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THE INFLUENCE OF ECUMENISM ON CHRISTIANITY

— Samuel S. Seane

"Ecumenical", "ecumenicity", "ecumenism" — what a word in the vocabulary of Church history, particularly in this, the 20th century! William Temple has called the ecumenical movement "the great new fact of our era" in church history. Others have called the ecumenical movement "the greatest miracle of the 20th century", and some have called it "the movement of the Holy Spirit in the Church of God". The word "ecumenical", the word "ecumenism" comes from the Greek word "OIKOUMENE", which, originally, means "the whole inhabited earth" — "the whole inhabited world".

The New Testament use of OIKOUMENE is more often in reference to the whole inhabited world than to the church. We find references in the New Testament to this political Oikoumene, which now went beyond the Roman Empire, e.g. Luke 2:1: "In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled." In fact this OIKOUMENE is sometimes claimed by the devil in the New Testament: Luke 5: 5 & 6, "And the devil took Him (Jesus) up and showed Him all the Kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to Him, to you I will give all this authority and their glory for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will." But for the author of the Hebrews the OIKOUMENE was not in the first place the politically, religiously or diabolically marked world, but a world — the whole inhabited world — destined to be redeemed by Christ. Thus he wrote about the "OIKOUMENE TO COME" — Hebrews 2: 5 "For it was not to Angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking". In Jesus Christ, the OIKOUMENE — the whole inhabited world — received its king, its messengers, and thus its future. This becomes clear in Matthew 24: 14 "And this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached throughout the world, as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." The whole inhabited world therefore, the OIKOUMENE, is the object of God's mission — the object of God's mighty acts of salvation, claimed by the risen Christ and the coming Lord.

A CALL TO REPENTANCE

There grew up gradually and quietly in the minds and hearts of certain men, a conviction that the divisions in the Body of Christ, the Church, are sinful and contrary to the will of Christ. Such a consciousness had existed before in christian history, but as a passionate motive for christian action it hardly existed except in some isolated individuals for nearly a millenium and a half. For St. Augustine the real unity of the church had been a unity of love and for him the distinguishing mark of the heretic and the schismatic was that both lacked this love for the Body of Christ, the Church. But in the Catholic Church of the first centuries it had always been the others who were the sinners.

But in this new ecumenical consciousness of the 20th century, those who feel it, feel the judgement of God on the sin of schism addressed to themselves. They feel themselves involved in this sin and they feel themselves called to repentance. During my study course in Geneva, I listened to one church leader in the ecumenical movement say this: "I never thought that in my lifetime I would live to hear a Pope of Rome say: 'If we (Roman Catholics) have wounded any people in the past, we ask for forgiveness — and if any people have wounded us, we forgive them.'" This is the heart and essence of ecumenism, and Pope John

XXIII, that great protagonist of ecumenism in the Roman Catholic Church shows this — a consciousness of sin, a consciousness of forgiveness for our sins, a consciousness of mutual love and respect, a consciousness of give and take, where there is no party superior and no party inferior in the ecumenical dialogue. "Ecumenism" says William Nicholls, "will always remain a mystery to anyone who does not see that repentance is the driving force behind it — that it is a movement of amendment of life — a movement of committal — a movement of renewal."

Ecumenism arises from a meeting of men and women through God the centre of all life and of all reality. Later, as they meet together, talk to one another, listen to one another, and through the Holy Spirit find themselves enjoying a rich fellowship, they become conscious of the fact that unity is already a gift of God; and they become aware that unity can only be worked for by a recovery of love between separated christians, by a new humility in our relations with one another

and finally by the gracious action of the Lord Himself, who alone can redeem us from our sinful situation. As V. A. Demant puts it, "we are not weak because we are divided, we are divided because we are weak."

A MOVEMENT OF PRAYER

The focussing point of ideas and inspiration which made the new ecumenical movement possible was the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910. Stephen Neill calls this ecumenical conference "the watershed between two eras of church history". Before 1910 he says the ecumenical movements were like rays of light struggling through a closed shutter into a dark room. Since 1910 the shutters have been flung back and light pours into all the corners of the room, and here we are taught something of the way in which "God moves the world through the church, by leading His faithful people to pray for those things which it is His will to grant." Ecumenism is a movement of prayer,

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GOD, KERK EN SENDING

DS. C. W. H. BOSHOFF

Die mens se houding teenoor die Sending is nie maar net 'n eie losstaande opinie wat niks te doen het met die res van sy geloof en sy godsdiens nie. Dit is deel van sy geloof in God, sy verhouding tot die Here Jesus en ook deel van wat hy oor die kerk van die Here glo. Dit moet so wees want Sending is nie maar individue se werk nie, dit is die kerk se werk wat hy doen in dankbare gehoorsaamheid aan die bevel van die Here Jesus. Eintlik en in laaste instansie is dit God se werk, dit is God se Sending.

Dit is Hy wat eerste gestuur het, „God het sy Seun in die wêreld gestuur,” sê Johannes (Joh. 3: 17) en die rede waarom Hy sy Seun stuur is Sy groot liefde tot die wêreld. „Want so lief het God die wêreld gehad dat Hy sy eniggebore Seun gegee het . . .”

Ons is by verre na nie so lief vir die wêreld nie, trouens ons is nie eers altyd in ons skik met God se liefde vir die wêreld nie. Ons wou graag hê dat God net sommige mense uit die wêreld liefhê, eintlik die wat so bietjie bokant die wêreld staan — soos ons by voorbeeld. **Ons wat in ons kerk is of aan ons volk behoort — maar ook nie almal in ons kerk nie, want daar is nog die wat ook in ons kerk is van wie ons nie hou nie, hulle is eintlik die huigelaars en die fariseërs en God moet hulle ook nie liefhê nie. Dan moet God ons volk liefhê, maar die liefde beteken nie dat hulle almal gered moet word deur die bloed van Christus nie, dit beteken eintlik dat God ons volk moet bewaar teen Kommuniste en barbare, teen die V.V.O. en almal wat ons haat. Ons**

moet bewaar word om te kan voortbestaan. En as ons nou vra maar waarom moet ons volk voortbestaan en wat doen ons volk nou sodanig dat ons God se beskerming moet ontvang, dan word ons skeef aangekyk en ter syde gesê: Kyk hoe ver het die liberalisme al by hom ook deurgebring, hy is seker nie 'n goeie Afrikaner nie!

Om alle twyfel uit die harte weg te neem wil ek u verseker dat ek my volk ook baie liefhet en gereed vir my volk en sy leiers en sy beskerming bid, net-soos baie van u. Maar ek wil daar byvoeg: Ons praat mos nie nou oor ons volk nie maar oor God se volk en ook nie oor ons kerk nie maar oor die kerk van Christus — mag dit so wees dat ons kerk ook die kerk van Christus is!

Nou in hierdie kerk het ons die ware God, die Vader van ons Here Jesus leer ken. En in Sy Woord leer Hy ons dat Hy geen behae het in die dood van die sondaar nie, dat dit te gering is dat Sy Seun net die vervalde huis van Jakob sou oprig maar dat Hy Hom gemaak het 'n lig tot verligting van die nasies.

Dit is hierdie God wat die wêreld so lief het, 'n wêreld vol van skurke en godloënaars, kommuniste, barbare, selfverhoogdes, skynheiliges, roekeloses, bandeloses, wredes, ontugpleërs — in een woord 'n gevalle wêreld, 'n wêreld wat midde in die dood lê. En tog het God die wêreld lief, met 'n liefde wat nie net 'n gevoel is nie maar 'n liefde wat 'n gawe word, liefde wat gestalte kry in die persoon van Sy eniggebore Seun. Meer nog, liefde wat 'n offer word, wat gekruisig en begrawe word, liefde wat kan ly en ter helle neerdaal terwille van die versoening van hierdie wêreld.

By Golgota het God 'n Bron, 'n fontein van heil en lewe geopen maar waar is die kanale om daardie waters na die dorstige wêreld te voer? By Golgota het God 'n kragstasie gebou, maar waar is die hoogspanningsdrade om die krag na duisternis en slawerny te voer? Die kerk is Christus se hoogspanningsdrade, die Christene is sy kanale. Dit is vir hulle wat Hy sê: Gaan dan heen . . . Soos die Vader My gestuur het, stuur Ek julle . . . Ons Sending is die voortsetting van God se Sending.

As ons so na die Sending kyk en ons vra na die voortgang van die evangelie in ons tyd, word ons ernstig daarvan bewus dat daar iets radikaal verkeerd is.

Mense wat met wêreldstatistieke werk het vir ons ontugterende feite aan die lig gebring. Dit blyk dat die

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THE INFLUENCE OF ECUMENISM ON CHRISTIANITY

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it is a commital to a vision. The World Christian Students Federation came into being because of far-sighted leaders like that dynamic American Methodist layman Dr. Mott, who said: "Let us unite students in the universities of the world in witness for Christ." The formation of the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, and other similar Christian Associations came into existence because their leaders realized that more and more the world needed the impact of co-ordinated christian forces.

Ecumenism — this movement of the Holy Spirit within the church manifested itself in matters of Faith and Order, in matters of Life and Work, and in 1948 at Amsterdam we see the formation of the W.C.C., a fellowship of churches, having as their basis, the Lord Jesus Christ, as Lord and Saviour. The theme of this first Assembly of the W.C.C. was "Man's Disorder and God's Design". This ecumenical gathering enabled the churches in the world to grow in the fellowship of Jesus Christ, and in the re-examination of their mission for the evangelisation of the world.

Ecumenism continued to influence Christians and churches at the Second Assembly of the W.C.C. in 1954 at Evanston, in the U.S.A. At this Assembly there were 164 churches in this ecumenical fellowship representing 48 nations, and having as their theme, "Christ the hope of the world". With greater impetus and determination, the churches of the world decided to go out into the world, to go and bear witness to this truth. Appeals from this ecumenical assembly were sent out to governments, to churches, to the press services of the world, to leaders of nations, to settle in future their differences by peaceful means. The ravages and brutalities perpetrated during the Second World War were still fresh in the memories of men and women.

From Evanston, the member churches caught afresh the true mission of the church in the world, as the repository of the truth of the Gospel as the conscience of the nation, as God's instrument for a new creation in all the ramifications of human life — in the home, in the family, in the schools and universities, in commerce, in industry, in labour and in migratory labour, in race relations, in racial discrimination — human exploitation and oppression were again seen as a negation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And from Evanston to New Delhi in 1961, ecumenism has been influencing christian forces in the world. In 1961 we see the W.C.C. merging with the International Missionary Council for a greater witness and service by the Church of Christ in the world. There is here a re-examination of the place of the laity — the laos — the people of God in the life and witness of the church, greater emphasis on evangelism, and the definition of the nature of that unity for which we seek. We hear of Anglican Methodist Conversations in England, and all this is done in order to save England for God. We have heard of the United Church of Canada, of the United Church of South India, of plans for church unions in Africa, in Asia and in Australia — led by the Holy Spirit we can see here how ecumenism influences the churches to be conscious of their mission in the world — we see the outreach of the church into new frontiers for the evangelisation of the world.

