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A GREETING FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

I WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY, editorially provided for the Chairman of the Baptist Ministers' Fellowship, of voicing most cordially a New Year's greeting to my fellow-ministers in the Name above every name.

It is inevitable that changes come with each new year and I therefore send prayerful good wishes to those of you who are freshly entering upon your first or a later pastorate, or who are even contemplating change in the sphere of your vocation, or who may be the targets of "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune", or who may be looking forward to "enjoying" so-called "retirement".

My hope for the New Year with all its vicissitudes and surprises, its problems and opportunities, is that, beginning in your own church, your own home and family, your own immediate situation, you may see and know the blessing of God moving outwardly "from Jerusalem, Judaea and Samaria to the uttermost parts of the earth". The "Seventy" returning from their mission (Luke x, 24) had seen with their own eyes things that prophets and kings of earlier days had longed to see but had never seen. May it be your privilege in 1964 to know new power over evil (Luke x, 17-19) and to see astonishing fruits for your labours.

J. B. MIDDLEBROOK.

THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY TO ITS OWN PEOPLE

IN A SENSE, that is half our trouble — "The church's ministry to its own people." Our own people are our church, and ideally we should be ministering to one another, our aim being not all the time to *get*, but also to *give*. To give as we get. To get in order to give. Such are the true children of Abraham, for to him the word was given: "I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing." But I know what the Editorial Board have in mind in giving me this theme, and I am not quarrelling with it. It has done my soul good to search through the New Testament to see "what saith the Scriptures" on this matter. The teaching seems to be threefold.

First and foremost, of the church's ministry to its own people, I would put WORSHIP. Primarily, the local church is a place of worship. The highest exercise of a born-again believer is the worship of God, in this life or in the life to come. The local church provides us with the inestimable boon of corporate worship, coming apart together and saying "*Our Father*". Our Lord has left us in no doubt as to the Father's requirements.¹ We are very anxious that worship shall be acceptable to us; whereas, of course, the only thing that really matters is that our worship shall be acceptable to God. This kind of worship is only possible from a born-again believer. All that the non-believer has a right to say in the presence of the Most High is "God be merciful to me a sinner".

So the church is to make available to its own people the amenities of spiritual worship, as distinct from carnal worship. How much depends on the Man of God who leads! Preaching a while ago in Alexander Whyte's pulpit in Edinburgh, I remembered the Elder who said to him after a service: "Dr. Whyte, when you came into the pulpit this morning you seemed to have come straight from the Presence of God!" To which he replied shyly: "Perhaps I had."

And how much depends on the people! These habitual late-comers (often living nearest to the church), these tiresome chatterers and fidgets, these thoughtless coughers who make no effort to control their noisy interrupting, these slouchers who sprawl across the pew in studied indifference, these frivolous folk who deliberately seek to distract the attention of others — what a menace they are, and how they spoil that mystic something we call "atmosphere", which is one of the greatest assets of any church and one of its chief attractions! On the other hand, every sincere worshipper, studying to be quiet and really engaging in adoration, can be like our Lord must ever have been in the synagogue at Nazareth — a centre of worship.

The Presence! Then Praise. Some churches will never prosper until their singing changes. Such deadly dull stuff is enough to keep angels away. Some churches are doomed to this dreary caricature of praise till they are delivered from their organist. It's a shame to let one person go on wrecking worship for the many. I speak as one greatly blest in this regard and very grateful. The value and virtue of good congregational singing can hardly be exaggerated.

And Prayer. Again, how gifted some are to lead one's spirit up and on, so that the prayer time in worship is one of the luxuries of the week! I notice that the great masters whose pulpit prayers have been published — Spurgeon, Rawson, Tipple, Parker, McLaren, Meyer — were wont to fill their prayers with Scripture. This I find is always helpful. Is not Silence, too, a ministry in itself. After "Let us pray" has been said, or the hands clasped in the pulpit, let there be a pause long enough to make the people look up and realise that we are drawing near into the presence of God; and after the main prayer — should there ever be such a thing as a *long* prayer? — a space for silent praise and intercession, long enough to produce a settled stillness over the people; and at the close of the sermon, for the last words of it to be pressed home upon heart and conscience by the Spirit Himself; and after the Benediction, a moment of disciplined quiet (soon learned by the people) before the organ plays, before the minister leaves the pulpit and before the stewards swish back the curtains — these are healing silences when much can happen between the soul and God. Many of our fellow-believers are pleading nowadays for a new gift of tongues: I would be one to plead for a new gift of silence.

And Preaching. Nothing can take its place. But let it be *preaching* — not soft crooning into these wretched microphones, not pleasant

quarter hours of sweet nothings, not hashed-up opinions, musings, doubts and dreams of clever men, but "declaring all the counsel of God"² — which alone can be used to "edifying"³. It is the simple, clear opening-up of the Scriptures that feeds hungry souls and creates a relish for the ministry of the Word that can change hearts and homes. My testimony is that, as a scatterbrain schoolboy of 14, I was made to think seriously about the Saviour by the difference I saw in my parents after we had begun to attend a virile, Bible-teaching ministry.

Under worship must come the Sacraments. The Supper, the beating heart of the church's life observed frequently and regularly, is the one occasion when the service should not be "bright" and "pleasant", but conducted with extreme seriousness and dignity, for which deacons may need to be put under severe discipline to ensure a consistent seemliness for the showing of the Lord's death till He come. Part of this discipline must be to ensure that the communion prayers are *thanksgivings* rather than ordinary intercessions. As for Baptism, can we ever be grateful enough for the asset this is to us, with its unfailing appeal and challenge and sheer joy? No less precious to us, is the Infant Dedication service. I have known young people to have been converted through facing the fact that they had not yet fulfilled their parents' commitment of them, and that it was time they themselves did their own part in making their calling and election sure.

In all this and beyond it all, the second transcending ministry of the church to its own people is FELLOWSHIP. Two exquisite New Testament words express its fullness of glory and gladness: "Koinonia" (sharing in common) and "Philadelphia", (brotherly love). This fellowship arises from the nature of the church. It is the "Ecclesia", the called-out community, separated from the world and set apart for God. The living Lord is in the midst, He Himself creating the fellowship around Himself⁴ and thereby constituting the local assembly a Temple of God by the indwelling Holy Spirit.⁵ Its outstanding characteristics should be Holiness⁶ without offence⁷ and love⁸ without limit. This fellowship will be enjoyed corporately in several ways: in prayer⁹, in teaching¹⁰, in service¹¹, in healing¹², in discipline¹³, in stewardship¹⁴. There must also be the pastoral side of the fellowship — "the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ"¹⁵. One of the things members ought to expect of their church is to be led out into the care and cure of souls. Let them be engaged in the ministry of comfort to the sick, the afflicted, the elderly, the shut-ins, the sorrowing and the backsliders¹⁶. Let them be trained in counselling the new converts and encouraging to discipleship¹⁷. Let them be given opportunities of showing hospitality¹⁸, and for Guest Services too. Some of us have found it very worthwhile to open hostels for homeless girls and homes for old folk. The climax of the fellowship is reached in the sending out of overseas missionaries, supporting

them in prayer while they are abroad and hearing the answers to these prayers when the missionary members return.¹⁹ Finally, there is to be fellowship with other churches.²⁰ All this and more is the birthright of each believer; and the local church fails its members if these things are not being provided. It goes without saying that each local cause must be a haven of real friendliness, and that no stranger must ever go away without being made to feel welcome at the door and in the pew. God save us from the starch factory, the deep freeze, the graveyard and the exclusive club!

