latter Days. Chicago: Moody Press, N. D., 224 pp., \$3.50.

This reprint copyrighted in 1954 is a chiliastic interpretation of the book of Daniel.

--Glenn E. Reichwald

G. R. Cragg, The Church and the Age of Reason. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., n. d., 299 pp., \$5.00.

This rather small volume is the fourth volume in the Pelican History of the Church. The author is professor of historical theology at Andover Newton Theological School. The volume covers the history of the church from 1648 to 1789. While it might seem impossible to compress the history of that period into so few pages, the author has come very close to being successful. Brevity has eliminated many isolated facts, but has also kept the flow of ideas moving. Hence the reader generally has a full picture of the ideas which moved people in their actions. England receives the major treatment in this book, but other areas are not neglected. Many of the philosophical premises used to attack orthodox Christianity also originated in this period of history and are clearly presented. Of particular interest is the flow of events in Germany which led from orthodoxy to pietism to rationalism. One wonders about the parallels of today. While the book is very brief, it is readable and will stimulate to further reading.

--Glenn E. Reichwald

George MacDonald, Diary of an Old Soul. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1965, 132 pp., \$3.50.

This little book contains 366 brief verses, one for each day, of devotional verses. The name MacDonald does not mean much today, but C. S. Lewis credited MacDonald's writings with being the strongest influence in his becoming a Christian. Alvin Rogness, President of Luther Seminary, wrote the introduction to the book and seems largely responsible for its publication.

--Glenn E. Reichwald

Robert L. Raymond, A Christian View of Modern Science. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1964, 30 pp., no price.

Dr. Raymond's tract, or pamphlet, discusses in a very conservative way the Biblical cosmogony, comparing it with the so-called modern scientific approach and also contrasting it with those who are tempted to or who have compromised their Christian position. While the material itself might be too difficult for a high school group, a pastor would find valuable thoughts here to use for several topical discussions in the area.

--Glenn E. Reichwald

Leonard Verduin, The Reformers and Their Stepchildren. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964, 292 pp., \$5.75.

The author of this interesting book has the scholarly qualifications to write in this area, having translated the complete writing of Meno Simons and having received a Fulbright scholarship in 1950 to study medieval protest movements in the Low Countries. The book itself is the outgrowth of a series of lectures sponsored by the Calvin Foundation in 1963. Lutherans will readily recognize the chapter headings: "Rottengeister," "Wierdertäufer," and others. As these indicate, the book discusses in detail the various sectarian movements which have troubled the Christian Church over the centuries. The author is both sympathetic in his understanding of these movements and yet critical where criticism is called for. As a pastor in the Christian Reformed Church, he discusses these movements against the background of the Reformed Church, though Luther is also involved in the book. One wonders if the author is fair to Luther when he pictures Luther as compromising his views on the congregation in permitting it to become a mixed group rather than a group of believers. (pp. 128-131) It would be better to say that Luther was not a perfectionist, as were the enthusiasts of various stripes, but rather a preacher of the Gospel who then took people at their profession and urged them to grow in grace. Those interested in this area of history will find this book stimulating.

--Glenn E. Reichwald

THE BECK TRANSLATION

The theological journal of the Church of the Lutheran Confession, Journal of Theology, for March, 1965, contained some comments by Dr. E. Reim on the Beck translation of the New Testament, The New Testament in the Language of Today. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963). Dr. Reim's article should be of interest to all, since the Beck translation has enjoyed some popularity in our circles. Dr. Reim, in general, seems to like the translation, even with its popular approach to the English language. At times, he felt the approach was too popular, as in the treatment of the Sixth Petition.

Dr. Beck, however, caused serious concern to Dr. Reim in his treatment of the word "justify." In a footnote to Romans 3:20 Dr. Beck states:

'Righteousness' is a court term. God, who gives us the righteousness of Christ (Romans 3:23-24; 4:5; Phil. 3:9), as a judge declares us righteous and by His creative verdict makes us righteous.

Dr. Reim underlines the last three words of this footnote and states: "The words we have underlined reveal a grave confusing of justification and sanctification, of the imputed righteousness of Christ and the personal righteousness of the believer. They in effect assign a dual role to faith in passages which speak of salvation." Dr. Reim illustrates this by pointing to the translations offered for the following passages: Romans 3:24 ("become righteous"); 3:26; 3:28; 4:2 ("got to be righteous"); I Corinthians 6:11 ("made holy and righteous"); Galatians 2:15 ("become righteous"); 3:11. In the light of these translations Dr. Reim asks: "What then has become of the 'court term,' of the footnote, of the declaration of a verdict, of 'the forensic use' of this basic term of Scripture?" (pp. 34-39) These comments of Dr. Reim were thought to be of some interest to our readers.

--Glenn E. Reichwald