In South Africa, we hear, under the Christian Council of South Africa of "Expanding Programme for togetherness of churches, and new dimensions of mission for South Africa today." We hear of a Durban Mayor who invited all the churches to the city hall of Durban on a Sunday before Christmas, "to come and unite in worship, in a demonstration of Christian unity on the basis of the incarnation." In a re-

port about this service, I underlined these words: "The combined worshipping of Catholic and Protestant, of European, Indian, African and Coloured, standing shoulder to shoulder was evidence that God is at work in His church, even in South Africa." In South Africa, we hear of that ecumenical fellowship the Christian Institute, with its wonderful ministry of reconciliation — reconciliation between man and God, between man and man and between race and race. And if there is anything that South Africa needs today, it is that the races of this country should learn, as they are led by God, to listen to one another, to talk to one another, to know one another, to respect and love one another, to learn how to live together in peace in this beloved country of ours — recognising the dignity of all men irrespective of a man's colour or his race. Ecumenism can help us in this task, but this is the task of Christianity, and we are committed to this way of life.

THE RENEWAL OF THE CHURCH

As we have seen that the ecumenical movement is strongly concerned with the relevance of the church, and its message in our modern situation, ecumenical discussions are concerned with ways and means of intensifying the outreach of the church into the whole society that the word of God should be interpreted in the language, the thought-forms, the theology and the idiom of the people.

For the so-called under-developed countries, or the so-called "Younger churches" or "Mission Fields" Christianity would not then appear as an exotic religion on the soil of the people, but would be related to the heart and soul of the people. To illustrate further this point — of a christianity that should be related to the soil and soul of the people, let me quote from a statement made by the International Missionary Council Conference, at Willingen in 1952, under the heading "the universal church in its local setting" "While the church of Christ in any place and at any time must exhibit the marks without which it will not be a church, it has the responsibility to exhibit them in a distinctive way, incorporating into the service of Christ whatever heritage of cultural values it may have been given, by God's grace. This is not being rooted in the soil but related to the soil. The church can only be rooted in Christ. But ecumenical discussions have discerned that the gospel must be so presented to men and women, that its contemporary and compelling relevance is recognised. It cannot be so recognised, as long as it appears in a foreign guise, imitating and reproducing the characteristics of a church in some remote and alien land. Foreign in one sense the church must always be, because its citizenship is in heaven, and it is an agent of transformation. But, despite the dangers of identification with this world, we urge that "foreignness" in the more earthly sense of the word is something to be outgrown with all possible speed. Churches should take a positive, yet critical attitude to the national cultures. . . ."

In trying to win Africa for Christ, the Church in Africa, the churches in the ecumenical fellowship in the continent of Africa, will have to walk that road — the road of making the gospel of Jesus Christ relevant and meaningful, understanding the fact that for the African, the spiritual and the material are indivisible. We can preach, and preach, and this is good, but what Africa needs today is the putting into practice of our preaching. As John White puts it, "the church must go down into the pit with the miner, into the foc'sle with the sailor, into the shop with the mechanic, into the factory and field, and into the countinghouse. Like the sea, the church must flow

into the very nook of the shoreline of humanity — and must practise what is preached."

WITNESSES AND SERVANTS

Let me now move towards the conclusion by stressing what I have said so far. Ecumenism directs us, christians and churches, to the centre of the church and the world, to the Triune God; from there we are built up and strengthened in grace.

We are now enabled to worship God and to know Him as He has revealed Himself in the whole Bible to all members of the church in the course of its total tradition. Ecumenism directs us, christians and churches, to go beyond the inner life of our church and its ecclesiastical structures and activities to the ends of the OIKOUMENE and the ends of time. Ecumenism draws us out of self-complacent church work to frontier work where we are called to be spent in witness and service. Ecumenism commits us to the struggle for manifesting unity among christians and in the whole of humanity. Ecumenism aims not so much at conservative reunion or static uniformity, but the growth into the wholeness of God's rich economy of grace.

In attempting to understand the relationship between ecumenism and christianity the outreach of the church in evangelism is shown by a picture — two concentric circles, the larger circle of the OIKOUMENE, and the smaller circle of the church, and both having their centre in the Triune God. Ecumenism means that christians and churches set out from the suburbs of

their particular confession, country, and culture, leave the fleshpots of Egypt behind, but take the treasures of God's grace given to them and come as the different troops from their different camps to the centre. From there, they are sent out as witnesses and servants beyond the ecclesiastical suburbs into the whole inhabited world and its tragic and glorious history. From the centre to the outward circle spins a spiral to show that the Pilgrim Church finds and manifests that rich unity which God gives to His church and the Cosmos. The above description shows the church on the march — the Pilgrim people of God — the church setting out on a pilgrimage — on a way of repentance, dying and rising, of expectant self-sacrifice, christians and churches finding one another as they move out, towards the ends of the world and the ends of time and space. In evangelism, making disciples of all nations, and in this great task and commission — in this great pilgrimage, christians and churches realise how they need each other, how they travel together towards the same goal — the goal "that the earth may be filled with the glory of God as the waters cover the sea."

The centre of church and world and the ends of time and space belong together. And here the above mentioned picture breaks down. The Triune God who is the centre of all, precedes us to the frontiers. He who is the centre of world history is also its beginning and end — the Alpha and Omega. While we confess with the Reformers that wherever the word of God is taught, the Holy Communion celebrated, and wherever christians gather together under the discipline of God's will there is the church in the presence

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GOD, KERK EN SENDING

(Vervolg van bladsy 1)

kerk nie kan byhou by die groei van die wêreldbevolking nie. Terwyl die Christendom nog tot in die helfte van hierdie eeu een-derde van die wêreldbevolking uitgemaak het, sal dit teen 1970 maar sowat een-kwart wees en teen 1980 een-vyfde, teen die einde van die eeu maar een-sesde.

Terwyl die Mohammedanisme en Kommunisme met asemrowende tempo groei, is die Christelike volke besig om te ontkersten. Onverskilligheid, kerkloosheid en self vyandigheid teenoor die kerk neem toe, eers by die hooggeleerdes, toe by die arbeiders en nou dring dit deur na die gewone middelgroep.

Dit is tyd om halt te roep, dit is tyd om na die oorsake hiervan te vra.

DRIE BASIESE FOUTE

'n Bekende teoloog in Holland, dr. J. C. Hoekendijk, sê die fout moet nie maar by die Sendingaksie gesoek word nie, die fout lê dieper, dit lê by ons Godsbegrip, by ons kerkbegrip en dan by die Sending.

Ons Godsbegrip

Ons Godsbegrip — dit is die basis van alle godsdiens. Hoekendijk sê ons het God geïdialiseer — van God Baäl gemaak — God van die Groep. Ons God is die God van die Christene en ons is dankbaar en tevrede as ons Hom kan toëien en die groep by Hom hou. Hy sê ons Sendingwerk is meer gegrond op 'n bietjie filantropiese neigings by God, eerder as uit die bewussyn dat God die God van die wêreld, die hele wêreld en die ganse mensdom is — die God van Ps. 24. Die aarde behoort aan die Here en sy volheid, die wêreld en die wat daarin woon . . . die God van Joh. 3: 16. So lief het God die wêreld gehad . . .

Ons Kerkbegrip

Ons kerkbegrip. Het dit ook hier fout gegaan? Die kerk van Christus is die lig van die wêreld, die sout van die aarde, d.w.s. hy bestaan terwille van,

terwille van die verbeerliking van God en terwille van die verlossing van die wêreld — aan die kerk en aan niemand anders is die heilboodschap van die kruis toevertrou. Hoekendijk noem dit die pro-eksistensie van die kerk — die bestaan vir.

Solank ons kerk net oor sy eie bestaan besorg is vereng by sy roeping en verloor hy die belangstelling van baie van sy lidmate, die kerk sonder 'n visie, sonder 'n uitdaging, sonder 'n beriep op die idealisme en gehoorsaamheid van sy lidmate sal steeds swakker word. Ondervinding het geleer dat waar 'n gemeente homself uitdaag met die gehoorsaamheid aan Gods Woord, word baie wat nie meer entoesiasme vir die kerk gehad het nie, weer opgewek.

Ons Sendingbegrip.

Ons Sendingbegrip. Solank Gods-begrip en kerkbegrip nie een-honderd persent volgens die Bybel is nie kan die Sendingbegrip nie in orde wees nie, dan is dit die onderneming van 'n klein groepie sendingbelangstellendes, wat dit nooit mag wees nie. Die kerk moet jaloers wees oor haar sending omdat dit die sekerste bewys is dat sy nog voort gaan met die werk van Christus en die Sending van God.

Alleen so kan dit die taak van elke gelowige word en as dit die taak van elke gelowige is sal dit binne die vermoë van elke gemeente wees om sy eie Sending te onderhou en sy eie veld te bearbei.

Alleen dan sal die dalende tendens van die kerk in die wêreld gekeer word — vanaf 'n kerk wat sy eie lidmate verloor, 'n kerk wat steeds kleiner word teenoor antichristelike magte wat groter word, sal die kerk weer oorwinnings behaal en groei, bo die getalle van bevolkingsaanwas en kommunistiese verowering.

Bestaande is 'n rede wat dr. Boshoff gehou het tydens 'n sendingsweek in die Ned. Gevel-gemeente Johannesburg en is uitgelees uit die maandblad „Die Gids“ van September 1964.

PRO. VERITATE

Editorial:

THEOLOGY AND POLITICS

The Prime Minister has often told South African theologians that their "interference" in matters of Government and politics is not welcome. According to a report in "Die Transvaler", (27th August, 1964), he has, however, reserved for himself the right to make pronouncements on questions of theology and church-life. Addressing the Cape Nationalist Party Congress in Port Elizabeth he is reported to have said the following:-

"People must not think the Government is being petty when it refuses to yield to the demand for integration within the sphere . . . of the church in South Africa . . . Attempts are being made to create the impression that we are wrong if we do not allow multi-racial churches . . . We do not wish to change our church from the way in which we have inherited it and experienced it for centuries."

The Prime Minister may have very shrewd (party) political reasons for these statements, but his views lack **Biblical** and **theological** justification. Firstly, he suggests that both the Government and 'we' have the right to decide what the character and membership of the church or churches should be. This suggests that the Government and 'we', instead of our Lord Christ, is the head of the church and may oppose His purpose "to create out of the two a single new humanity in himself, thereby making peace." (Eph. 1: 22-23; 2: 15). Secondly, he suggests that the changes taking place in the life of the churches in South Africa is something which 'we' may judge as 'right' or 'wrong'. It is not altogether clear who he means when he speaks of 'we', but if he means that **Christians** have the right to decide whether or not our church change "from the way in which we have inherited it and experienced it for centuries", then he is not merely being petty (kleinsielig), he is without any Biblical justification for his opinion. Christ is the Lord of the Church and He is also the One who is "making all things new!" (Rev. 21: 5). Thirdly, he suggests that the Church's life and character must be evaluated in terms of political concepts such as 'integration' and 'multi-racialism'. But, although the Church sometimes uses these terms, the Church's concern to remain loyal to the commandment and prayer of her Lord — "Love one another as I have loved you" (Jn. 13: 34-35; 17: 20-23) — is not a matter of politics but of theology (theos logos, Word of God). Thus it is necessary to point out to the Prime Minister that neither the church as a whole nor individual Christians can agree with his statements as reported without being guilty of flaunting the commandments of God. The Church has always prayed for the government under which it has lived and it will continue to do so. Part of its prayer has always been that governments will not create a situation in which Christians have either to disobey the government or deny their Lord. Any attempt by a government to force apart those whom Christ has brought together will be such a situation.