The third word is WITNESS. It is the logical outcome of the first. We are to go "in and out and find pasture" — in to worship, with the "ecclesia"; out to witness, with "exousia". He ordained twelve that they might be with Him (which is discipleship) and that He might send them forth to have power (which is apostleship²¹). Our people need both together. There is a discipleship which is content to be "with Him" and is not forth going; always getting and never giving, which turns the disciple into a Dead Sea. There is an apostleship which is always forth-going at its own charges, and hence with the barrenness of a busy life out of touch with the Lord. God save us from worship that fails to witness. And God save us from witness that fails to worship. God grant us to seek both, and in the right order.

This third feature is, similarly, the product of the second. Our witness is to be in fellowship. The New Testament knows nothing of free-lance evangelism. The local church is an evangelising centre. Anything but church-centred evangelism is bound to be second best and a misrepresentation of the Gospel. In some spiritually dead localities the centre may well be "the church that is in thine house", a local assembly of born-again believers no less, and probably more truly, an "ecclesia" than some cathedrals.

May I venture to describe the ideal church? The members are all present on Sunday mornings, and the Man of God in the pulpit, as the climax of the worship, expounds in all the Scriptures the truth as it is in Jesus, bringing it right down in simple challenge to daily life and building up the members in life more abundant in Christ. From Monday to Saturday the members are scattered into the life of the community, and each goes a convinced and convincing witness, living out the truth taught on the Lord's Day. Their quality of life in the world is so different and distinctive as to arouse enquiry²². One outcome of this is that on Sunday evenings a number of members have unconverted people in the pew with them, men and women, old and young, made eager to discover the secret of what makes these Christians so different and so attractive. The Man of God can always count on having unconverted hearers provided by his own people for the Gospel service. Thus the baptistry is regularly in use and the membership roll continually increases to offset the constant drain of deaths and removals. One notable feature of this ideal church is that the teenagers are in the forefront of this personal

witness, and the pastor feasts his eyes every Sunday night on new faces where the young people sit together. There is a close connection in the New Testament between the church being "edified" and being "multiplied"; and in between the two is the daily walk of the members²³. Most significant!

During the week two factors are to be observed in connection with the witness of this ideal church. One is that the message is being continually and systematically taken by the members from house to house in the neighbourhood²⁴, and that some of the homes of the members are used for contact groups in the name of the church²⁵, thus "softening up" neighbours and friends for their first visit to a church service. The other is that everything that is run on church premises for young and old during the week is consistent with what the church stands for from its pulpit on Sundays. The *administration* of the church is at one with the *ministry* and not at war with it.

The ideal church is a family church, all catered for, all coming together on Sunday mornings, the babes looked after in a nursery, the younger children in a crèche, and with something spiritual for every one during the week, and an outreach into the district and far beyond, even to the uttermost parts of the earth. GEOFFREY R. KING.

The Reformed Pastor. Richard Baxter. Ed. Hugh Martin. S.C.M. 6s.

When I was trying to equip myself as a Minister I read every book on preaching and pastoral work that I could lay hands on. The Reformed Pastor was one of the few that I have returned to again and again. My standard copy was wordy, repetitive, and unattractive in format. But the force and depth of the thought overcame even all that. Just as Baxter's Kidderminster Ministry was an event in Church History, so this work abides an essential handbook for the pastor. For it always deals first with the heart, rather than the extremities. It examines "The Oversight of Ourselves" before going on to discuss "The Oversight of the Flock".

This paperback is now the only edition in print. And how attractive it is, with the natural tediousness of Baxter banished by the superb work of our own Dr. Hugh Martin, who has abridged the original for this modern format. Most Ministers probably already have a copy of Baxter, but here is a delightful edition that can easily be carried around, as it deserves to be. And every new Minister can easily acquire a copy. SYDNEY F. CLARK.

¹ John iv, 23, 24.

⁴ 1 Corinthians i, 2, 9.

⁷ 1 Corinthians x, 32.

¹⁰ Acts xi, 26.

¹³ Matthew xviii, 15, 20.

¹⁴ 2 Corinthians viii.

¹⁶ 2 Corinthians i, 3, 4.

¹⁹ Acts xiii, 2, 3, xiv, 27.

²² 1 Peter, iii, 15.

²⁵ Romans xvi, 5.

² Acts xx, 27.

⁵ 1 Corinthians iii, 16, 17.

⁸ John xiii, 33, 34.

¹¹ Revelation ii, 18 R.V.

¹³ Galatians vi, 1.

¹⁵ Ephesians iv, 12, without the commas.

¹⁷ Acts xiv, 22.

²⁰ 2 Thessalonians i, 4.

²³ Acts ix, 31.

³ Acts ix, 31.

⁶ 1 Corinthians i, 2, 9.

⁹ Acts xii, 5.

¹² James v, 14.

¹⁴ 1 Corinthians xvi, 1, 2.

¹⁸ 3 John, 6.

²¹ Mark iii, 14, 15.

²⁴ Acts xx, 20, 21.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE MINISTRY

THIS ARTICLE IS an abridged version of a paper given to a Baptist Ministers' fraternal in Leeds in 1963. I chose not to speak about psychiatry and how it was relevant to the ministry, but to use my psychiatric knowledge in the service of my Christian faith, to see what light it shed on a minister's work.

I am not ashamed to speak of emotional experiences for we cannot develop into healthy men and women without having passed through many phases of emotional development. Our personalities are formed by internalising, building up inside ourselves psychic images of our parents as those who cared for us, and then of the significant persons in our lives. The effectiveness of your ministry will depend as much on your ability to present human relationships and an emotional life, in other words to make Christ come alive, as on anything else. It is much more important to be a real person, blemishes and all, than a polished stereotype of a parson, "a whited sepulchre" in our Lord's phrase. Much of the therapeutic power a doctor or a parson exerts comes from his personal influence in replacing what may have been inadequate parental influences earlier.

