





This is to certify that the

thesis entitled

A HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE
CHRISTIAN CHURCHES AND CHURCHES OF CHRIST AS
REVEALED BY THE PULPIT ADDRESSES DELIVERED
AT THE NORTH AMERICAN CHRISTIAN CONVENTION
(1927 - 1977)
presented by

Keith Peter Keeran

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

____ Ph.D. ____ degree in Arts and Letters
(Interdisciplinary)

Robert T. Anderson

Major professor

Date 11-7-78

A HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE
CHRISTIAN CHURCHES AND CHURCHES OF CHRIST AS
REVEALED BY THE PULPIT ADDRESSES DELIVERED
AT THE NORTH AMERICAN CHRISTIAN CONVENTION
(1927 - 1977)

By

Keith Peter Keeran

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Interdisciplinary Doctoral Studies Program

1978

6105172

ABSTRACT

A HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES AND CHURCHES OF CHIRST AS REVEALED BY THE PULPIT ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT THE NORTH AMERICAN CHRISTIAN CONVENTION (1927 - 1977)

By

Keith Peter Keeran

The North American Christian Convention is one of the largest religious gatherings of its kind in the world, usually registering more than fifty thousand people from the United States and foreign countries. Planned and programmed by leaders of Christian Churches and Churches of Christ, the Convention offers a yearly platform for Biblical preaching and discussion on vital issues of Christian concern, and an opportunity for Christian people to share the experiences of fellowship with other Christians.

The development of the Churches of Christ and Christian Churches (known collectively as the American Restoration Movement) has not been steered by legislative conferences. Its impetus has been pulpit-centered. The Convention, without becoming a policy-making assembly, has supplied a crucial need by providing a medium for brotherhood-wide fellowship and stimulation. The church has benefited immeasurably from the spiritual and intellectual offerings of this, its chief forum for the communication of ideas. In short,

the Convention has been the most vital platform of a pulpit-centered people.

This study was designed to examine the pulpit addresses at the North American Christian Convention, 1927-1977. The investigation was divided into two major areas. Part I concerned the Convention's origin and purpose. Part II of the study concerned the ideas and issues which were treated by the Convention speakers.

The purpose of this study was to determine and define the issues and ideas with which the speakers were concerned and view them within the context of the religious--historical climate of which they were a part. Within such categories as the Bible, God, man, salvation, and the church; the convictions of the Convention speakers were compared with the prevailing thought of America's religious mainstream.

Without being a historical interpretation of the period or a critical investigation of the Convention messages, the research reflects the central body of Christian thought of an otherwise non-creedal religious movement. To know the North American Christian Convention is to know the thought which forms the basis for belief, attitude, and conduct among churches of the Restoration Movement.

The pulpit addresses delivered at the North American Christian Convention revealed that the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ have maintained an unusually stable belief system during the past fifty years. During the period from 1927 to 1977, the Convention continued to remain faithful to the purpose for which it was

Keith Peter Keeran

designed, namely, "to tell and hear some of the old things--those things most surely believed among us."

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

By no method of calculation can this dissertation be considered the product of any one individual. Rightly assessed, it represents not only the accumulation of the writer's experience, preparation, and reflection, but the indispensable contribution of his family, his parents, his professors, his former teachers, his colleagues, his students, and those whose influence, sacrifice, and cooperation have helped to make this research project possible.

In light of such acknowledgment, debts of gratitude are due to many whose names, for want of space and the fallibility of human memory, have regrettably been omitted, but particularly to Dr. Mary Schneider of the Department of Religious Studies for her assistance as the director of my doctoral program, and to Dr. William Hixson of the History Department and to Dr. David Ralph of the College of Communication Arts for their assistance throughout my program. Also, I wish to express my gratitude to Dr. Robert Anderson, Chairman of the Department of Religious Studies and to Dr. Madison Kuhn, Dean of the College of Arts and Letters for their inspiration. To my typists, Anita Zehr, Becky Foland Miller, and Nancy Heath whose tireless efforts at typing and retyping the manuscript required countless hours and tremendous patience, I also wish to express thanks.