"O Father of justice, of thine infinite goodness direct the hearts of all who bear authority. Help them with the power of the Holy Spirit, protect them from the snares of the enemy and the pride of power, and grant that rulers and people may with one mind serve thee our God and King, through Jesus Christ. Amen."

J.E.M.

Inleidingsartikel

KERK EN WÊRELD

Drie artikels in hierdie uitgawe gaan oor die verhouding tussen kerk en wêreld. Die werk van die akademies vir leke-opleiding, die evangelisasiewerk in die nywerheid en die vraagstuk van 'sekularisasie' is verskillende uitdrukkinge van die nuwe besef onder Christene dat die kerk nie 'n weelde-artikel in Gods plan is nie maar 'n middel wat Hy daargestel het vir Sy werk in die wêreld.

Al hierdie bewegings is uitinge van die kerk se nuwe besef van die alles-omvattende Heerskappy van onse Here Jesus Christus en van die omvang van Sy reddende werk. Lank reeds is Christene bewus van die betekenis van Christus se kruisdood en opstanding in hulle persoonlike tragedies en probleme. Sy barmhartigheid is deur die eeue heen verkondig aan bedroefdes, verwardes, eensames en skuldiges. Sy kerk het vertroosting gebring aan die met sonde belaaide en treurende kinders van God, maar daar het geweldige veranderinge gekom in ons wêreld — in nywerheid, massakommunikasies, die politiek, daar waar die moderne mens feitlik sy hele bestaan voer, moes hy Homself as't ware indring omdat Sy kerk te besig was met sy eie programme en aktiwiteite om werklik betrek te raak in die wêreld soos dit is.

Die genoemde bewegings is in hoofsaak 'n antwoord, hoe onvolmaak ookal, op die uitnodiging van die Christus van die hele skepping aan die mens om saam met Hom Sy reddende werk te verrig, ook op daardie terreine waar Hy die meeste verontagsaam en misken word.

Hierdie bewegings dui ook daarop dat die kerk sy begrip van die mens moet hersien. Die onpersoonlike aard van ons tegnologiese tydvak het 'n nuwe soort mens voortgebring — die massamens.

Daar is die wesenlike gevaar dat die mens sy persoonlikheid sal verloor, dat hy 'n blote rat sal word in die groot nywerheids-masjien. Elke mens in hierdie nuwe struktuur is weliswaar onmisbaar maar terselfdertyd is niemand regtig nodig nie. Die mees fundamentele gemeenskaps-eenheid, die gesin, word in toenemende

Gebed vir Eenheid

Here Jesus, op die vooraand van U dood het U gebid dat al U dissipels een mag wees soos U in die Vader en die Vader in U een is. Laat ons met bedroefde harte ons skuld aan die verdeeldheid besef. Skenk aan ons die opregtheid om te erken en die moed om te verwerp wat in ons nog aan onverskilligheid, wantroue en vyandskap skuilgaan. Verleen aan ons dat ons almal mekaar in U ontmoet, sodat uit ons harte en van ons lippe onophoudelik U gebed vir die eenheid van alle Christene mag opstyg, soos U wil en met die middels soos U dit wil.

Laat ons in U, wat die volmaakte liefde is, die weg vind wat na eenheid lei, in gehoorsaamheid aan U liefde en U waarheid, sodat die wêreld kan glo dat dit U is wat deur die Vader gestuur is.

Amen.

„Die Brug”, Januarie 1964.

SAMARITANS ANONYMOUS A Joint Project in Cape Town

The amalgamation of Suicides Anonymous and the Guidance Bureau is now complete. Samaritans Anonymous is a reality. Its aim is:

To aid people distressed through personal and social problems and particularly problems concerned with alcoholism, drug addiction, suicide, marriage and youth, by the practical application of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Rev. T. Kotze of Sea Point Methodist Church is Chairman of the Management Committee, and the Rev. D. L. Crawford is Vice-Chairman. Miss Ada MacFarlane has resigned her job in a building society to come into full-time service for Christ as Organising Secretary.

A distressed person phoning 2-2212 for help, will hear her "smiling voice" or that of one of the trained telephone counsellors. Such a person is immediately put in touch with trained "field" counsellors or an approved organization able to cope with the particular problem.

The office is in the city. This service operates daily from 9 a.m. to 12 midnight. It is available at all times to all people in every area of human need.

„The Presbyterian Leader”, — May, 1964.

mate bedreig deur die ingrypende invloed van 'n tegnologies-georganiseerde gemeenskap. Minder en minder persoonlike inisiatief en verantwoordelikheid word van ons verwag, maar dis ook vir die "nuwe" mens vir wie Christus gesterf het en ook hy het die bediening van die kerk nodig. Dis presies hierin dat die uitdaging vir die kerk geleë is, want die mens het in groot en onrusbarende mate voeling verloor met die taal en die lewe van die kerk. Hy is meer besorgd oor die aantal skofte wat hy moet werk as oor sy sondes. Hy het geen skuldbesef nie, maar ken allerlei "frustrasies". Heiligmaking en heiligheid is vir hom onverstaanbare terme hoewel hy nogtans probeer om „ordentlik" te wees. Aanbidding is vir hom vreemd en van die numeuse weet hy hoegenaamd niks. As hy ooit aan die hiernamaals dink, dan is dit net op die allervaagste wyse. Hy stel eenvoudig niks belang in daardie vraagstukke waaraan die kerk in ons tyd soveel aandag wy nie: liturgiese hervorming, die verantwoordelikheid van die kerk in die gemeenskap, ens.

Bogenoemde bewegings is pogings om hierdie mens te ontmoet, om hom te verstaan in

plaas van hom te ignoreer of met minagting te bejeën. Maar die bewegings stel in baie meer ingrypende vraag — die vraag oor die aard en die taak van die kerk. In hoeverre beantwoord die tradisionele instellings van die kerk aan die roeping en taak van die kerk in ons tyd? Is ons kerkgeboue, ons eredienste en kerkvergaderings, die aanwending van ons fondse, die opleiding van ons leraars werklik toereikend? Die nuwe bewegings is pogings om die antwoorde op hierdie vrae te vind, om te ontdek hoe die kerk ook in ons tyd die evangelie, en die redding van wat Christus onder alle omstandighede kan bied, kan bring, ook aan die „nuwe" mens.

Die genoemde vraagstukke het geen maklike oplossings nie. Dat hulle wesenlik is, staan vas en die kerk kan hulle slegs teen baie groot gevaar verontagsaam. Dat hulle al die skeppende aandag verdien wat kan kom as ons in gehoorsaamheid wag op die leiding van die Heilige Gees is duidelik, want slegs op die wyse sal die soute, wat Christus sê ons is, waarlik soute kan wees in die tyd waarin ons leef.

J.E.M.

The Role of a Centre in Lay Training

ENOS Z. SIKAKANE

The gospel in Africa was introduced by missionaries belonging to different denominations. We were then children but now we are becoming men. The fact that we are meeting here in Bloemfontein as members from different churches is a sign of growth. I say again, and only a sign, because Africa is only beginning to wake up to express its Christian convictions. We are beginning to put away childish approaches to the gospel and are seeking unity as members of the body of Christ who is the Head.

Christ prayed that we may be one that the world may believe. We have brothers and sisters of the Christian Community all over the world. A Lay Centre would provide a chance for introduction and fellowship. It was during my visits to many homes, churches and institutions overseas that I realised more clearly what Christ had done for us at Calvary in His Ministry of reconciliation. One of the great prophecies of Isaiah is that -

"THE MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD'S HOUSE SHALL BE ESTABLISHED IN THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAINS AND THAT ALL THE NATIONS SHALL FLOW TO IT. . . . AND LEARN WAR NO MORE." WAS THIS MOUNTAIN NOT CALVARY?

For some years the Church has been confronted with a problem of finding a modern presentation of the gospel in the thought forms of this generation. Something must be done by the Church to attract young men and women to enable them to make their full contribution to effective evangelism in the cultural and spiritual development of Africa. Some kind of approach is necessary that would appeal to people in every walk of life.

After completing the 1961/2 semester at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey I had the privilege of visiting some Lay Centres in Holland and Germany. When I visited the KERK EN WERELD INSTITUTE IN HOLLAND, I was told by the Director that it was established with the aim of making the church aware of her apostolic character, a church for the world, to help the world to find a way of real human living.

In Germany I attended a ten day course at the Evangelische Akademie Loccum Wunstorf near the city of Hanover. The Director informed me that the LOCCUM ACADEMY was a centre where men and women, young and old, met for the purpose of devising ways and means by which to revive the spirit of Christ in the Community. I was convinced that this was the kind of a centre we needed immediately for the revival of our own sense of Community in the Republic of South Africa.

The Mindola Ecumenical Centre consultation on Lay Training defined in broad terms the function of a LAY CENTRE as follows:-

- Lay training would develop leaders in the Church.
- It would make a contribution to research into areas of life of the Church and society.
- It supplies the common ground on which the Church enters into a dialogue with the world.
- It gives an opportunity for the Church to carry out its task of reconciliation.

(1) The need for a Lay Centre

A Lay Centre is one of our most immediate and greatest needs for helping the churches to become the Church. It was unfortunate that Christianity in Africa was introduced by different denominations emphasising differences rather than what was common among them. The propagation of different denominations has accelerated the growth of more than 2,000 sects in the Republic of South Africa alone. We have the problem of a growing number of elite who have become alienated from the church because it does not meet their need. It is regarded as an institution of the clergy which

exists to be maintained rather than to serve the requirements of the community. Ministers and evangelists appear to be commercial travellers who sell spiritual goods which nobody wants to buy. Any layman who takes an active part in the church is regarded as helping the minister rather than offering his service to God as his contribution to the Kingdom. The layman in the majority of cases does not claim the church as his spiritual and cultural home. He regards the church as an institution for times of crisis connected with sickness and death.

We need a centre where we shall be constantly reminded of the role the laity has played in the church since Jesus chose the first twelve disciples from fishermen, tax collectors and ordinary folk. We need to be reminded that the word "layman" according to the New Testament means the "chosen people of God". Therefore all the members of the church are laymen, the chosen people of God.

We live in an age dominated by industry. Homes are used as parking places for the night. Families grow in and around town. Many people spend much of their time by day where they are employed and they develop some kind of fellowship and community life among fellow workers. Employers and managers enjoy the company of their clerks more than that of their own wives.

The German Evangelical Academy Report on "Ten Years of Teamwork" published in September, 1955, asks an important question:

"Is it possible to maintain or resurrect a living congregation in that area of life where its members only sleep? The messengers of God," proceeds the report, "the educators of youth, the prophets of the spirits, no longer see what goes on in the specialised areas of the modern industrial world, in the large city, behind the gates of the factory."

The Lay Academy, by providing a place of deeper fellowship, would create living spirits from which new forces would proceed into the area of everyday life. The messenger of God should have an ear and a voice in those places where the battles of everyday life is fought.

(2) What should be the role of a centre in Lay Training?

The question may be asked: what is it that should be done by the Lay Centre which cannot be done by the churches? It must be understood that the lay centre although it has a different approach is an integral part of the church. There is no competition between the two; neither imposes its authority on the other nor claims to be doing better. Each one must allow the other to do its work.

The role of a centre in lay training is to awaken the layman to put Christianity into practice in his daily life. The role of the layman in the mission of the church is to interpret the gospel in terms of the moral and spiritual issues of his time.