Psychiatric treatment for me consists in enabling patients to work through human relationships, through the medium of a therapeutic one, until they are enabled to use and enjoy real ones. Nevertheless one of the most important factors in my work is that although there is a tendency towards healing without which work would be impossible, there is at the same time a quite extraordinary resistance thrown up to change. It is our human predicament that we can only oscillate or come to rest between two extreme positions. If we try to efface ourselves totally we fall short; and if we encourage what is called "personality cult", we fail even more. A minister, as a man, wields the most influence for Christ as he, the person, harmonises with the person of Christ whom he lifts up. I thank God for the witness and influence of some of the men whom I heard in my youth. They witnessed, but they also revealed themselves with their love and their struggles.

As I see it we can never be wholly right. We find ourselves between two poles. We can say with Paul, "In my inmost self I delight in the law of God, but I perceive there is in my bodily members a different law fighting against the law that my reason approves and making me a prisoner." We have little difficulty in thinking of antithetical pairs of our own. Maybe you despair sometimes that in your work or preaching you please some and simultaneously antagonise others. As a church grows the tempo slackens, or when it gets a name for a particular ministry, it begins to rest on its laurels or even grow smug. Our only remedy lies in being aware of this predicament. We can strive to minimise the effects, but we await our deliverance.

This theme is a familiar one in psychiatric work. Mature human

relationships are ambivalent, positive and negative feelings enter into them. It is not enough to say that frustration leads to aggression. No doubt it does. Nor do we need much reminding of the existence of hatred. The problem goes back further than that. A colleague of mine expresses it in a significant statement: "The healthy child has a personal source of the sense of guilt, and need not be taught to feel guilty or concerned." He was summing up the meaning of perhaps the most important phase of an infant's development: the realisation that its life drive is at mother's expense. Out of this realisation, if all goes well, develop the capacities for love and concern and reparation. Put in other terms, you cannot have your spice and your halfpenny. Yet how many church members want just that! Almost all neurotic patients are seeking the same through the compromise of their illness. And, honestly, are we entirely free ourselves? It is not wrong to want it. It is only wrong when the wish is acted on.

Freud's final theory reduced the instincts to two, that of life and death. This proved unacceptable even to some of his disciples. One reason for this may be that instinct is so often confused with a conscious wish. Hence a death instinct is loosely taken to mean a will or drive to die. It can mean no such thing. I am sure Freud was struggling to include in his scheme of things the fact that starting and stopping are mutually interdependent, an antithetical pair. If life is not maintained, it fades and ceases. Having both watched and read about some of the prolonged struggles that go on, "the unconscionable time dying", I have come to believe that one of the possible meanings of "Is there a man of you who by anxious thought can add a foot to his height?" may be that one can no more influence or control the life drive than one can the death potential. Disease is the result of the struggle our bodies put up against injury or invasion. This struggle is not the result of will, but is innate and involuntary. I would not dispute that it is possible "to give up the ghost", but sometimes even when that happens the body takes a long time to lie down.

One of the reasons, I feel sure, why Freud's death instinct was so unpopular with many of his disciples was that it undercut their utopian views. Here was psycho-analysis by which at last man could free himself from misery. At last the key to his own salvation was in his hands. Such views were neither new then, nor are they out of date now. We begin life helpless. Before our abilities have developed we compensate for them by omnipotent phantasies. They may be overlaid, but they are never altogether lost. The revival of helplessness through disease and death tends to revive omnipotent wishes and the need for magic. Normally maternal love and the security of an environment (an envelope in which development can take place) do the most to diminish our weakness and helplessness; but there still remain the inexorable operations of Fate, in the shape of disease, war, famine and death. Many so-called

savage tribes have admirable family constellations in which individual security and development are amply catered for; but surrounding them is a nightmarish world of spirits. In one sense this is much simpler to cope with because it's split off and external, and so is capable of being placated, escaped from or ultimately blamed. One of the things a minister meets and has to wrestle with is a religion like this, which is little more than an insurance policy or a talisman or a religion contaminated by magical needs.

But what about his own trends towards exclusiveness and omnipotence! It is sometimes said that nurses get callous. Where that is so it is a defensive manoeuvre developed to cope with the sight of suffering, with impotence to provide imperative relief, and with anxiety and even anguish which the nurse would otherwise feel. This is true too of doctors who may respond by withdrawing into inner mysteries or by pontificating. What may be called professionalism is also such a device. Nor are ministers immune. The seeming spread of Churchianity as opposed to Christianity and the elevation of an hierarchial order of priests are cases in point. I feel my hackles rise when I pass those sentimentally painted "Come to Church" posters. So often now it is "The Church says" rather than "And I shall draw all men to myself, when I am lifted up". Modern psychology places increased emphasis on the personal relationship and encounter as the dynamics of development, and would suggest that Christian experience, if it is anything, is a personal encounter with Christ. I deplore the elevation of the Church, of ritual practices and forms of worship, because I believe that psychologically speaking it is a retrograde step. It is not wrong to want a "sign" as the disciples did. Indeed our human stability depends on the very real experience of some solid bodily loving by mother. It is much harder to worship God in spirit. I have not thought it out to my own satisfaction, but it seems to me that true mystical experience itself becomes a sign, a concretised experience, an end in itself. We are certainly now in an age of big corporations; and perhaps the story of the Tower of Babel has its message for us. Is not a universal Church in danger of being a Babel? Do not the ideas of some of our Councils which seek to erect a tower (a world-wide living monument to God) derive their origins from professionalism, pride in the organisation, springing from anxiety about the future?

To say this is not to criticise professional behaviour, that is, behaviour designed to produce the maximum of effect on the recipient with the minimum of extraneous disturbance and with the least transfer of unnecessary things; even as a surgeon goes to enormous lengths to do his work with the minimum of interference with his patient. Professional behaviour cannot be avoided. A minister cannot do some things Sunday by Sunday in new and utterly spontaneous ways. It cannot be wrong for him to develop a manner as a doctor does. But his behaviour should produce the minimum of disturbance. A minister like a doctor is expected to

deliver the goods whatever is happening in his own life. Can Ezekiel's example be attained? "Son of man, behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke, yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep . . . put on thy shoes upon thy feet and cover not thy lips and eat not the bread of men. So I spake unto the people in the morning; and at even my wife died: and I did in the morning as I was commanded."

I remember an Anglican parson, who had many marital difficulties as well as personal ones, describing his state of mind sometimes as he took the early morning celebration. It hardly accorded with the words or the spirit of what he was uttering, and it distressed him. So it could be with me. But one's professional skill does assist in presenting what is wanted without intruding too much of one's own difficulties. I have learned, for example, not to read my letters before seeing a patient, lest there be one, for example, from H.M.I.T. which might vex me; though curiosity, I admit, sometimes gets the better of me. If you have a tiff with the wife or some mishap has occurred, or a loved one is sick, it is hard to concentrate on the patient or the matter in hand and to preserve a free attention, sensitive to what is presented. A surgeon friend does not rough garden, because he feels he should neither injure nor contaminate his hands. And I feel it desirable to preserve a degree of anonymity so as not to interfere with my patients nor introduce stumbling blocks. In the same way if a minister is invaded by some conflict or crisis beyond his professional skill to control, it may be better to withdraw temporarily. It isn't easy. Perhaps he cannot. But it is worth thinking about.