But most of all I thank my wife Topsy who proofread this project and who along with my children: Keith Loran, Shannon Dean, and Angela Renae endured considerable neglect without complaint.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
PART I. THE NORTH AMERICAN CHRISTIAN CONVENTION		
I.	INTRODUCTION	2
	The Problem	2
	Significance of the Problem	3
	Review of Literature	6
	Methodology and Sources	6
	Plan of Reporting	9
	Footnotes	10
II.	THE AMERICAN RESTORATION MOVEMENT	11
	Introduction	11
	The Origin and Purpose of the Restoration Movement	13
	Twentieth Century Developments	24
	The Instrumental Music Controversy	25
	The Open Membership Controversy	28
	Fundamentalism and the Restoration Movement	32
	Footnotes	42
III.	THE NORTH AMERICAN CHRISTIAN CONVENTION	45
	Introduction	45
	Origin and Purpose	45
	Structure and Organization	52
	The Convention Speakers	55
	Footnotes	61
PART II. MAJOR ISSUES AND IDEAS		
IV.	THE BIBLE	64
	Introduction	64
	The Inspiration of the Bible	69
	The Bible and Evolutionary Theory	86
	Science and the Bible	96
	The Higher Criticism	98
	Studying the Bible	105
	Summary	107
	Footnotes	110

	Page
V. THE DOCTRINE OF GOD, MAN, AND SALVATION	117
Introduction	117
God, the Father	120
The Existence of God	121
The Divine Nature	130
Jesus Christ, the Son of God	137
The Holy Spirit	156
Man's Response	160
The Nature of Man	161
God's Plan for Redeeming Man	166
Summary	173
Footnotes	176
VI. THE CHURCH	187
Introduction	187
The Nature of the Church	187
The Kingdom	190
The Body of Christ	193
Sectarianism Within the Brotherhood	199
The Organization of the Church	204
The Worship of the Church	213
The Nature of Worship	214
The Acts of Worship	215
The Mission of the Church	218
The Church and Social Concern	219
The Church and Education	227
Summary	244
Footnotes	247
VII. CONCLUSION	258
APPENDICES	265
A. "The Folly of Open Membership"	266
B. Statement Read by Chairman Collis at Annual Meeting of Trustees of College of the Bible, May 24, 1918 .	282
BIBLIOGRAPHY	297

PART I.

THE NORTH AMERICAN CHRISTIAN CONVENTION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For half a century, the North American Christian Convention has been a significant American platform for the pronouncement of conservative religious thought. The Convention has been supported by and is designed to serve the religious movement known as the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ. This religious body, the fifth largest American church, has drawn heavily upon the spiritual and intellectual offerings of the Convention.

Since the first Convention was held in 1927, the largest annual gathering of members of the Christian Churches has been that which has assembled to hear the Convention addresses. In recent years, more than 25,000 listeners have made the annual pilgrimage to the Convention. The addresses which they have heard are representative of the thought and public presentation of spokesmen for the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ.

The Problem

The purpose of this study is to describe the pulpit addresses at the North American Christian Convention, 1927-1977. This overall problem is divided into a two-fold problem statement. First, what has been the nature of the origin and development of the North American Christian Convention, 1927-1977? This first

major area of investigation is subdivided into four constituent questions: How did the Convention originate? What have been the features of its growth and development? Who have comprised the Convention audiences? Who have been the Convention speakers?

Second, what has been the nature of the ideas and issues discussed at the North American Christian Convention, 1927-1977? This second major area of investigation is also subdivided into constituent questions: What major ideas and issues have been presented in the Convention addresses? What growth and development have occurred in the ideas and issues discussed in the Convention addresses? How have these ideas and issues been related to the religious thought and attitudes of the times? What has been the significance of these ideas and issues in the development of the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ?

Significance of the Problem

For several reasons, this study is thought to be of significance to students of religion, history, and communication.