The lay centre would provide a chance for a layman to think, speak and be stimulated to experiment. Jesus went about with His followers teaching and doing things. He demonstrated His teaching by practising. The Master said "go and do thou likewise." There would certainly be an opportunity at the lay centre for conferences with various professional groups for consultation, confrontation, frustration and

commitment. The ideal place for a dialogue is the training centre where all types of people could be free to express their independent opinions.

From my experience at the Ecumenical Institute (Bossey) I have found that frustration may be useful in furthering the cause of Christianity. We have to be broken if we are to be useful in our Master's service even as His own body was broken for us. Our group at Bossey was one of the most troublesome ones - there were different views from differing emphases in dogmatics. The Directors had some difficult times in their attempt to reconcile different church traditions as they declared that "unity does not mean conformity" - "There are various gifts but the same spirit. There are differences of administration but the same Lord."

There is a deeper friendship that develops in a group which meets and stays together for ten days than there is in the same group of people who stay for fifty years separately in the same community. The climax of my experience at Bossey was the last Lord's Supper when all the students with the exception of those belonging to the Orthodox Church came forward to receive the sacrament. At the end of the semester we were reluctant to leave Bossey, being worried by the fact that we were to part. We were all conscious, however, of the fact that our unity in Christ would maintain the family spirit, until the day when we shall meet at His table and never part again.

(3) The Lay Training Centre would be the heaven

On the South Coast of Natal there is an African Camp used for retreats, picnics, recreation and studying. I have used this camp annually for planning the work of the Methodist African Circuit with my leaders and preachers. The three days spent in this rough camp every year have been more effective in cementing relations between our members than the fifty-two Sunday services and fifty-two fellowship meetings held in our churches. Here they live, eat and sleep together. The groups of young and old people at the end of three days at this camp have always said: "It was good for us to be here."

The role of a training centre would be the heaven developing a Christian community and producing laymen who would witness in the market places, in public affairs and educational institutions and factories. Moreover, it would produce laymen who are not afraid to meet their brothers and sisters of another colour or race.

One of our white Methodist ministers made a statement in a press interview to the effect that: "All men are brothers, for Christ clearly speaks of God as being the Father of all men. There is a special and deeper sense in which those who have entered into the Christian family by an acceptance of Jesus as Lord and Saviour are brothers." This statement no doubt would not be accepted by all Christians, especially some conservative white Christians, as being relevant for South Africa. Before any agreement can be reached there would have to be group discussion by black and white Christians at a centre where there would be consultation, confrontation and a commitment to Christ. The lay training centre would be the heaven. The harvest truly is great but the labourers are few. The Lord of the harvest would send forth more labourers if provision were made for lay training along ecumenical lines.

(4) The Lay Training Centre as a Fellowship Centre.

Fellowship is part of the human life as a whole. Where two or more people come together there is fellowship. Those who share it must have something in common. It has been said that the purpose of all fellowship is both

to enjoy and to feed that which is common to those who share it. I regard fellowship as one of the most important roles of a lay centre. It would be the role of a lay centre to develop the fellowship of different professional groups and workers in various fields. The practical problems of the people would create more fellowship. They would be sharing something in common and this would be the kind of fellowship which would gradually develop into Christian ethics.

Quite a number of business men have been heard making statements to the effect that they do not mix religion with business as though business is alien to religion. He is the Son of Man and is interested in full communion with all men in all their occupations.

Christ represents the higher life and we as human beings represent the lower. The lower life grows by sharing with the higher. The higher life descended in Jesus Christ to have fellowship with the lower. He became what we are in order that He might make us what He Himself is. The important role of the fellowship centre would be to abolish fear and hostility and to create harmony.

One of the Directors at Bossey after a very controversial Bible discussion said to me: "There is always good progress when discussions are controversial because they arouse the interest and the initiative of even the most passive participants."

(5) A Lay Training Centre would be a Centre of Reconciliation.

There should be prayer for reconciliation among denominations and the best place is a lay training centre. Some churches teach that the church should be one and undivided and that racialists are out of tune with God.

Such doctrines require reconciliation. These men of God must meet and tell us what they mean and how these doctrines can be put into practice. A lay centre would break the wall of participation and make the two one. Those who are in agreement would be brought near and be reconciled. The centre would continue the work of the cross of Christ.

I am one of those who are convinced that Africa has a distinctive contribution to make to the world. If Africans had wings they would fly, if there were sufficient opportunities for exploration of fellowship, both in extent and depth, there would be good relations with both black and white.

A lay training centre would open more gates for fellowship within South Africa and with the world. The Way will come as we practice. It will never come merely by waiting and doing nothing.

Laymen do not desire to be dictated to by ministerial "experts" what God's will is for them, rather they prefer to be given an opportunity to discover and determine the road to unity.

In conclusion, I would like to quote Oscar Lee in the ecumenical weekly of the 17th July, 1963. He said that:

"People must discover that even though they may differ, they are drawn together by common aspirations, hopes, ideals, goals and interests. Thus fellowship can be the means of establishing human relationships of such quality that each person is able to realise the spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical potential with which God has endowed him."

Such would be the nature of a true community, and such would be the role of a centre in lay training.

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CHRISTUS en die Wêreld van Môre

KOBUS
OOSTHUIZEN

"We will not be able really to get alongside man in our modern world unless we begin to 'de-religionise Christianity'. Christianity is a secular movement..."

(J. C. Hoekendijk—Strassbourg 1960)

Die groot woord **sekularisasie** het geval. Reeds op die Internasionale Sendingkonferensie in Jerusalem (1928) is dit druk bespreek. Toe was daar reeds sprake van „'n bedreiging vir die kerk."

Die kerk in 'n nuwe wêreld

Destyds in Jerusalem het mense al besef dat die Christelike kerk wesenlik in 'n nuwe wêreld te staan gekom het. Erger nog: dat die gevestigde kerklike taal in hierdie nuwe wêreld elke dag *overstaambaarder* begin word het. Sedert 1928 het die Christelike kerk besef dat die kerklike taal nie meer deurdring nie. Hoe ernstiger hy homself verstaanbaar maak, hoe meer kom hy in die wêreld te staan voor die feit dat baie die taal nie verstaan nie en dus die boodskap ook nie. Kommunikasie tussen die kerk en wêreld het veelal opgehou om te bestaan (Kraemer).

Jerusalem lê nou reeds baie jare agter die rug en daar is ongelukkig nog mense wat nie hierdie feit aanvaar nie. Hulle praat nog steeds van „die gevaar van sekularisasie", gaan nog steeds van die standpunt uit dat die wêreld die taal van die kerk wel verstaan. En intussen word die misverstand tussen kerk en wêreld ongelukkig groter en ernstiger . . .

Ontnugteringe

Na die Tweede Wêreldoorlog beleef die Christelike kerk verskeie ontnugteringe. Groot dele van die sogenaamde Christelike weste word weer 'n **heidenveld**. Die stroom van die kerk na die wêreld word 'n toenemende vloedgolf. Groot dele van Frankryk by. word opnuut 'n sendingveld. Skaars 3% van die bevolking leef nog aktief met die kerk mee. Wat vroeër alleen maar 'n aaklige vermoede was, word nou deur navorsers bevestig, naamlik dat groot groepe mense reeds vir drie tot vier geslagte los van die kerk lewe; sonder doop, belydenis of enige besef van die Christelike evangelie. 'n Teken aan die muur . . . veral as ons in gedagte hou dat Frankryk gewoonlik maar net 50 jaar voor die res van Europa loop!

Elke dag word die beeld somberder. Dwarsdeur die wêreld skyn die Christelike kerk sy invloed in twee uiters belangrike sektors van die samelewing te verloor: onder die intelligentsia en die (industriële) arbeiders. Dit is 'n **pyntlike gedagte**, veral as ons daaraan dink dat tegniek en industrialisasie oral voorop in die ontwikkelingsprogram van die wêreld van vandag staan.

In die jongste tyd begin die kerklike statistieke (selfs dié van die jongere kerke) ons ook daarop attent maak, dat die verskillende kerke oral besig is om te **verouder** omdat die persentasie jeugdige kerklidmate daal en dié van die ouer lidmate styg. Dit kan dus gebeur dat die kerk voortaan net uit ouer persone bestaan en die jeug daar nie meer tuis voel nie.

'n Mens sou op hierdie wyse kon voortgaan. Alles dui daarop dat die groep mense tot wie die kerk spreek, vinnig krimp. Dit geld vir alle Christelike kerke — Protestante, Ortodokse en Katolieke.

Die feite waarmee Christene hulle vandag sal moet versoen

Dit pas elke Christen om onder hierdie omstandighede die feite nutter in die oë te sien en alle moontlike illusies te verban.

Ten eerste moet ons aanvaar dat ons midde in 'n veranderde wêreld staan. In ons poging om in gesprek met die wêreld te tree, moet ons bereid wees om die taal van die „mondige wêreld" (Bonhoeffer) te spreek. Met aandag moet ons die sogenaamde tweede industriële revolusie (gekenmerk deur

automatisering, kernenergie, ruimtevaart, ens.) volg en aanvaar dat mense wat in so 'n wêreld leef, noodwendig anders moet dink en reageer as die landelike mens aan die begin van ons jaartelling (ook anders as die middeleeuse of 19de eeuse mens). Ons moet ook aanvaar dat waar ou gevestigde sosiale strukture onder invloed van die moderne industriële kultuur kom, die tradisionele vorme van „kerklikheid" spoedig begin kwyn — selfs verdwyn!

Ten tweede: Die kerk van môre kan so maklik 'n kerk in verstrooiing word, sodat die „groei" van die Christelike kerke in feite beteken 'n groei na 'n minderheid. Dit is vandag ongelukkig 'n bekende feit dat bevolkingsaanwas die aantal bekeerlinge tot die Christelike geloof ver oortref. Jaarliks kom daar 25-maal soveel nie-Christene by die wêreldbevolking by. In 1900 was die Christene 34% van die wêreldbevolking, in 1955 31%, in 2000, (?) . . . Onwillekeurig kom die vrae: Wat sal die optrede van die Christene wees in die wêreld van môre? Sal hulle nog vergun word om in gemeentes georganiseerd te wees en ook geboue vir aanbidding op te rig? Sal daar nog gepraat kan word van „Christelike" volke? Erg onwaarskynlik. Is die toekomstbeeld en die kerk nie dié van verstrooiing nie? Sal Christene hulle nie moet oëfen in die kuns om as minderheidsgroepies die sout van die aarde te vorm nie? (H. R. Weber). In toenemende mate dui baie dinge tot 'n terugkeer tot die N. T. huisgemeente. Ons sien dit reeds gebeur: dramaties in Oos-Europa, waar die kerk reeds moes leer om soos die koringkorrel te sterf om werklik te kan lewe; minder dramaties in Wes-Europa deur die toenemende verbodskeling van die georganiseerde kerklike lewe. Ons kan nie help om aan die volgende te dink vir die kerk van môre nie. Hier . . . daar . . . oral klein groepies gelowiges besig om sjalom (vrede) te bring in 'n wêreld waar onvrede heers.

Ten derde: Die proses van sekularisasie kan nie meer gestuit word nie. Sommige mense se poging om vir laas nog 'n 25ste uur in die wêreld van gister te lewe voordat die nuwe dag aanbreek, is 'n onmoontlike saak. Hoe spoediger ons ons drumpelvrees oorwin en die nuwe sekulêre wêreld binnetree, hoe beter.

Dit bring ons by die kernvraag van

Wat is sekularisasie?