There's another important aspect of your role. It has a dual nature. There is how you interpret it and try to fill it, and there is how your clients regard it or regard you. This is the same as in a doctor's role. You must be perturbed sometimes at how you are seen or how you are expected to act, because it bears so little relation to your own intentions. A simple example is provided by a girl whom I referred to Dr. Guntrip. She was in a moral sense a very immoral girl. She objected to going. Her reason was "that B.D." It had nothing to do with how he would handle her, but everything with her false expectations. She expected moralising, disapproval and "Divinity"; not understanding. It is important you should try to disentangle this sort of thing first, as anything you otherwise say or do may be seen in your client's phantasy light and given quite a different meaning from what you intended. Freud discovered that dreams have a manifest and a latent content. So it is with a client's expectations and questions: "Is it cancer?" or "Am I going to die?" A minister must meet something similar. The latent needs greater skill in discerning it and answering it than does the manifest. One of the things a minister can do in his teaching is to make clear, both his own true position and the rightful expectations of those who seek his help.

One of my chief psychiatric tasks is just that — to help my patients do some reality testing, to sort out phantasy from reality, to examine and even experience real relationship as opposed to phantasy-dominated ones. Here, I think, is a parallel for the minister. His clients can be directed in one of two predominant directions. As Baptists we hold to the priesthood of all believers. Of course that is marvellous for the narcissistic and self-important who want no truck with any intermediary. I believe rather that this points to spiritual maturity and independence, in which a man's relationship is primarily and exclusively between himself and his Father, because he has been bought with a price. In the other direction is a dependent relationship which stresses the necessity for a priest. Such a view is likely to be popular because it fits in with man's dependent needs. Some are always looking for the expert, the big daddy, who will do it all for them; and in face of sickness or suffering this becomes the need for the magician who will put it right. Again and again the minister must be faced with those who want God and themselves in such roles, and not in those which have been declared possible. Just as man prays most when he is in need or trouble, so also may the help of the minister be sought to by-pass situations for which there is no solution but acceptance, even as Christ accepted in Gethsemane.

Another example of human behaviour is well described by C. S. Lewis when he talks of verbicide, the murder of a word. He says its greatest cause "is the fact that most people are obviously far more anxious to express their approval and disapproval of things than to describe them." Some words end up by being purely evaluative. I have noted this because I think he is speaking of another regression towards the primitive. My professional training was designed to avoid being evaluative, but simply to draw attention to actions and their consequences. Indeed I would say that you cannot see what is going on through a fog of evaluation. I would urge ministers to test the validity of this point by looking at Christ's contacts with people during His ministry. It is, I think, another human trait, a falling short in the professing Christian to which a minister may well direct his skill.

What is the remedy for these things? Here is an admirable expression of it: "For the Word of God is alive and active. It cuts more keenly than any two-edged sword, piercing as far as the place where life and spirit, joints and marrow divide. It sifts the purposes and thoughts of the heart." I like these verses because I think they point out just that kind of sorting out process of what looks like dilemma or antithesis which is needed of us. The means of countering these primitive or magic-seeking trends which are evidence of our primary state of sin (not of our sinning) are first the minister's personal witness, but second and very importantly, his teaching. Here lies his professional skill, his surgical technique. Philip said to the eunuch: "Do you understand what you are reading?" He replied:

“ How can I understand unless someone will give me the clue? ”

Thus let one end by discussing this particular aspect of a minister's service, preaching. Jesus' repeated reply to Peter was: “ Feed my sheep. ” In an age of excellent nutrition, I wonder if there is not some mal-nutrition among the sheep. I am thinking of how some sermons are prepared, and sometimes “ prepared ” is a euphemism for the process. On the other hand I know of the struggles of some ministers to communicate in simple terms what they find so hard to communicate at all. I have already written of reality-based thinking as opposed to phantasy-dominated thinking. As the predominance of the former characterises a mature healthy person, so it should also characterise a mature healthy Christian. One hears so much, though, that is primitive. Henry III of France, speaking of the massacre of St. Bartholomew's day, said: “ Since it has been so successful the idea may well have been put into my heart by the Divine Majesty. ” (To give him credit he did not say “ *Was put* ”.) In such ways God's activities are presented as a pale reflection of our own omnipotent phantasies. Surely blasphemy consists not only in oaths and swearing, but in traducing God in such ways as this.

How much of what is termed guidance belongs to similar thinking? I seem to hear of a lot that does. Clearly it is easier to believe you are guided to do something you long to do than to believe something you flinch from. It is not that I deny Divine guidance, but I feel that a lot so-called may be but wishful thinking. Attempts to strike bargains with God in the face of sickness, the tendency (which dies hard) to equate illness with wrong-doing, and the straining of faith to seek the interruption of a process are other common examples of immaturity. As our physical and psychological maturity depend on our intake of food and love, so I would urge upon ministers their responsibility for feeding, and indeed for continually labouring to feed. For labour it is.

And now may I touch on some of the hazards of preaching. One is that is all too possible to flannel people. Pious platitudes flow. Let's all be nice chaps together. Quite often this may imply that the preacher has not done his homework, rather than that his ideas are awry. The sermon in “ Beyond The Fringe ” stung me as much as it made me laugh, because it had such a familiar ring. It is so wilfully vacuous in spite of being on the point of saying something all the time. I'm afraid it has contemporary models. They are brilliantly satirised, but, like all good satire, not so widely divorced from the truth.

It is easier to preach at than to preach. One can lay down the law, harry a pet sin or aversion. One can make conscious oblique references or use the pulpit to air particular views on current events. It affords a golden opportunity for exhibitionism, though the best preaching must be well exhibited. But none of these alone is enough. I believe that feeding is the most important part of preaching,

but feeding to an end. Spoon-feeding is perfectly appropriate for a particular phase of development. The minister's difficulty is that his congregation is not made up of people of the same intelligence, converted on the same day. He may continue to spoon-feed and foster dependence. And there are many who will lay up whatever he says and never wish to think for themselves, to whom the words of Hebrews v, 10-14, most aptly apply. In some Group work the term "a resource person" is used. He is the one available to the Group who has expert knowledge or who can go and get it. This is a minister's role. It involves not only his body of knowledge but his homework, and much of it. His expositions should provide material not readily available, clues such as the eunuch needed (Acts, viii, 31).