First, the North American Christian Convention addresses represent some of the best pulpit-speaking produced by spokesmen for the Restoration Movement. Since its inception, the Program Committee of the Convention has prided itself upon selecting able speakers and thinkers of the church and has insisted upon careful and conscientious preparation. As a result, these addresses reflect the finest composition and delivery among speakers of the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ. Mark Collis, speaking of the

original Convention program in 1927 said: "No one should be put on this program who cannot be trusted to give the people his best thought, expressed in the very finest manner, and delivered with all the grace and force of which he is capable."¹

Second, the durability of the North American Christian Convention seems to indicate its significance as a platform for the expression of ideas and issues effecting the church. With roots reaching back to the "annual church meetings" of the 1820's, the Convention has flourished through a half century of social and political convulsion. Three Conventions were held in the "twenties," three in the "thirties," four in the "forties," and since 1950 the North American Christian Convention has assembled annually.

Third, the ideas and issues featured in the Convention addresses comprise a significant expression of the heart of the religious movement. From the very first program, hearers have testified that the pulpit addresses were both timely and representative of the movement's religious thought. Edwin V. Hayden's 1978 observation was typical:

Good listening is important to good preaching, anywhere. It was definitely so in the North American Christian Convention at Oklahoma City, July 11-14. The convention theme, "God Has Spoken," may have had something to do with it. When God's Word is faithfully proclaimed, His people listen. So the thousands who attended the preaching sessions in the Myriad Arena came to hear. Not all of them arrived in time for the opening prayers, but they were responsive, and they stayed to hear the preachers out. Solid applause greeted many statements in which God's word--or sometimes the preachers' and the audience's firm conviction--was brought to bear on present problems.²

As a result, the principal ideas woven through the estimated 700 addresses of this Convention series aptly reflect the distinguishing features of the religious movement.

Fourth, the Convention appears remarkably significant to the student of oral communication when judged in terms of its ability to attract and hold large audiences. This series, which provides metropolitan centers across America with their largest convention assemblies, is apparently among the most widely attended speaking platforms in America. The largest meeting of members of the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ is the audience which assembles each year to hear these Convention addresses. This gathering of twenty-five thousand or more is without question one of the largest annual religious assemblies.

Fifth, the pulpit addresses at the North American Christian Convention have apparently stimulated the spiritual and numerical growth of the movement. The unique organizational policy of this religious group has added to the significance of the North American Christian Convention as its chief platform for the communication of ideas. Because of an emphasis on local congregational autonomy, the church avoids ecclesiastical organization and conference assemblies. Consequently, without becoming a policymaking conference, the Convention has provided a basis for brotherhood fellowship and intellectual stimulation.

Unlike many Protestant church bodies, this movement has been guided from the pulpit and the convention and lecture platform,

rather than from legislative decisions reached around the conference tables of synod meetings. In short, the North American Christian Convention has been a vital speaking platform of a movement which has been sparked primarily from the pulpit.

Sixth, this study is important in light of the scarcity of scholarly literature dealing with the platform expression of conservative Christian thought. The North American Christian Convention thus comprises an untapped source of study in the history of Christianity in American culture and in the history of American public address.

Review of Literature

A review of all previous literature which might be relevant to this study indicates that the North American Christian Convention constitutes an untapped source of investigation in the study of Christian thought and American public address. A detailed search of church history and communication monographs, doctoral dissertations, microfilm abstracts, and church sources reveals that so scholarly treatment of the Convention has ever been attempted. Several studies which concern the history of the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ and biographies of individual Convention speakers were helpful.

Methodology and Sources

"The history and literature of speechmaking inform us not only in the art and practice of speechmaking, but serve admirably

to throw light on aspects of the general culture of which they are expressions."³ This statement indicates the area of greatest contribution served by this study. The North American Christian Convention is a platform which became a vital forum of ideas and inspiration for the religious group which it represents. For fifty years it has gathered to itself men who have grappled with the issues confronting the future of the church. To know the history of this convention series, to be acquainted with the men who came to speak and those who came to listen, to grasp the ideas which they tested and developed, is to know something ultimately of the historical and theological foundation of the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ.

This study employed the historical research method, which has been defined by Greg Phifer:

Historical method requires the student to seek out and critically evaluate the reports of observers of past events in order to describe accurately what happened, and to clarify, as best he can, the relations among those events.⁴

The use of the historical method in solving the research problem posed by this study involved two major steps: a reconstruction of the historical setting and an interpretation of the ideas and issues expressed in the pulpit addresses within the perspective of the religious movement which gave them birth. The acquisition of historical data was enhanced by the fact that some of the early policy makers of the Convention were still alive and available for interview. Personal interviews with O. A. Trinkle, Dean E. Walker, and Joseph H. Dampier afforded first-hand contact

with men who have served in the role of Convention president. In addition, appointments with Leonard G. Wymore, the current Convention Director; and information provided by regular attendants at the programs provided intimate insights into the half century of the Convention's development.