Die woord sekularisasie (ook: ver-wêreldliking) is afgelei van „saeculum". Gedurende die Middeleeue het die mense onderskei tussen die religieuse (of sakrale) en die tydelike (of sekulêre) orde. Tot eersgenoemde is gereken die kerk en die klerus, tot laasgenoemde die staat en die gewone volk. Oortuig van sy roeping tot heerskappy, het die Middeleeuse kerk egter as heer en meester alle terreine van die lewe beheers, wat gelei het tot 'n bittere magstryd tussen kerk en staat. In die laat-Middeleeue, en veral gedurende die Renaissance, begin die staat (en die burgerlike maatskappy) daarin slaag om hom van die kerklike heerskappy los te maak. Dit was die begin van die sekularisasieproses. In die daaropvolgende eeue neem hierdie proses van verwereldliking in momentum toe en dring dit deur tot alle lewensterreine. 'n Nuwe figuur verskyn op die horison: die **sekulêre staat**. En nog steeds gaan die proses voort . . . Die Christelike kerk van vandag is in so 'n posisie dat alle wêreldlike **heerskappy** van hom ontnem is.

Dit was die staatkundige kant van hierdie proses. Belangriker vir ons doel is die godsdienstige sy. Ten gevolge van die sekularisasieproses kry ons in ons tyd ook te doen met 'n nuwe mensetipe, die sogenaamde sekulêre mens. Mag ek

hom kortliks vir u beskrywe. Eers negatief, dan positief.

Negatief onderskei die sekulêre mens hom van die religieuse mens soos volg: **Psigologies** staan hy afwysend teenoor alles wat maar enigszins aan kerk of religie herinner; religieuse gevoelens (bv. eerbied vir die huidige of die bonatuurlike en sondebeseft) is by hom prakties afwesig (as dit soms nog in krisistye by hom opkom, bejeën hy dit met diepe wantroue); in sy **denkwêreld** het die begrip „Almagtige God" in onbruik geraak; sy **praktiese lewenshouding** word beheers deur suiwer humanistiese motiewe; **sosiaal** distansieer hy hom van alle kerklike of religieuse groepe.

Positief tree die sekulêre mens na vore as iemand met 'n besondere hoë waardering vir die mens se intellektuele en tegniese prestasies, gedrewe deur 'n diepe verlange om van hierdie wêreld 'n beter wêreld te maak, vereenselwig hy hom volledig met die veranderde lewenskode van die nuwe tegnies-industriële maatskappy waarin hy hom bevind.

Om van die bestaan van hierdie sekulêre mens te ontken, is **onrealisties**. Hy het ons tydgenoot geword. Oral kom ons hom tee: op straat, in ons letterkunde, voorlopig selfs ook nog in die kerk. Hy is ons tydgenoot maar helaas nie ons gespreksgenoot nie. Voordat ons weer met hom in gesprek kan tree, sal ons eers ook die kerk moet **sekulariseer!**

'n Sekulêre kern in 'n sekulêre wêreld

Binne die raamwerk van ons omskrywing van die sekulêre mens beteken „sekulêre kerk", 'n kerk ontdaan van alle vorme van **religiositeit** of **sakraliteit**.

In ons beoordeling van die twintigste eeu van kerkgeskiedenis wat agter ons lê, moet ons onderskei tussen **Christendom** (religie) en **Christelike evangelie** (blye tyding). Die inhoud van die blye tyding waarmee Christus (en die Christen) deur die wêreld gaan, is wesenlik, **verlossing, vryheid en vrede** (Luk. 2: 14, Joh. 20: 26). Dit is voor die hand liggend dat dit met religie of sakraliteit niks te doen het nie. Na Gólgota het religie geen betekenis meer nie. Christus het ons daarvan bevry/verlos. Om dit weer uit te haal en te probeer restoreer, is sinneloos. Met sakraliteit het die evangelie ook niks te doen nie. Dit beteken dus dat ons ook moet **ontsakraliseer**. Ons is geroepe om gewoon in die wêreld te lewe as vrye verlore mense — Christene. **Religieuse wette en sakrale huisies hoort by onvrye bygelowige mense — heidene.**

Watter konsekwensies het dit nou vir ons praktiese lewe as Christene? Hier open die voorbeeld van Jesus Christus self vir ons nuwe perspektiewe. Hy het homself ontleed, die gestalte van 'n dienskneg aangeneem en aan mense gelyk geword (Fil. 2: 7). Hy het nie gekom om gedien te word nie, maar om te dien (Mark. 10: 45). Die Woord het vlees geword en onder ons kom woon (Joh. 1: 14).

Terme soos solidariteit, identifikasie, kommunikasie, selfverloëning, offer en diensbetoon kry in die lig van bogenoemde, veral die feit van die inkarnasie, nuwe betekenis. Ook in die Christen wil die woord vlees word en onder die mense gaan woon. Die „Christelike" van die kerk sal tot onherkenbaarwordens toe in die „menslike" moet ingaan . . . Die heil moet in die taal van die hande vertolk word (Hoekendijk). Wil die evangelie in ons moderne wêreld verkondig word, dan sal dit **gedemonstreer** moet word. Woord moet daad word (M. Warren). Evangeliseer is nie 'n gebod waaraan die kerk moet gehoorsaam nie, maar haar wyse van lewe op aarde (Pop).

Dus: **die kerk moet oral te vinde wees waar menslike lewens in stukke lê, siek is, in die mag van die sonde verkeer, bedreig word met ondergang deur honger of rampe. Daar moet ons die kerk aantref: besig om te herstel, te**

heel, te beskerm, te versadig en te ondersteun. Die kerk is in, met en vir die wêreld, „daar vir andere" (Bonhoeffer) **Solidariteit met die wêreld beteken voorlopig niks anders as solidariteit met die armes en ellendiges nie** (Matt. 25: 31-46).

Die sekularisasie van die kerk beteken dus dat die kerk hom moet oefen in die kuns om in die wêreld onder die mense te lewe — nie as heerser nie maar as dienskneg!

Ons weg na vore

Wil ons die evangelie weer effektief in hierdie wêreld verkondig, sal ons verplig wees om die eis om die **vernuwing van die kerk** met groot beslistheid te stel. Op die vraag na die presiese aard van hierdie vernuwing kan ons voorlopig nog geen finale antwoord gee nie. Ons gaan voorlopig 'n tyd van fundamentele onsekerheid binne. Belangrik is dat ons hierdie onsekerheid sonder paniek of vrees verdra, die risiko aanvaar om improviserendewys te gaan lewe. Met toewyding moet ons in die kerklike laboratorium eksperimenteer! Op ons weg na vore sal ons bereid moet wees om veel van ons ou vertroude reisbagasie agter te laat; ou metodes en tegnieke, oorgelewerde vorme en handelwyses. Ons moet veral nie huiwer om ons vroeë heel skerp te stel nie! Dus vra nie: hoe moet ons preek? nie, maar: moet ons nog preek? (Of is dit onmoontlik dat die evangelie ook in 'n ander gestalte as dié van die gesproke woord tot die sondaar kom?)

Ek sluit af met 'n slenteloppermerking: **werklik „wêreld" kan alleen die „leke" wees. Hulle is die evangeliste van môre. Hulle kan in die alledaagse lewe iets demonstreer van Christus se solidariteit met die wêreld.**

Kobus Oosthuizen is as jong teoloog besig met navraanse studie in Nederland. Bostaande is oorgeneem van „Ichthus", Augustus 1964.

The Influence of Ecumenism on Christianity

(Continued from page 2)

of its Lord, we may not forget that God is not imprisoned in the church and church history. The nearer the church draws to its Lord, the nearer it draws to the world.

In his book "Ecumenism and Catholicity", William Nicholls says: "The recovery of the church is necessarily a recovery of the church's mission in history. The ecumenical movement arose out of the missionary movement, and its fruit must be a truer commitment of the uniting churches to that mission. The distinction between church and mission is being more and more clearly seen to be a false one. The church as we see it in the Bible through ecumenical eyes is a missionary church, and its theology will be a missionary theology. It is not that we should have one department of our theological thinking which will have to do with missions, but that all our theology will be missionary."

And this is the goal of ecumenism — the journeying together, the talking together of the churches in fellowship, the crusading together into the unknown as Abraham did in faith and hope — into that unity which is of God, that in the end the Kingdoms of this world may be transformed into the Kingdom of God and of His Christ.

The Revd. Samuel S. Seane is Co-Secretary of the Christian Citizenship Department of the Methodist Church and Superintendent of the Thaba'Nchu African Circuit. This article is the substance of a paper presented to the I.D.A.M.A.S.A. Conference at Bloemfontein, 5th — 7th August, 1964.

Kerk en Wêreld Church and World

Die Werk van 'n Industriepredikant

„Daar werk in Nederland deesdae op enkele strategiese plekke predikante met die opdrag om hul pastorale arbeid veral op die mens in die industrie te rig”, skryf dr. C. P. Andel in „Woord en Diens” van 18 Januarie 1964.

Soos daar gespreek word van „hospitaalpredikant” en van „studentepredikant”, so is daar deesdae ook 'n „industriepredikant”. Hy doen sy werk in opdrag van die kerk wat hom beroep het.

Die industriepredikante in Nederland ontmoet mekaar op die vergaderings en konferensies, op die werk- en studiegroepe wat georganiseer word deur die **Sentrale Raad vir Evangelie en Industrie**. Hulle neem deel of het deelgeneem aan die grondige kursusse wat deur die **Universitaire Instituut i.v.m. Bedryfslewe** in Utrecht gehou word. Hierdie kursus is tot nog toe deur ongeveer sestig predikante uit verskillende kerke — Hervorm, Gereformerd, Baptiste, ens. — gevolg en van hierdie getal staan daar maar net sewe in die besondere diens wat met die naam „industriepredikante” omskryf kan word.

Hierdie beskeie getal steek af by die meer as honderd sg. „bedryfsaalmoeziers” van die Rooms Katolieke Kerk. Maar dit hoef ons Protestante nie te ontstel nie. Rome is self nog maar in die eksperimentele stadium van hierdie werk. Wat veel belangriker vir hierdie werk is as blote getalle, is die goeddeurdagte wyse waarop die werk uitgespeel en die oortuigingskrag en innerlike sekerheid waarmee dit uitgevoer word.

SY WERK IN DIE FABRIEK

Daar bestaan geen kenmerkende beeld van die industriepredikant nie en die werk dra die stempel van elkeen se persoonlike individualiteit. En tog is daar een opsig waarin hulle almal ooreenstem, nl. die manier waarop hulle begin. Hulle moet hulle pastorale oriëntasie begin deur hulle eers in te leef in die werklikheid van die industrie. Die industrie immers bepaal tot 'n groot mate die lewenspatroon van die mens in die algemeen en van die fabriekswerker in die besonder. Dit lê voor die hand dat die industriepredikant vir 'n bepaalde periode in een of meer fabriek sal gaan werk, meesal in die posisie van 'n ongeskoolde arbeider. Hy vervul sodoende nie die rol van die „priesterarbeider” van Frankryk nie. Dit is hom daar werklik te doen om een van die arbeiders te wees sodat hy 'n insig kan kry in die verhoudinge en toestande in dié bepaalde werkkring.