Preaching may be compared with the therapeutic function of interpretation. It can be fairly easy to paint out what is wrong with a man, which corresponds with the beat-up kind of sermon. It will help the person who is only a little ill, whose resources are fairly intact. But it is likely to be useless to the very sick, and even harmful and off-putting. It can add further hopelessness to the far too much that is already there. In psychiatry the diagnosis is often easy; what to do about it is the rub. There is a term, a "Mutative interpretation", which indicates a useful method. It points out the problem, begins to outline the remedy and, in the person of the analyst, suggests what the difficulty is which prevents the remedy being applied. It bridges the gap, so that help can pass across. Such interpretations are not ten a penny. They can only effectively occur where one has begun to see clearly what a man's problem really is. There may be need of many intervening comments and exploratory enquiries. Likewise a minister must often get the feel of a need in his congregation. He may see signs and symptoms that all is not well. May I in such case suggest what I will call the "Mutative sermon". It points the problem, it offers the remedy, it endeavours to uncover and reduce the resistances which hinder the remedy being taken. It is the minister's personal influence and witness which give compelling value to his words. It is the fact that his hearers can say: "That man speaks because he understands and has experienced this in himself."

Often he is simply scattering bread or sowing seed not knowing what is being taken up nor by whom. The faithful exposition of Scripture enables him to meet many needs quite unknown. The Word of God is alive and active. One hears many patients say something like this: "I know I've got to do it myself"; and a number of doctors say something very like it too, especially in dealing with nervous complaints of which they are ignorant. It is quite untrue. What *is* true is that one can only help a patient who is wishing to be helped. A minister may need to do a lot of work and be patient for a very long time before that state of mind is reached. He can only effectively reach a man who wants to listen.

In treatment sometimes the only positive sign is that the patient comes along, even though he presents all sorts of negative signs or resistances. And so it must be sometimes with church-going. No surgeon says to a patient: "It is up to you to operate on yourself." Doctors should be the expert assistants, seeing his need and lending their skill to foster his healing potential. May I liken the minister's role to that? He is the true expert assistant, lending his greater skill and technical knowledge, his Hebrew and Greek, his history, his geography and his theology to make the complexities of Scripture clear and understandable.

I will end with a passage from Hebrews once again: "Let us stop discussing the rudiments of Christianity. We ought not to be laying over again the foundations of faith in God . . . Instead, let us advance towards maturity; and so we shall, if God permits."

R. E. D. MARKILLIE.

GRAPPLING WITH OUR TIMES

AFTER TWENTY-FIVE YEARS in the ministry, I am aware much more than in my youth that the Church of God is slow to be itself in the new situation. It tends to be like an old maid, who persists in dressing in the fashion of that sweet spring-time when she was loved awhile. If we affect the manners of yesteryear, we must expect to be treated as Aunt Sallies.

I am concerned to stress that we must be our age, the Church of God in the 1960s. That sounds easier than it is; for who can plumb the mystery of our creation as the people of God, or enter fully into the mind of the Spirit for today? Yet we must convey to our generation the fullness of Christ as He would be expressed. To do that we need to look sensitively at the world, remember His so great love for it, and open our minds to His Spirit.

What about our times? I am impressed by the marks of agnosticism across our generation's face, lines which easily turn to grinning cynicism. The slick young writers for television today, bent upon giving what the public wants, seem to think the man in the street is like this. They seem scared of only one thing: of presenting sheer goodness boldly and saying something resounding about it. They treat us to analyses of morbid problems, they make our sets shriek with rows between husbands and wives, they throw up from their earthy minds a mist of doubt about everything honourable and of good report. The world to such is a morass. If you see a rock and step on it, you are a traitor to those in the mire, as ignoble in their eyes as a hero. In this atmosphere, how can people be encouraged to act responsibly, trust their informed consciences, and create a good society?

As soon as we go behind this agnosticism and its attendant cynicism, and begin to ask questions, we must beware of any neat formula that appears to explain it all. There are many contributory factors, and we can only speak broadly.

Karl Heim has some interesting things to say about the secularism which lies behind what we have been talking about. For instance, he points out that the thorough-going secularist has disposed of our problems. They are merely phenomena in the natural order, to be accepted along with earthquakes, typhoons and the like. The best you can do is to go along with this order, making the most out of it for yourself and calling this good. No wonder then that one becomes suspicious of real goodness and God.

Heim also indicates that secularism naturally arises only in cultures deeply affected by the Biblical view of the world. Elsewhere God and the world are virtually integrated, and the whole culture would disintegrate if the spiritual element were removed. In the Biblical view, the Creator stands over against creation, and the possibility arises of repudiating the Creator, and asserting creation's self-existence as Nature. Science and technology are often blamed for provoking this secularist assertion of independence. This is scarcely fair, since there is no reason why science should not be accepted as declarative of God's glory. In any case, secularism appeared before science became impressive.

Heim suggests that what does provoke the assertion of independence is the belief in durability, as though the universe were indefinitely self-perpetuating. Then God as the ground of all seems unnecessary. This idea was plausible before the advent of relativism, but has now lost its basis, though most people do not realise it. So Heim counsels us to stress the relativism, and accelerate the collapse of secularism. When the durability is questioned, it is relevant to bear witness to the Creator and Lord, who alone gives meaning to life.

In the meantime, existentialists of various kinds passionately assert the importance of personality in this bewildering world, and the need for decision in a meaningless existence. Their mingled spirit of boldness and despair has percolated into literature and art. Despair is the intolerable burden of those who have no God.

Manifestly we have not given a proper description of our times, but only a peep behind the scenes. Now let us think about grappling with our times.

To set our feet firmly, let us look at a "catacombs ordination" in Düsseldorf in 1937, described by Dr. Nathaniel Micklem. It was held in a crowded hall rigged to serve as a church, since the German Christians had taken over the parish church. The young ordinand had been surreptitiously trained, his ordination was illegal, and there was no possibility of his being given a charge in the official church. He was being ordained to privation, danger, and probably the horrors of the concentration camp. After the ceremony, the young man preached his sermon. His text is our rebuke and our inspiration: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

Resurrection does not fit into the categories of sociology, of science, of philosophy, of historical patterns. Resurrection is God the Creator and Redeemer acting with His sovereign compassion. Resurrection is not frustrated by death and corruption, as we are. Resurrection fits that very situation. We believe in the Resurrection of Christ, and we preach the Gospel of Resurrection.

Having set our feet aright, we have still to grapple with our times. It is not with us to effect a miracle, a resurrection. That waits upon God. As Pascal said: "We always behave as if we were called upon to make the truth triumph, whereas we are called upon only to struggle for it." How do we grapple with our times?

In the morass we have to speak and act boldly with the divine authority which persuades and deeply convinces men. We have to utter the Word of God in its fullness and power.