The classification of the pulpit addresses according to major thematic categories presented a seemingly insurmountable task. The ideas of each speaker were compressed into a concise abridgement, and each address was outlined so as to preserve its thought structure. Significant quotations indicative of the thematic emergence were recorded from each address. While most of the pulpit addresses presented but one major theme, the task was often made tedious by sermons which dealt with various major ideas. Ultimately, three major categories were selected to relate the historical and theological development of the Churches of Christ and Christian Churches during the period 1927-1977. These are the Bible; the Doctrine of God, Man, and Salvation; and the Church. Without being a historical interpretation of the period or a critical analysis of either message content or rhetorical processes employed by the Convention speakers, the research serves to reveal the central body of thought which forms the basis for belief, attitude, and conduct among churches of the Restoration Movement.

Research in the history of a religious forum becomes most significant when pursued in connection with important issues and ideas. One is sensitized to these ideas and issues by consulting

the various points of view which emerge from the problems and challenges faced by speakers and their listeners. Examination of the complementing and conflicting ideas of the representative spokesmen for a movement provides a historical awareness of the streams of thought flowing within the movement.

Plan of Reporting

With the discovery, recording, and organizing of the data into three thematic categories, a two-fold division of the study appeared most adequate in providing a means for reporting the findings in a unified and meaningful manner. Part One presents the North American Christian Convention as a historical institution, and Part Two concerns an analysis of the major ideas and issues of the Convention.

CHAPTER I

FOOTNOTES

¹Mark Collis, "The Convention Proposed for this Fall," Christian Standard (March 19, 1927): 269.

²Edwin V. Hayden, "Good Listening Enhanced Good Preaching," Christian Standard (September 10, 1978): 11.

³James H. McBath, "Speechmaking at the Chautaugua Assembly," 1874-1900 (Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1950), p. 9.

⁴"The Historical Approach," in Introduction to Graduate Study in Speech and Theater, ed. Clyde W. Dow (East Lansing, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1961), p. 53.

CHAPTER II

THE AMERICAN RESTORATION MOVEMENT

Introduction

To properly interpret and appreciate the speaking at the North American Christian Convention, one must be acquainted with the principle features of the religious movement which gave the platform its birth, which sustained its development, and to which it returned inestimable spiritual and intellectual nourishment.

As the nineteenth century dawned, sixteen states were in the Union with a population of some 5,250,000. Estimates show that only 3,000 to 3,500 churches were in the nation, and only 10 percent of the population claimed membership. By 1820 some 2,600,000 people, or 27 percent of the population lived west of the Appalachian Mountains.¹ The frontier increased its residents by nearly 200 percent between 1820 and 1840, while the nation as a whole gained only 80 percent. Ohio's population expanded from 50,000 in 1802 to 600,000 by 1820, becoming larger than Massachusetts. In 1809 New York had 100,000 people; Buffalo, Cincinnati, and St. Louis were frontier towns; and Chicago did not exist.²

The frontier man was individualism personified. He often wrote his own law, educated his own children, set his own bones, built his own house. He saw little need for a special priest to

intervene between himself and his Creator. The man on the American frontier was characterized by self-confidence and lack of respect for ecclesiastical authority. His individualism led him to believe that every man had an innate ability to discover religious truth simply by a rational investigation of Scriptures.³ The stage was set for a religious upheaval of widespread influence in America. The recently-gained religious liberty, the multiplying sects of a divided Christendom, and the rapid expansion of the American frontier with its corollary of religious indifference, were among the factors favorable to the birth of a unionistic, non-creedal, Bible-centered movement.