Die industriepredikant kom ook met

die industriële lewe in aanraking deur die welwillende samewerking van die bedryfshoofde. Immers die aanstelling van die industriepredikant is slegs moontlik omdat bepaalde bedrywe wil saamwerk en dit gewoonlik deur middel van die bestuurders wat kerklede is of die kerk goedgesind is. Die industriepredikant het dus 'n ope deur ook tot ander terreine van die bedryfswêreld. Hy kry die kans om vergaderinge by te woon waar sake van maatskaplike-sielkundige aard bespreek word of hy woon 'n personeelvergadering by waar suiwer tegniese sake aan die orde is. Soms word hy selfs uitgenooi om 'n direksievergadering by te woon.

Omdat daar hierdie openheid vir die predikant in bepaalde bedrywe is kry hy allerhande moontlikhede vir persoonlike kontakte en kan hy tot 'n gesprek kom met alle soorte mense van hoog tot laag. Hierdie gesprekke kan moeilik tydens die werkyd gevoer word. Die bedoeling is dan ook nie dat die sielsoerger die fabriek as toneel vir sy evangelisasiewerk sou kies nie maar hier word die kennis ingewin en kontakte gemaak wat die grond vir die ware pastorale werk voorberei.

SY WERK BUTE DIE FABRIEK

Die industriepredikant is dus nie fabriekspredikant nie, maar herder en leraar vir die mense wat hy in die fabriek leer ken. Hy is geestelike raadsman van die wat hulle nie meer in die kerk tuis voel nie en hy soek hul op waar hul buite die fabriek te vinde is. Daar is gewoonlik maar min verband tussen die daaglikse werk en die kerk en die industriepredikant wil dié verband wees.

Deur middel van die fabriek en daarmee die alledaagse werk, kry hy aanknopingspunte met gesinne en enkelinge wat deur die kerk en sy ampsdraers nie bereik word nie. Deur sy pastorale werk kry hy ingang tot hul huise en harte.

Naas die aantal pastorale kontakte sal die industriepredikant egter ook die opbou van gespreksgroepe ter hand neem. Kringe word gevorm uit een bepaalde laag van die fabrieksmense of uit 'n deursnee. Soms is dit moeilik om wetenskaplikes met eenvoudige ambagsmense, leidinggewende personeel met ongeskoolde arbeiders in 'n gesprekskring te verbind en dan moet hulle maar geskei word.

Die kringe het geen sistematiese program nie. Hulle spreek en luister vanuit die daaglikse werklikheid en ontmoet daarin hul Here. Hulle neem kennis van wat in hul eie wêreld of in die groot wêreld gebeur en soek die antwoord van Gods Woord op al hierdie dinge.

Aanwesigheid in die werk, studie van sosiale en ekonomiese vrae, persoonlike kontak, huisbesoek en kringwerk vorm die gewone arbeid van die industriepredikant, maar put dit nie uit nie. Hy moet oral luister en diensbaar wees aan die mens in die bedryfswêreld. Hy sal seker mettertyd inpeskakel word in die vorming van die bedryfsjeug. Namate sy ervaring en insigte groei sal hy die probleem van die arbeidslewe in 'n nuwe perspektief sien maar hy sal nie die gewillige dienaar van die industrie word nie. Hy sal vry staan om aan almal in die bedryf onder alle omstandighede die evangelieboodskap te bring dat Jesus Christus die Verlosser van die bedryfsmens en die Here ook van die industriële wêreld is.

„Inter No2”, April 1964.

Lay Training in my Congregation

By GEORGE D. WILKIE

St. Martin's is a new church (of 12 years standing) in a new housing area on the outskirts of a ship-building town. About 10,000 people live in the parish area, of whom a large percentage are Roman Catholics. It is an entirely working class community and there are now about 800 communicant members on the congregational roll. Well now, what of lay training in this congregation?

In a sense what I am going to talk about is lay training of my congregation rather than in it: because looking back, it started as that and continues as that though later it required grades of training within the congregation. It had no formal pattern — indeed we did not think of it as training at all — rather we aimed to do more effectively in small groups what everyone knows to be the work of the Church in the world. Then we realized that we had hit upon house churches, and finally that we were in the process of training the congregation for its work.

THE WORK TO BE DONE

We did not begin by saying “let's have training”. We first aimed to let our congregation “be the Church” in the given situation.

And here I would like to throw in a thought for what it is worth, though it may be commonplace in the thinking of those who are daily concerned with lay training. That training of God's people cannot be considered apart from an awareness of the operation of the Holy Spirit in “giving gifts unto men.” God's promise is that to every obedient church will be given the gifts appropriate to the tasks he calls on it to perform (some apostles, some pastors, some teachers). Therefore training in a sense is revealing God's gifts in the members of his Church. Gifts which will match the work to be done. And so lay training must always be closely related to the real work that God needs to be done and for which he is willing to strengthen and undergird his Church.

Given a new church in a new housing area the temptation is great to build up a successful church with well-attended services and thriving organizations. All the laymen who came to us from other churches knew that this was what was wanted and were willing to work for it. The whole orientation of their past church life had shown them that success meant numbers in church and a good balance sheet. Against this we kept on saying: “the test of the life of this church is not what happens inside the church buildings, but what happens in the parish, what new quality of life is to be seen there because of our existence.”

THE CHURCH IN THE STREET

As a beginning we set out to “serve the parish”. The most obvious thing to do was to gather as a congregation to discuss means of serving the people round about us. We used an evening service once a month and discussed the problems of the aged and the young, the influence of newspapers, the rise of juvenile delinquency, the needs of Indians, the conditions in refugee camps and the colour problems of Africa. And we often “did something about it.” We sent letters to our member of parliament, or a deputation to a local councillor, or town official, or headmaster. Or we collected money or clothes for needy people across the seas, and so on. But we soon realized that although on paper we seemed to be fulfilling our remit, in fact we were not serving the people in our parish in the personal way in which they most needed our help. We were only helping them “at a distance” and very

often not coming into contact with them to discover their real problems.

Our congregational gatherings were also a matter of deep concern for us. Attendance at the meetings was poor. Even those who took part hardly felt any sense of fellowship among them. Therefore we decided to hold, instead of the congregational gathering, small meetings of church members in each elder's district. It was not easy to persuade the elders to accent leadership but finally we began calling together meetings of church members in their areas. We must have seemed extremely vague about what the object of these meetings was. We said we wanted to be “the Church in the street” — whatever that meant. The only things we were sure it included were service of neighbours in need and study of the Bible to discover God's will for us.

HOUSE CHURCHES

On this basis we began about 10 years ago and have been functioning in a recognizable way over half the area of the parish since, sometimes flourishing, sometimes hanging on with the few enthusiasts until imaginations are fired again. At least in the Kirk Session (the elders meeting) it is now officially accepted as a basic part of the pattern of our church life and not just as a new fad.

The meetings of these house churches take place in a house in the elder's area once per month. We stress that the elder should issue an invitation to every member in his area for every meeting, so that it does not become a meeting of a little clique who are interested in this sort of thing but is a real meeting of the church. Let me give you the agenda of a typical meeting:

(1) After the usual informal welcomes the meeting begins with a short prayer led by the elder (prepared or extempore).

(2) Then the passage for Bible study is read (all have Bibles) and time given to think about it. The elder has already been over it at the Kirk Session meeting and may say a word or two about the background. He may also have a few questions to start the discussion going. At first most members were afraid of Bible study. Then they found it easy and wanted to go on all night airing their pet theories. Sometimes they were rather proud when they spent the whole evening doing little more than Bible study and having no time for the rest of the agenda. This is a typical church attitude — that there is virtue in doing Bible study in itself. But of course it probably meant that they were not facing some other responsibility fully and we had to remind them that Bible study should be limited to 30 — 40 minutes.

A method of Bible study which we have been using quite recently with some success has been to take a subject like peace, faith, forgiveness, etc. and give each member of the group a different passage in which this word is mentioned. The member has to act as custodian for the text he has been given — and the idea behind it — during the discussion which follows. This we find brings everyone into the study and often leads to a deeper un-

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OP SOEK NA HELDERHEID

Die Wêreldraad van Kerke is in 1948 in Amsterdam gestig. Hierdie stap is voorafgegaan deur 'n lang geskiedenis — en 'n moeisame proses. Hieroor wil ons nie nou spreek nie. Wat wel ons aandag verdien, is die standpunte van verskillende kerke van gereformeerde belydenis ten opsigte van aansluiting by hierdie organisasie. Ook in ons eie land het die saak al heelwat probleme opgelewer, en selfs in die Geref. Kerk in S.A. word hierdie probleem nog steeds bestudeer.

Waarop ons nou eger wel die aandag wil vestig, is enkele gegewens wat opgeteken staan in 'n Nuusbrieff wat uitgegee is deur die sekretariaat van die Geref. Ekumeniese Sinode, onder leiding van dr. P. G. Schrottenboer, van Ontario in Kanada. Interessant is hierby sekere besluite van die Geref. Kerke in Nederland en die reaksie daarop deur 'n kerk in Amerika.

STANDPUNT VAN Geref. KERKEN IN NEDERLAND

Die eintlike slotsom waartoe hierdie susterkerk van ons gekom het, is dat daar geen beslissende beklensel deur hierdie kerk gesien word om by die Wêreldraad aan te sluit nie. Nogtans sal hulle nog nie tot hierdie stap oorgaan nie, maar eers hoor wat die gevoelens van hulle eie kerke in Nederland is, asook eers die opinie van ledekerke van die Geref. Ekumeniese Sinode probeer bepaal. Op hierdie stadium is daar dus geen aanbeveling of besluit oor aansluiting nie.

Die rapport wat as agtergrond van hierdie besluit gedien het, bevat onder meer die volgende punte:

1. Die kerke moet hulle ekumeniese roeping in gehoorsaamheid aan die Heilige Skrif vervul.
2. By die uitvoering van hierdie roeping hinder dit nie as die grondslag van hierdie ekumeniese verwantskap nie volkome ooreenstem met die Geref. Belydenis nie, as dit net nie met die Skrif bots nie en 'n suiwer Christologiese karakter het.
3. Die kerke moet die aanvaarde grondslag vir hulle rekenskap neem en gewillig wees om op daardie grondslag tot verantwoording geroep te word.
4. As afwyking van die basis toegelaat word, kan dit as 'n struikelblok dien om aan te sluit of lid te bly.
5. 'n Ekumeniese organisasie kan nie verantwoordelik gehou word vir oitsprake van nie-afgevaardigde lede wat afwyk van die basis en nie in hulle eie kerke daarvoor vermaan word nie.

STANDPUNT VAN ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (NOORD-AMERIKA)

Hierdie kerk in die V.S.A. het ook in hierdie jaar Sinode gehou en daarby ook gespreek oor hierdie bogenoemde besluit van die Nederlandse Geref. Kerk. 'n Rapport van 'n kommissie het daar gesien. Die konklusie was dat dit betreur sal word as die Geref. Kerke in Nederland by die Wêreldraad aansluit en hulle daardeur genoodsaak sal word om die susterverband te deurbreek. Die saak is tot stemming gebring en met meerderheidsstem is besluit dat die rapport heroorweeg moet word, dat die kommissie uitgebrei word en dat met die volgende sinode weer hieroor gehandel sal word.

Hoewel die saak dus nog nie afgehandel is nie — en die voorgestelde vermaning aan die adres van die Nederlandse kerk nog nie gerig is nie — is dit wel interessant om te let op die inhoud van die rapport. Die kommissie het op grond van 'n studie van die Skrif tot die volgende konklusie gekom oor die beginsels wat vir 'n Christelike kerk vereis word in sake afskeiding en gemeenskap:

1. Afskeiding van ongeloof is Bybelse voorskrif.
2. Die norm of grond vir afskeiding is die gebrek om te glo of te gehoorsaam aan die voorskrifte van die Heilige Skrif.