What has impressed me for years has been the wholeness of the Word of God, and the fragmentary way in which we utter it. It does not make sense to the man in the street, because we give a vowel here, a consonant there, but no complete Word. This is particularly unfortunate in our times, when the multifarious aspects of life are daily before us. Religion seems to speak, "here a little, there a little," instead of comprehensively. If we have success with a particular syllable, we go on shouting it, as though it were sufficient, and looking askance at those who have another syllable.

Some think we can overcome our times with bigger, brighter missions, for some have been successful. Others sacrificially serve the misfits and the unfortunate, and rightly castigate our sluggish consciences, though criticised themselves for not making the Gospel explicit in what they do. Some brusquely dismiss the scholars, and would virtually surrender that field altogether, but become angry when somebody like the Bishop of Woolwich says something they cannot understand. Sitting on our various committees, and staring at our agendas, we lose sight of the whole pattern.

Behind this fragmentariness is our fragmentary worship, which is commonly expected to be simply a first-aid service to fainting souls, instead of a transaction with the living God expressing the whole range of God's worth-ship in every place and task. Often at the heart of it is hesitation about the sacraments, which could help us to grasp the wholeness of the Word of God.

We must come together in activating the Word of God in our times. This undoubtedly means that the Word must become incarnate in our life, and the suffering accepted. Suffering is too rare in our faith today. We are breeding Christians who do not think of suffering as inevitable in Christ's way of life; and we are doing so because we are not so fully immersed in our times as Christ was in His. Standing on the side-lines, we escape the suffering.

Bruce Kenrick can teach us what it means to live incarnationally. He worked with other ministers in East Harlem, New York, a district from which the churches had virtually been driven because

the people had no use for them. These ministers, working intimately in a group, discovered that only by becoming members of the community, physically involved in the decayed conditions in which the people lived, could they really represent Christ. They were driven to closer identification with Him, finding their way to Him through the Bible and Holy Communion.

There could be no holding back from total involvement. They had to accept the people as they were and commit themselves to them, despite their confused morals and crazy entanglements. They had to fight drug traffickers, as soon as they started praying beside drug addicts. They had to become familiar with politics, when only political action could liberate their people.

In these conditions the Church had to ask what it really was, and to discover painfully what it meant literally, to be the Body of Christ. Through that experience came the power of His resurrection. This is the way for us to grapple with our times.

J. CLIFFORD ASKEW.

Originally given as Chairman's address to the General Body of the Three Denominations in London.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

AS MINISTERS WE NEED no convincing of the need for an educated Church Membership. Our difficulties lie rather in persuading our people of the need for Christian Education. We are deeply indebted, therefore, to Arthur Liston for describing in the last issue of the *Fraternal* some ways in which the Faith may be taught. I should like now to pursue this question still further.

Nearly all of us are seeking to educate children in our Sunday Schools or departments of Family Church, adolescents in our clubs and fellowships and adults in our Bible study groups or mid-week meetings. Our Bristol Association has also offered a Correspondence Course on Christian Discipleship to new members of churches in the Association. A hundred or so young people have already taken advantage of this and we anticipate that many more will do so. But it still seems to me that we have not, on the whole, developed any consistent or co-ordinated policy of Christian Education in our churches. Each section of the church plans its work independently of the others. It is doubtful how much real education can take place without a planned syllabus, not merely for each department and organisation of the church, but for the church as a whole. It would be a fascinating and perhaps disturbing exercise to review the past year and see just how haphazard our policy has been. To produce an overall policy of education is no easy task, but it is surely one that needs to be done. Nor is any such policy obvious within the denomination as a whole, for this is a matter which cuts right across all existing departments and really deserves a department to itself, co-ordinating and planning the valuable educational work that is done in the Women's, Men's, Young People's and

Citizenship departments. New Zealand Baptists have, I understand, their Board of Christian Education working in close liaison with all other departments. Would not some similar Board or Department be of immense value to us in this country as we seek to build up our own educational programmes?

Further, I sometimes fear that our view of education is far too restricted. We find it difficult to get our thinking beyond the stage of our own day-school formal education. For those of us who are at or beyond middle life it was formal indeed, with the teacher talking to his class and passing on information which we were supposed to assimilate. We know that modern educational methods have advanced beyond this. It is essential to stimulate the desire to learn and for the pupil to discover things for himself. Yet much of our educational work in our churches is still of the older type. The teacher in front of the class, the leader before the Y.P.F., the minister before the Bible Study Group talking and lecturing — these are not the only ways of educating, nor are they necessarily the most effective. It is preferable for the teacher to be *among* his pupils helping them to discover for themselves the truths of the Bible or the lessons of Church History or the meaning of Christian Doctrine or the need for Social Responsibility. The same applies to older groups. Projects involving discovery and application of Christian truths need to be worked out in the educational policy of our churches. If this can run on parallel lines for all age groups so much the better, whether we have Family Church, All Age Sunday School or other ways of organising our Church life. Our Lesson Guides and teaching materials too ought to cater for all age groups, including adults, and ought to bear in mind these new methods of education. At the moment it is done partially and piecemeal. It needs to be done much more comprehensively.

But our conception of Christian Education must be wider still. To use a sentence from the report of the Conference I attended in June at Ruschlikon, "Christian Education is concerned with reaching people and leading them to Christ and with the total development of personality towards Christian maturity. It will seek to produce an increasing understanding of the Christian Faith and its implications in the contemporary world, an increasing harvest of the fruits of the Spirit in personal life, and an increasing and enriching life of fellowship within the Church."

I remember hearing Professor Niblett say that a child has received the major part of its education by the time it reaches the age of three. It has by this time learned to talk, to walk, to think and it has acquired certain basic attitudes to life. Yet very little of this has been gained through formal instruction. How then has the child learned these things? Chiefly by living in relationships with other people, especially its parents, by watching, listening, experimenting.

So, "learning by doing" is not enough. There must be "learning by doing together". The New Testament has much to say about

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Yours sincerely,

C. J. L. COLVIN,
General Manager.

kerugma and *didache*, but always in the setting of *koinonia*. Real education takes place when two or more personalities meet or even clash. Most of us who shared life in a theological College are most grateful for the instruction we received in lectures from tutors and professors. But few would deny that such maturity as we reached was the result not only, perhaps not chiefly, of the instruction. It was the result of personal contact which we had with staff and fellow students. The interplay of different personalities was an educating factor in itself, enabling us better to assimilate the more formal teaching. From this rich experience we learned not only facts, but attitudes, ways of thinking and living. This is education. Such situations must be created within the Church if they do not already exist. "Learning by doing together" is one way, but there are others. The concept of the Church as a Family of God helps to provide them if properly and thoroughly worked out, for it means that there are real opportunities for fellowship at all levels, social and spiritual, fellowship which reaches across the traditional boundaries of age and sex.