Religion in American culture has assumed a multiplicity of forms from the beginning. These religious traditions, which were primarily the offspring of the Protestant Reformation, were introduced early as settlers came from various European countries. Lutherans, Reformed and Anabaptists from many lands were commingled with Anglicans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Quakers, and later Methodists. Before long some important indigenous bodies were added to the transplanted ones. Robert T. Handy has compared the American religious scene to "a tropical jungle, where stout and ancient trees are crowded by mushrooming new growth."⁴ This indigenous "new growth" is the primary thrust of the current investigation.

As the eighteenth century drew to a close, preachers in Scotland, Ireland, and America began to plead for a restoration of New Testament Christianity. The two fundamental principles

that guided the efforts of these spokesmen were that all believers in Christ should be united, and that the only possible basis for such unity was the acceptance of the Bible as the absolute authority in religion. The resulting upheaval, often termed "The American Restoration Movement," is today America's largest indigenous religious movement and the fifth largest Protestant group on American soil.⁵

The Origin and Purpose of the Restoration Movement

Before a movement bursts into flame, there lies that period when isolated sparks shine forth for a moment. Hence, the great figures of the Reformation, Luther and Calvin, were preceded by others with similar determination and goals. Centuries before the Reformation began its sweep through Germany, the Waldenses of northern Italy and southern France had struggled and died in conflict against Roman Catholic authority; in the fourteenth century the bones of Wycliffe were dug up in England and burned for his independent views and practices; one century before Luther posted his "Ninety-Five Thesis" on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenburg, the Bohemian John Huss had been burned at the stake. These protests against corruption in the church and moves to exalt the Bible played their role in bringing Christendom to the kindling point at the eve of the Reformation.

In like manner, who can say at what moment the Restoration Movement began? Because of the timely and effective leadership provided by Thomas Campbell and his brilliant son, Alexander, these

men are often considered the founders of the movement. However, the restoration activity was well underway in America before the Campbells migrated from Ireland in the early 1800's. James O'Kelly in Virginia and North Carolina, Abner Jones in New England, and Barton W. Stone in Kentucky, had announced restoration intentions well before the Campbells set foot on American soil.

James O'Kelly was a minister in the Methodist Church who favored the congregational form of government and the New Testament as the only book of discipline. When his own church, under the leadership of Coke and Asbury, adopted the episcopal form of church polity, O'Kelly and his friends withdrew. At Manakin Town, North Carolina, on Christmas Day, 1793, the secession was accomplished. O'Kelly and his followers adopted the name "Christian," and acknowledged Christ as the only head of the church and the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice.⁶ The movement which he started was later swallowed up in the larger effort, but he and his followers deserve credit as pioneers of the restoration idea.

Similarly, Abner Jones, a Baptist, of Hartland, Vermont, early in the nineteenth century began to urge the abandonment of human creeds and disciplines and a return to the doctrines and practice of the New Testament. From 1800 to 1803 he organized congregations at Lyndon, Vermont, and at Bradford and Pierpont, New Hampshire. Jones and his followers refused to wear any name except "Christian."⁷ Perhaps the most significant movement that preceeded the Campbells was that led by Barton W. Stone. A

Presbyterian, Stone was educated at the famous school of David Caldwell in North Carolina. In the spring of 1801, Stone attended a revival meeting in Logan County, Kentucky, conducted by James McGrady and other Presbyterian ministers. Excited, he returned to his congregation at Cane Ridge, Kentucky, where in August 1801 he began the celebrated Cane Ridge Revival; perhaps the most extraordinary revival ever held in America. The attendance was estimated at from thirty to fifty thousand. Four or five preachers frequently spoke at the same time in different parts of the encampment. Thousands of people professed conversion, and the effect of the meeting was felt all over Kentucky and the Mid-west.⁸ At the close of the revival, an attempt to "Calvinize" the converts was opposed by Stone and others who, while Presbyterians, had adopted arminianism. In 1802, six preachers--Richard McNemar, John Thompson, John Dunlavy, Robert Marshall, David Purviance, and Barton W. Stone--withdrew from the Presbyterian Church and united to form the independent Springfield Presbytery. They published their position in a book called The Apology of the Springfield Presbytery. In this volume, all human creeds were denounced and an appeal was made to return to the Bible alone. In less than a year, it occurred to this group that the very existence of the Springfield Presbytery "savored of the party spirit" and damaged their plea for freedom from the rule of human organization. On June 28, 1804, they issued "The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery." It declared the right of self-government for each congregation,

protested against religious division and party splits, and insisted on the Bible as the sole authority in religion. The document declared: "We will that this body die, be dissolved, and sink into union with the body of Christ at large; for there is but one Body and one Spirit, even as we called in one Hope of our calling."⁹