3. Weiering om van die ongeloofstandpunt af te skei of samewerking daarmee bring mee dat die ware Christen of die ware Christelike kerk deel het aan die skuld van die bese werke van diegene van wie hulle behoort af te skei.
4. Die enigste basis vir samewerking

van kerke en binne kerklike rade is weersydse toestemming met en aktiewe gehoorsaamheid aan die waarheid van die Evangelie. Die suiwerheid (soundness) van die belydenis of konfessionele formule is nie die enigste maatstaf vir samewerking of afskeiding nie. As die krag en waarheid van die formule ontken word — hoe goed die formule ook is — dan is samewerking onmoontlik en afskeiding 'n vereiste.

Die Sinode van die Geref. Kerk in Suid-Afrika het ook in 1964 te doen gehad met 'n lang en deeglike rapport oor die hele aangeleentheid van ekumeniese probleme. Ook hier is geen

finale besluit geneem nie, en die saak word nog verder bekyk.

Organeem van „Die Kerkblad“, 8 Julie 1964.

LAY TRAINING

(Continued from page 6)

understanding of the faith than when only one passage is under review.

(3) Then there is a roll call. The elder reads over the list of members for the area to see if any were in need. This leads to brotherly care for the sick, the aged, the blind, the young, etc. It also provides a quick way of knowing whether a person has been "dropping out of things" and has not been around much — in which case his fellow-members can go and see what is wrong and help to bring him back.

(4) Then there is service of the neighbourhood. Is there anyone in the street, be they Protestant or Catholic or Communist or Jew — anyone who is in need? It is seldom there is no one, though we discover how easy it is to forget about the family next door, we have become so used to their problem. Sometimes it is straightforward help, visiting the sick, helping the widow, the unemployed, the man off work through sickness. Often it means taking round a parcel of food, butter, eggs, sugar, tea. Sometimes it's more difficult; dealing with a man who is an alcoholic, the neurotic woman ostracized by her neighbours, the returning prisoner, the wife who has got into hopeless debt, the adolescent who has gone off the rails, etc. But in each case the church in the street tries to show its cares and expresses the love of God in a quite practical way. And how often when we try to help in a practical way the opportunity is given of talking of the deeper convictions we have.

(5) Then after a cup of tea an opportunity is given for any general discussion on any subject of concern to those present — maybe a subject of national concern, maybe local working conditions, or education, or teenagers, etc. This allows anyone in the group who is worried about some matter to bring it to his fellow-Christians for their help and guidance.

(6) Then home-going prayers. And I believe the real intercession for the parish goes on in these groups rather than in the more formal statements on Sunday. All that we have been thinking about and all the people we are trying to help come naturally into our prayers.

The elder is always the chairman of the meeting and though the minister is present as often as possible, he takes a back seat so that it does not become a question and answer session with himself.

New communicants undergoing instruction for confirmation are invited to the meetings and occasionally neighbours who are not members of the church come along and take part in the discussions, and even come into the church.

Once or twice the meeting has begun with a celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion, using the ordinary table, the ordinary cloth, the ordinary bread from the bread tin and sitting round in the ordinary way in the living room. It has given to those present an entirely new vision of the sacrament in relation to ordinary life. Those of us who are not accustomed to small celebrations do not realize what a profound experience this can be for the ordinary church member who has never known anything else than the great celebration in the church.

(To be concluded)

"Lairy" — bulletin of the Department on the Lairy and on the Co-operation of Men and Women in Church, Family and Society, June, 1964.

Menings van Lesers

Geagte Redaksie,

In die Junie-uitgawe van PRO VERITATE word ses gevalle van Bantoes beskryf wat ontherrings moet ly weens die wet op trekarheid.

Graag verneem ek deur u kolomme:

1. of sulke gevalle algemeen onder die betrokke Bantoes voorkom dan of dit uitsonderinge is;
2. watter groep is die grootste: dié wat deur die wet bevoordeel word of dié wat deur die betrokke wet benadeel word?

Met vriendelike groete,

Die twee,
J. VAN DER WALT,
Hunter's Home,
Knysna.

Geagte Redaksie,

In antwoord op die vroe van 'n korrespondent, Mr. J. van der Walt, toon die getuënis versamel in die Keiskamahoek *Landelike Ondersoek* asook 'n meer omvangryke studie van die Universiteit van Kaapstad dat meer as 'n kwart van die Bantoes wat in die stad werksaam is, getroude mans is wat sonder hulle vroue in die stad leef. Volgens die getalle in die Tomlinsonverslag gegene spandeer werkers in die nywerheid (die myne nie ingereken) gemiddeld 22 dae per jaar tuis. Mr. de Wet Nel, toe Minister van Bantoe Administrasie, het op 25 Januarie 1963 (Volksraad-debatte, Vol. 5 1963 bb. 198) in die Volksraad verklaar dat van die 18,311 mans in enkelkwartiere in Langsa, 12,390 getroud was. Die mans wat alles in hulle vermoë doen om hulle eggenotes na die stad te bring is dus

nie uitsonderinge nie: hulle verteenwoordig een kwart van die arbeidsmag wat veroordeel is om geskei van hulle families te lewe vir 49 weke in die jaar. 'n Ondersoek van die rekords van die Advieskantoor, Athlone, Kaap toon 80 (tagtig) verdere gevalle van vroue sous Anna M. en Mev. M. wie se mans kwalifiseer om in Kaapstad te wees maar vir wie verlot geweer is om by hulle mans te lewe. Hierdie gevalle het binne 21 maande voorgekom. Tussen 1 Oktober 1962 en 30 Junie 1964 het 1,121 wat uit Kaapstad uitgevindsoer is die Kantoor besoek. Die meerderheid van hulle was vroue wat verlang het om by hulle eggenotes te bly.

As 'n Korrespondent hierdie getuënis betwyfel gee ek aan die hand dat hysell kom kyk: laat hom sonder voorafgaande kennisgewing op enige weersdag kom en een of twee oggende in die Advieskantoor kom deurbing en luister. As hy dit sou doen sal hy nie langer die vermoede koester dat die gevalle wat aangehaal is die uitsonderinge is nie.

Wat die „voorlede“ van die toestromingsbeheer vir die stedelike Bantoes betref bestaan dit in die verbeeking van die blanke en nie in die alledaagse lewe van die nie-blanke nie. Dis langtermyn inwoners wat in wanhoop verval deur die skeiding van hulle vroue en deur die weiering om kinders, wat in die stad gebore is maar na koskole gestuur is, toe te laat om weer by hulle families aan te sluit wanneer hulle die skool verlaat.

MONICA WILSON,
Universiteit van Kaapstad,
Rondebosch.

PUBLIKASIES ONTVANG —

— BOOKS RECEIVED

1. A. T. Besselaar en J. Spoelstra — *Rome en die Reformasie* — een poging tot eerlijk gesprek. (J. H. Kok N.V. Kampen).
2. Dr. Peter Beyerhaas — *Theological Training in Southern Africa*. (S.A. Advisory Committee on Theological Institutes, c/o P.O. Box 97, Johannesburg — 30 cents).
3. Dr. J. J. Degenaar — *Die Sterflikheid van die siel*. (Simondium-Uitgewers (Edms.) Bpk., Posbus 3737, Kaapstad).
4. Prof. Dr. A. L. Janse de Jonge — *Anthropologie en Geestelike Volksgezondheid*. (C. J. H. Kok N.V. Kampen).
5. Prof. Dr. H. de Vos — *Inleiding tot de Ethiek en Inleiding tot de Witsbegeerte van de Grieken en de Romeinen*. (C. C. F. Callenbach N.V. Nijkerk).
6. Barnard Gilliland — *Veelboek*. (Simondium-Uitgewers (Edms.) Bpk., Posbus 3737, Kaapstad).
7. Watchman Nee — *Die normale Christelike lewe*. (Christelike Uitgewersmaatskappy, Posbus 132, Roodepoort — R1.45).
8. Nig Sans — *In die Mōrestille*. Dagstukkies vir Tienderjariges. (Christelike Uitgewersmaatskappy, Posbus 132, Roodepoort—R1.25).
9. Dr. J. H. P. van Rooyen — *Kerk en Staat*. 'n Vergelyking tussen Kuyper en van Ruler. (Doktorale proefskrif verkrygbaar van Posbus 487, Johannesburg — R3.00).
10. Prof. N. P. van Wyk Louw — *Lewenslyn*. 'n Hoorspel. (Simondium Uitgewers (Edms.) Bpk., Posbus 3737, Kaapstad).
11. Prof. Dr. J. Verkuyl — *Zijn Alle Godsdiensten Gelijk?* (J. H. Kok N.V. — Kampen).
12. Prof. Monica Wilson — *Let no man put asunder* — *Mag geen mens skel nie*. (P.O. Box/Posbus 487, Johannesburg — Enkelkopië gratis. Posgeld per tien kopie 5 sent. Single copies free of charge. 10 copies or more — 5 cent per 10 to cover postage).
13. *The Crisis in the Christian Ministry in Africa*. A publication of the All Africa Conference of Churches. 'n Publikasie van die „All Africa Conference of Churches“. (P.O. Box/Posbus 487, Johannesburg — Enkelkopië gratis/single copie free of charge).
14. *Vertragle Aksie/Delayed Action*. (P.O. Box/Posbus 487, Johannesburg — R0.75).

Christelike Instituut van Suidelike Afrika

Christian Institute of Southern Africa

Persverklaring uitgereik na aanleiding van die verklaringe van Dr. J. D. Vorster en Ds. A. J. V. Burger, i/s die voorstelle oor rassiegelykheid op die vergadering van die Wêreldalliansie van Gereformeerde Kerke, Frankfurt. 15 August 1964.

Na aanleiding van die verklaringe deur dr. J. D. Vorster en ds. A. J. V. Burger uitgereik ag die Christelike Instituut van Suidelike Afrika dit noodsaaklik om die volgende te stel:-

Dr. J. D. Vorster se in sy verklaring volgens „Die Vaderland” van 12 Augustus 1964: „Niemand in Christelike kringe betwyfel dat die gebod van liefde nie net tot een ras beperk is nie.” En volgens die „Rand Daily Mail” van dieselfde datum: “It is the Christian's duty to see that justice is done.”

Die Christelike Instituut verwelkom hierdie uitsprake van dr. Vorster en onderskryf dit. Maar as dr. Vorster egter daaraan toevoeg dat hierdie dinge so vanselfsprekend en onbetwibaar is dat dit nie nodig is om pertinente besluite daaroor te neem nie, kan geen Christengelowige hom daarmee vereenselwig nie.

So 'n uitspraak ontnem die Christelike Kerk die besonderheid en die krag van sy getuienis vanuit die besondere openbaring van God in hierdie wêreld.

DIE SENTRALE BOODSKAP

Die implikasie lê daarin dat die sentrale boodskap van die Skrif, nl. 'n menslike gemeenskap wat ingerig is op die grondslae van die geregtigheid en van die liefde (waarvoor Jesus ook aan die kruis gesterf het) in so 'n mate in die „gesonde” verstand van die mens kan lê, dat dit in hierdie wêreld 'n oorbodigheid kan word.