This growth in Fellowship cannot take place, however, unless there is a depth of Christian love which forms a solid basis for mutual confidence. Clashes between parent and child may be productive and educative when there is a bond of love between them. Without such love the clashes cause disintegration. Thus within God's family we must seek to foster such love that we may dare to create explosive situations in which different personalities may meet and emerge with greater maturity as better educated people.

There is one thing more that has to be said. Education takes place through worship. Needless to say, I do not mean that ministers should lecture their people in their prayers! I simply mean that if human fellowship is an educating factor, meeting with God is even more so. Each time a person meets with God in worship he takes a new step forward towards maturity. As ministers, ordering and leading worship, we must therefore give attention to this so as to be as certain as possible that we are giving full opportunity for such a meeting to take place. We have to play our part in ensuring that the gate of heaven is open for our people. This makes heavy demands upon us, heavier than we are often prepared to accept. Yet worship, properly ordered, is vital to the growth and education of any Christian.

I have done no more than throw out a few suggestions and ideas and to plead for this wider view of our task. Paul surely had such a vision when he wrote to the Ephesians, "With deep roots and firm foundations, may you be strong to grasp with all God's people, what is the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ, and to know it (not simply to know about it!) though it is beyond knowledge. So may you attain to fullness of being, the fullness of God Himself." What higher aim of Christian Education could we have than this?

H. MOWVLEY.

THE FINAL AUTHORITY: SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION

“BY WHAT AUTHORITY doest thou these things?” This challenging question has a far wider application than to ministerial status and service in any one denomination. It ought to be put by every Christian to himself, whatever his particular vocation, and whatever be the Church to which he belongs. Some answer to it is essential to any intelligent response of faith, and to any adequate acceptance of revelation. In fact, the answer must affect our whole conception of what revelation is, both in content and method. Our very philosophy of revelation is often a more or less rationalised form of our individual contact with the Beyond. It is natural enough that we should emphasise the particular media which have been the “means of grace” to ourselves. They become our most individualised sacrament, however trivial their occasion and origin. In them the temporal form acquires an eternal content. But, in putting the question to ourselves, we must not be content to answer it simply by a choice between the Bible and the Church. That is far too superficial an answer, however popular it may be. The truth lies deeper, and like all historical data, is much more complex. Both individual conviction and the authority of a community are involved in any and every religious decision; whilst in every profession, Protestant or Roman Catholic, both Bible and Church are involved, and essentially involved. The difference is in the ultimate emphasis, and a difference of emphasis can easily become a difference of kind.

In the Baptist life and faith, the emphasis clearly falls on the side of the individual conviction. The rite of baptism is, as in the New Testament, administered only to those who take the initiative in making a personal profession of faith. The Church is avowedly constituted of believers who have been individually convinced of the truth of that which they profess. The most essential aspect of the ministerial vocation is not any prescribed rite or ceremony, but individual vocation. The gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit are far oftener conceived in their individual relations to the believer than as corporately conditioned. It would, however, be quite wrong to ignore the influence of a corporate tradition running through all this. Most of those who “spontaneously” avow the Baptist form of faith on the basis of individual conviction have, in fact, grown up in a Baptist environment. Consciously or unconsciously, they have been subjected to Baptist influences from their earliest days. Those influences are a particular form of the common evangelical tradition. This claims, and rightly claims, to set forth and employ important elements of Biblical truth. But, not less than any other form of tradition, though in different ways, “it depends chiefly for its active propagation on the continuity of a community in and by which it is cherished. Baptist life and faith may indeed be criticised for not making enough of the factors of the community, and no purely individualistic reply to this kind of criticism would be adequate.

But the community-factors are there, and inevitably there.”

Similar things hold true of the Roman Catholic tradition, though the other way round, and in a much more systematised fashion. The child, already received into the Church by its baptism, normally grows through and into a tradition which is transformed into a habit, and becomes “second nature”. The social side of human personality thus receives fullest recognition from the very outset of life. The element or factor of personal conviction, however, is not ignored, but remains more or less latent until individual responsibility can exert itself. Then, the tradition made familiar by long habit is consciously accepted and continued, or there may be a rejection or neglect of it, and a man goes out into the wilderness of the unfamiliar. In a “conversion” to Roman Catholicism, the emphasis falls yet more clearly on personal decision.

In all this, the place assigned to the Church is manifest, and it becomes explicit in the decrees of the Council of Trent. But the warning already given must be remembered. The decrees do not set the Church in direct antithesis to the Bible. All that is claimed (and it is a sufficiently comprehensive “all”) is that the Church has been divinely authorised to interpret the Bible. Such a claim fully endows the tradition with all that it needs to make it *de jure* as well as *de facto*. This authority to interpret belongs to the divine purpose, and the Church, in effect at least, becomes the final authority. The initial question is answered—by the transference of responsibility to other people.

It is plain, then, that acceptance of the authority of revelation does not resolve itself into a simple choice between the conviction of the believer and that of the religious community. There is a new product and since both factors are involved, a place must be found for both in our philosophy of revelation. The path of understanding takes us from any thought of the individual and the community in isolation to the fuller recognition of their unity in the hands of God, and in the operation of His providence. As, indeed, in all the normal developments of life and not only in those attaching to religion, the community is essential for the training and preparation of the individual, and the individual to the constant renewal of the community. At some point the conscious contact of the two will raise the question as to which should be uppermost in authority; the answer decides a man's ecclesiastical choice. But he will never wholly escape from the factor which he subordinates, since he is characterised by both individuality and sociality. In their divinely wrought unity they exert their dual authority, and the Bible stands out from history as the unique record of man's converse with God, and of God's converse with man. As such the Bible will exert its proper authority, and on sufficient grounds it rules to its own degree intrinsically, simply by being what it is.

One confirmation that we are on the right path in thus thinking of the authority of revelation is that the whole development becomes a

training in moral responsibility. All along the individual learns to make decisions, and not the least in the culminating one. God uses in revelation the methods familiar to us in all true education, the aim being the evocation of personality. But these methods are those of the invitation or pressure of the community, which becomes the great and necessary corrective of individual wilfulness or ignorance.

The final authority must always be God, but He has many media, and supreme amongst them all is the life, death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ, proclaimed by the Church, to which, within the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the witness of the Spirit within the believer testifies.

H. WHEELER ROBINSON

Asked recently for an article on *Scripture and Tradition*, the Board felt it could not do better than reprint the main part of Appendix I in the 1946 edition of Wheeler Robinson's *Life and Faith of the Baptists*, which we are enabled to do by kind consent of Dr. E. A. Payne and the Carey-Kingsgate Press.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE LITURGICAL USE OF HYMNS

Fortunately it becomes more and more apparent that our services, whether they alter radically in shape or not, are being carefully thought out as acts of worship. The new hymn book, however, ought to give rise to a consideration of the function of hymns within worship.