While Stone was advancing restoration ideals in Kentucky, Thomas Campbell arrived from Ireland where he had served as a minister for the Seceder Presbyterian Church. Due to ill health he emigrated to America in 1807, and settled in Washington County, Pennsylvania. Once in this country, he was received into the Associate Synod of North America, which represented all Seceder Presbyterians. He was assigned to the Presbytery of Chartiers in western Pennsylvania, which appointed him to an itinerant ministry among Irish immigrants. He was among many of his own people, some having immigrated from his own part of Ireland. His views, already expanding back in Europe, developed even more in the New World. He was not prepared for the narrow sectarian restrictions that his presbytery placed upon him--to minister to and serve the Lord's Supper to Seceder Presbyterians only. He was soon under their judgement for disregarding sectarian differences in that he served communion to all Presbyterians.

The minutes of the presbytery, which tell the story of his trial indicate that there was more involved than his liberal practices as a preacher on horseback. It was not simply that he had ecumenical tendencies, but that he had serious misgivings about the theology of his church. Seven charges were brought against

him, and these were debated in various hearings for two years, but about midway through the dispute Campbell withdrew from the presbytery and left the Presbyterian ministry. The charges had to do with his opposition to creeds as terms of communion and fellowship, his sympathy for the lay ministry, his desire to associate with other churches, his idea that men can preach without being called, and his belief that a believer can live in this world without sinning. He more or less admitted guilt to all of these except the last one. The presbytery suspended him. He appealed to the Synod in Philadelphia. After a week or so of hearings his suspension was rescinded, but he was rebuked for his deviations from the faith. The presbytery resented his reinstatement and therefore gave him no appointment. He was finally suspended again for not submitting to their authority.¹⁰

The break with the Presbyterian Church was complete. By the time the presbytery deposed him from "the office of Holy Ministry," he had already written the famous "Declaration and Address," and had organized the Christian Association of Washington, Pennsylvania. The association was to help "unite the Christians in all the sects." It was not to be another church. It was Campbell's hope that many such societies would arise across the nation, dedicated to the task of reforming the church and restoring its unity. Before the Association in 1809, he delivered the "Declaration," which is still called the theological Magna Charta of the Restoration Movement.¹¹ This distinctive document called for reform through unity. It is this feature that made the Campbell-Stone movement unique; it pled

for a unity of all believers as well as a restoration of the primitive faith. The idea of restoration goes far back and can be evidenced in the Anabaptists and Waldensians, but the twin streams of restoration and unity were distinctive features of the Restoration Movement in America.

Campbell's document set forth the principles of unity. The church, he insisted, is by its very nature one, and cannot help but be one, if it is God's church. Nothing can be made a term or basis of unity except what is expressly taught by Christ and His apostles. Nothing can be made a term of fellowship that is not as old as the New Testament. Inferences from scripture may be true doctrine, but they cannot be made binding upon others further than they perceive them to be so. Doctrinal systems may have value, but Campbell insisted that they cannot be made essential to the faith since they are beyond the understanding of many. Full knowledge of the Bible is not necessary in order for fellowship to be extended, and no one was to be required to make a profession which was more extensive than his understanding. Campbell believed that division by its very nature was sinful, nor did he believe that opinions should be made tests of fellowship. He contended that the primitive faith as revealed in the New Testament should determine the ordinances of the church.