Dit is wel waar dat die getuienis van die geregtigheid en van die liefde vanselfsprekend by die wese van die Kerk behoort; maar dit maak nog nie die uitdrukkings van hierdie getuienis aan 'n gelowige en 'n ongelowige wêreld oorbodig nie. Daarom word waarhede wat vanselfsprekend by die besondere openbaring behoort, elke Sondag weer opnuut aan gelowiges en aan ongelowiges verkondig van die kamsels van die Christelike Kerk oor die hele wêreld.

ONWAARDIG

Dat 'n ekumeniese liggaam met uitsprake soos dié waarteen dr. Vorster so onbegryplik reageer, hom van 'n „onverantwoordelike” en „onvergeeflike” insinuasie teen die een of ander kerk sou bedien, met die doel om 'n valse skuldgevoel by hierdie kerk te probeer kweek, is 'n onwaardige en verwerplike bewering.

Christene mag hulle nooit deur so 'n bewering laat mislei om te dink dat die kerk, op watter terrein en in watter deel oorkal van sy bestaan en sy getuienis in die wêreld, ooit so 'n graad van heilighêid sal bereik dat sy geen skuld meer voor God te belê het nie. Dit geld ook van die onderlinge verhoudinge tussen gelowiges uit verskillende rasse, en met name ook in Suid-Afrika, in die Kerk sowel as in die daaglikse lewe. Dat die verkondiging van die eenheid van alle gelowiges in Christus juis in Suid-Afrika 'n besondere aktualiteit verkry het en daarom tydlig en ontydig moet geskied; dat die daadwerklike uitlewing van hierdie eenheid steeds deur die kerk gesoek en aan sy lede voorgelê moet word, en dat ons in alles nog niks verder gekom het nie as 'n klein — alre klein — beginsel van die gehoorsaamheid aan Gods gebod — dit kan alleen in 'n sondige verharding teen God en in 'n ewe sondige selfregverdiging en eiegeregtigheid ontken word.

'n Kerk wat die gebod „Vergeef ons ons skuldê” (vgl. ook Jak. 5: 16) nie meer vir hom nodig ag nie, op watter terrein en in watter deel oorkal van sy bestaan en getuienis in hierdie wêreld, kan geen kerk van Christus bly nie.

Dit is inderdaad nie 'n saak wat in die kommunisme sy oorsprong het nie, maar dit is 'n wesenkenmerk van die Evangelie van Jesus Christus dat dit bring tot skuldbesef.

Christene moet daarteen waak om die eise en veronderstellings van die Evangelie wat aan hulle voorgelê word, al meer as bedekte bedreigings van die kommunisme te waaraan.

Binne die grense van die kerk en op die breë terrein van die volkslewe, moet alle dinge voortdurend aan die toets van Gods Woord onderwerp word. En dit is eenmaal 'n feit dat daar talke dinge is, sowel in die beleid wat deur die kerk in Suid-Afrika voorgestaan word met betrekking tot rassieverhoudings (maar meer nog in die gebrekkige wyse waarop positief Christelike elemente van hierdie beleid deur gelowiges uitgeleef word) as in die wetgewing van die staat (m.n. ook in sy rassewetgewing en in die toepassing daarvan) wat die toets van die Skrif raai kan deurstaan nie.

PSEUDO-TEOLOGIE

Die Christelike Instituut ag dit verder nodig om die verwerplike van die deel van dié verklaring van ds. A. J. V. Burger wat handel oor die gelykheid van alle rasse en gemeenskaplike aanbidding onder die aandag te bring en te waarsku teen die verwarrende invloed wat sodanige uitsprake kan hê op die gemoedere van Christene wat soek na duidelikheid oor die vraag na die ware Christelike gesindheid in rassieverhoudings, en teen die verwoestende uitwerking wat dit kan hê op die uitlewing deur gelowiges van hulle eenheid in Christus. As ds. Burger met sy verklaring bedoel dat die afsonderlike ontwikkeling van rasse (waaronder ook verstaan kan word die vorming van eie gemeentes deur gelowiges uit verskillende rasse) nie noodwendig diskriminasie teen Christene van 'n ander ras veronderstel nie, kan ons ons in hoofsak daarmee vereenselwig.

In die verklaring van ds. Burger word die Skriftuurlike waarheid van die gelykheid van alle rasse voor God en in Christus, egter ontken deur die verskeidenheid op so 'n wyse in die skepping te fundeer dat daar geen rekening gehou word met die faktor van die sonde nie, en by gevolg word die verskeidenheid, met al die skeidings wat dit meebring, op so 'n wyse bestendig dat daar geen rekening gehou word met die waarheid van die versoening nie.

So lank as wat Christene hulle deur sulke pseudo-teologiese stellinge laat mislei, sal hulle ongewoos bly vir die sonde van rassediskriminasie in die Kerk van Christus en onder Christengelowiges en sal hulle hulle in die sonde verhard, sonder om deelgenote te word van die vreugde van Christelike gemeenskapsbeoefening oor die grense van ras en taal en kultuur heen binne die eenheid van die liggaam van Christus.

Dat dit noodwendig moet lei tot die regverdiging van 'n sondige en onhybelse diskriminasie teen gelowiges van 'n ander ras, waardeur die belydenis van die eenheid van die Kerk van Christus met die daad en in die praktiek weersprek word, blyk daaruit dat selfs die prinsipiële uitsluiting van mede-gelowiges uit die kerklike lewe op grond van ras, kleur of nasionaliteit, in 'n verklaring soos dié van ds. Burger implisiet berispt word.

Dit is klaarblyklik in stryd, nie alleen met die Skrif nie, maar ook met duidelike beleidsverklarings van die Ned. Ger. Kerk, waarvan ds. Burger 'n aanspreek is.

NIE WAAR NIE

Dit is eenmaal nie waar wat ds. Burger beweer, nl. dat daar in die kerklike lewe „dieper” dinge is as die gesamentlike aanbidding deur gelowiges nie. Die sosiale gemeenskap reik gewis nie dieper of hoër as die eenheid in Christus voor die troon van God en rondom die Nagmaalstafel nie. As lede van die liggaam van Christus en as medeburgers van die heiliges en huisgenote van God, is Christene aan mekaar gebind met bande wat sterker en inniger is as enige natuurlike bande, bv. van bloed of ras of volk of familie.

Dit is in die verklaring van ds. Burger onmiskenbaar duidelik dat die afweer teen 'n uitlewing van die Christelike eenheid in die kerklike lewe, ge-

skied vanuit die oorweging van wat by baie as die meer belangrike of diepere aan gevoel word, nl. dat dit ook 'n verkeer op sosiale vlak moet meebring.

Hoewel dit waar is dat die medeburgers van die heiliges en die huisgenote van God mekaar ook in die gewone lewe as sodanig sal herken, en diensooreenkomstig teenoor mekaar sal optree, gaan die Christelike gemeenskap hier nie dieper nie, maar wel wyer as die gemeenskapsbeoefening wat daar plaasvind in die gesamentlike verkeer met God. Christene moet egter daarteen waak om uit vrees vir die eerste, die ontwyking van die tweede met 'n beroep op die Skrif te wil regverdig. Dit is 'n pseudo-teologie wat aan loutere heideloosheid en selfsig diensbaar gemaak word.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT PRESENTED TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, JOHANNESBURG, 27th AUGUST, 1964

Membership and development.

The Institute was established on the 15th August, 1963, with approximately 150 members; at present the membership exceeds a thousand and is increasing steadily. The Institute has the moral support of all the churches in South Africa with the exception of the three Afrikaans churches. The highest governing bodies of these churches have either denounced the Institute or declared that it is unacceptable to them. We regret these pronouncements because we are convinced that they are based either on a misunderstanding of the work and aims of the Institute or on an unfounded fear of the implications of our Biblical witness for the life and work of the Church.

As a result of this the number of Afrikaans members has not been as large as originally expected and a certain number of these members have resigned because of pressure brought to bear upon them.

Besprekingsgroepe.

Ons Bybelstudies is oor die algemeen baie gunstig ontvang, en die rapporte oor die bespreking wat in kringe plaasgevind het was baie bemoedigend. Hier en daar het lede gevoel dat die studies te ingewikkeld is maar op grond van persoonlike waarneming en verslag kan ons met dankbaarheid sê dat ons kringe met enkele uitsonderinge baie goed vorder. Tot dusver is altesaam 25 kringe gestig hoofsaaklik aan die Raad, in Pretoria, Durban, Kaapstad en Stellenbosch. 'n Aantal van die kringe is tweetalig, terwyl 'n aantal Afrikaans en 'n aantal ander Engels as voertaal het.

Dit het ook gou geblyk dat dit nodig sal wees om gereelde kort kursusse vir verteenwoordigers uit elke groep te hou om lede te leer hoe om hulle kringe suksesvol te lei. Die eerste van sulke naweek „leiersbyeenkomste” word beplan vir einde September te Wilgespruit.

The Christian Institute and youth.

The reaction of young people who have been addressed by myself or my colleagues clearly indicates the lack of guidance and direction amongst Christian youth as to the convictions which they, as Christians, must hold on those issues in which we are presently engaged in South Africa. The Institute deems it necessary to draw the atten-

tion of its members to this fact and wishes to offer its help to churches and organizations, especially those who are in touch with our students, in combating the frustration and confusion amongst our students and supplying them with the clear guidance they need.

Studie en Aksie

Baie lede het die vraag gestel of die Christelike Instituut naas sy studie en bespreking enige verdere voorligting oor aksie gaan gee of self sodanige Christelike aksie gaan loods. As antwoord wil ons dit duidelik stel dat van elke lid verwag word om as individuele Christen te handel in die lig van oortuigings wat uit sy studie van Gods Woord gebore word. Dis egter ook duidelik dat die Raad van Beheer die lede sal moet voorlig oor enige gesamentlike Christelike getuienis wat lede geroepe mag word om te gee sonder om individuele lede te bind wat ander sienings mag huldig. Ons hoop om in die komende jaar duidelike voorligting te help gee oor die getuienis en optrede wat van Christene verwag word oor bepaalde probleme en vraagstukke waarmee ons almal worstel.

Raad van beheer.

Op die Algemene Jaarvergadering is die volgende persone in ooreenstemming met die Konstitusie verkies tot lede van die nuwe Raad van Beheer, dié eerste tien vir 'n tydperk van twee jaar en die tweede tien vir 'n tydperk van een jaar met die reg van herkiesing na verstryking van hulle dienstrydperk:

Twee Jaar: Ds. B. H. M. Brown; biskop B. B. Burnett; dr. B. Engelbrecht; prof. dr. A. S. Geyser; ds. A. W. Habelgaarn; ds. E. E. Mahabane; mnr. J. C. M. Mbata; mev. M. Malherbe; mnr. S. A. Mohono; mnr. F. J. van Wyk.

Een Jaar: Dr. J. Dalziel; ds. J. D. Davies; mnr. M. T. Eddy; biskop H. Fosseus; dr. A. M. Hugo; prof. dr. G. C. Oosthuizen; ds. R. Orr; mnr. H. Ramaila; mej. H. Walther; ds. C. L. Welch.

Chairman of the Board of Management.

Prof. A. S. Geyser is the newly elected chairman of the Board. He succeeds the Revd. Dr. J. B. Webb who retires from the active work of the ministry at the end of the year and who, because of taking up residence in Natal, requested to be released from this responsibility.