The origins of the hymns we use vary radically. Many indeed were never meant as such, but are adaptations of meditative poems or narrative verse from other settings. Even among those whose original purpose was liturgical there is a great variety. Metrical psalms were part of the Puritan popularisation of the Scriptures. Lutheran chorales were meditations on, or congregational responses to the preached word. Primitive and modern office hymns were acts of corporate prayer. There are evangelical battle-songs; metrical versions of ancient and modern hymns of praise; statements of faith and hope. It seems a pity that so often the tradition of treating all hymn-singing in the same way covers up so much of the variety.

This can be seen when trying to use hymns logically. The service has begun with a shout of praise. Then everyone sits. There is thus a break which tends to turn into a full stop. Then prayer is offered, starting with adoration. In fact, however, the two activities are really the same.

Similarly prayers of intercession and supplication are offered, ending with an "Amen". The subsequent hymn, especially if followed by notices, is isolated. Often, indeed, when discussing an order of worship, hymns are used as breaks to give the congregation a stretch or the Minister a breather. Why should such a hymn be isolated? Why, by the sheer mechanics of announcing it, playing it over and standing up is it necessary to cut it off from what has preceded?

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These examples raise two points immediately. The first is primary; the function of hymns. In our worship they take the place, though not entirely, of the corporate acts within Mattins or Evensong. Through them the congregation expresses its joint devotion as it does in the Lord's Prayer. If this is so, then they must be used in such a way as to imply this and not seem to be either a superimposed element or a framework. Also we must get out of the habit of regarding set words (and tunes!) all read and used together as any less "spiritual" than prayer offered with eyes shut and composed *ad lib.* "Praise my soul the King of Heaven" is thanksgiving as much as any "prayer of thanksgiving".

This leads to the second and mechanical point. Mechanics are not immaterial. Worship can be made or marred by the way it is done, which includes posture and action. In daily contacts we indicate welcome and respect by the insignificant action of standing when a stranger enters a room. This is not the place to go into detail on the appropriate actions in worship but only to indicate a few possibilities with regard to hymn singing.

i. Hymns need not always be prefaced by an announcement of number, recital of a verse or tune. Printed orders can overcome any prefaces; but even without that it is possible to announce the hymn some time before actually using it. Well-known tunes need no preliminary introduction or a minimal one to indicate which tune is being used.

ii. There is no law which ordains that we stand to sing and sit to pray. Thus in order to join a hymn to the previous or subsequent activity the same posture can be used for both. For example, in opening adoration hymn and prayer can be sung and offered standing; or communal supplication using a hymn, can be offered while still sitting after intercession, the number having been found beforehand.

iii. Hymns can be used to express congregational response as much as said responses. Thus intercession could be made by biddings followed by a verse used as a collect, as in a litany. Or the Eucharistic Thanksgiving could include, integrally, a hymn in place of the Sanctus, which was originally a hymn. Unfortunately there are few hymns that lend themselves to this easily.

iv. There is no reason why movement should not be introduced into hymn singing. A procession singing "Onward Christian soldiers", gives it some added meaning. "Lift up your heads, ye gates" while the Communion elements are being brought in, or "Just as I am" while taking up the collection gives content to these actions.

v. Chorale preludes are in fact, in Lutheran worship, a solo meditation on the theme of a hymn, using the tune played over before singing. This sort of introduction could have a valuable place, for instance, in linking the taking of the offering to the hymn of dedication, or in the pause before singing the hymn after the

sermon, to allow the congregation to be quiet and the minister to move from the pulpit.

vi. Hymns are also used as prefaces to stages in the liturgical action. "Lord thy Word abideth" can introduce the reading and preaching of the Word. "Hark the Herald Angels" or "Hail the day that sees Him rise" sets the worship into its place in the Christian calendar.

vii. After reading and preaching there should be an affirmation of the truth revealed or of faith in God. Other traditions use ancient psalms: e.g. Evensong has the Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis and Apostles Creed. Many hymns, e.g. Cowper's and Newton's, were written for just this. This is one of the appropriate places for metrical psalms and scripture.

These suggestions, it is submitted, are worth experimenting with and elaborating. We have at our disposal the product of hundreds of years of Biblical faith and devotion and an inherited tradition of freedom to use it as is most fitting for our present needs. This may be a small nettle but it ought to be grasped in the search after renewal in our time.

PAUL H. BALLARD.

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

THE STEWARDSHIP MOVEMENT, far from being an American stunt to raise money, is one of the great movements of the Spirit in our day, bringing spiritual renewal to countless Churches of various denominations throughout the world. Bishop Hans Lilje has said: "To know that with all that we are and all that we have we are God's stewards is the answer to a particularly deep yearning that people feel in our time, the yearning for a complete renewal of our life."

There is nothing new about the idea of Stewardship. It is as old as the Gospel. Indeed Stewardship is our human response to the Gospel—the good news of God's redemptive love in Jesus Christ. Stewardship is grounded in the Biblical doctrines of Creation ("Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us and not we ourselves, we are His people . . . Enter into His gates with thanksgiving". Psalm c, 3-4) and Redemption ("For ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your Spirit, which are God's". 1 Corinthians, vi, 20). To Clarence C. Stoughton, an ecumenical leader of the Stewardship Movement, Stewardship is "human thanksgiving for divine goodness and mercy".

No, there is nothing new about the idea of Stewardship. What is new is that Churches throughout the world are finding the Spirit revealing to them afresh what Stewardship means, and are experiencing renewal as they answer the divine call to become faithful stewards. What is also new is the practical plan which has been devised to present the challenge of Stewardship to the whole family of the Church, providing every member with specific, practical means of exercising his stewardship. This is what a Stewardship

Campaign is — a carefully thought out plan to present the challenge of Stewardship personally to every member of the Church family. The fact is that the vast majority of them, far from resenting this personal approach, gladly respond to it.

What has impressed both of us during our training with the Methodist Stewardship Organisation (which has so generously shared its experience with us) is that in the 170 Campaigns they have directed during these last three years not one has been a failure, though they have worked in many unpromising situations. As a general rule they expect a fully directed campaign to treble the weekly offerings or double the whole of the direct giving of a Church. Again and again they have found the Church quickened to new life spiritually, with increased congregations and a deeper sense of fellowship as a result of such a Campaign.

There are no short cuts or easy methods to success in a Stewardship Campaign. For every one of the many details of the complete plan there is a sound reason. A successful campaign involves the most detailed and careful preparation and is not cheaply run. It has been found, however, that the Church gains far more financially even during the first year than it has to spend, and the financial and spiritual gains thereafter give the Church new life and vigour. Already we have begun to receive invitations to conduct fully directed campaigns. It is only a limited number of such campaigns that we shall be able to conduct in any one year. If you are contemplating a Campaign or have any queries please write to us at the Baptist Stewardship Department, Baptist Church House. We shall be glad to do all we can to help.

E. UNGOED DAVIES. R. J. FINDLAY.