The "Declaration and Address" was the first document to definitely and comprehensively proclaim the "plea" of the Restoration Movement. Its thirteen propositions may be summarized as follows: The church of Christ is "essentially, intentionally and

constitutionally one." That although this unity presupposes and permits the existence of separate congregations or societies, there should be perfect harmony and unity of spirit among all of them. That the Bible is the only rule of faith and practice for Christians. That the Old and New Testaments alone contain the authoritative constitution of the Church of Christ. That no human authority has power to amend or change the original constitution and laws of the church. That inferences and deductions from the Scriptures, however valuable, cannot be made binding upon the consciences of Christians. That differences of opinion with regard to such inferences shall not be made tests of fellowship or communion. That faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God is a sufficient profession to entitle a man or woman to become a member of the Church of Christ. That all who have made such a profession, and who manifest their sincerity by their conduct, should love each other as brethren and as members of the same body and joint-heirs of the same inheritance. That division among Christians is antichristian, antisciptural, unnatural and to be abhorred. That neglect of the revealed will of God and the introduction of human innovations are and have been the causes of all the corruptions and divisions that have ever taken place in the Church of God. That all that is necessary to secure the highest state of purity and perfection in the church is to restore the original ordinances and constitution as exhibited in the New Testament. That any additions to the New Testament program which circumstances may seem to

require, shall be regarded as human expedients and shall not be given a place of higher authority in the church than is permitted by the fallible character of their origin.¹²

Campbell had the first printed text of the "Declaration" with him when he met his son Alexander and the family on a road in western Pennsylvania, October 19, 1809, following their forty-four day voyage across the Atlantic. Thomas Campbell met his son with some uneasiness, not sure how Alexander would react to the account of his treatment by the Presbyterian Synod and Presbytery and his decision to preach independently to people of all denominations. Strangely enough, Alexander, thousands of miles away, had been led to an almost identical position. After reading the "Declaration and Address," Alexander determined to dedicate his life to the dissemination of the principles and views set forth in the document.¹³

When his father left for America, Alexander, although only nineteen years old, had been placed in charge of Thomas Campbell's academy at Rich Hill, Ireland. When the older Campbell had been in America a year, he sent word to his family that they should join him. As the family began their voyage, however, a storm wrecked the ship off the coast of Scotland and for a time they gave themselves up as lost. While in this condition, like Martin Luther in a similar position, Alexander Campbell dedicated himself totally to God's service if his life should be spared.¹⁴ The shipwreck caused them to put off their coming to America until the following season. This delay had great influence in the training of Alexander

for he attended the University of Glasgow that year. During this period he became personally acquainted with leaders among independent Christian groups with which his father had also been acquainted. Greville Ewing and Robert and James Haldane were the closest of Alexander Campbell's friends. All of these men were agreed in their emphasis upon restored primitive Christianity. It should also be noted that both Campbells were influenced by the religious ideas of John Locke, especially as developed in his Letter Concerning Toleration and Essay on Human Understanding. In the former, Locke asserted:

Since men are so solicitous about the true church, I would only ask them here, by the way, if it be not more agreeable to the Church of Christ to make the conditions of her communion consist in such things, and such things only, as the Holy Spirit has in the Holy Scriptures declared, in express words, to be necessary to salvation.¹⁵

Alexander Campbell's own defection from the Presbyterians occurred at precisely the same time that his father's name was being erased from the roll of the Chartiers' Presbytery in America. The year was 1809; the place was Glasgow, Scotland. The occasion was the semi-annual communion service of the Anti-Burgher Seceder Presbyterian Church. Eight hundred Scots had gathered for the service which excluded other kinds of Presbyterians. Alexander was troubled about breaking bread in such a sectarian atmosphere. Having been examined by the elders and found worthy of communion, he had been given a metal token by which he could gain access to the service. Token in hand, he waited for the last of eight or nine tables to be served, hoping he might resolve his doubts in those

last moments. With his doubts unresolved, he dropped the token in the plate as it came by, but refused to break the bread or drink the cup, believing that it was a communion with Christ from which other believers were barred. He turned away and walked out; and life was never again the same for Alexander Campbell. His biographer and physician, Robert Richardson, wrote of that occasion: "It was at this moment that the struggle in his mind was completed, and the ring of the token, falling upon the plate, announced the instant at which he renounced Presbyterianism forever--the leaden voucher becoming thus a token not of communion but of separation."¹⁶ That "moment" is generally regarded as the beginning of the Restoration Movement in America. While James O'Kelly and Barton Stone had already begun restoration efforts in America, and Thomas Campbell had written the most formative document in the Movement's history, it took Alexander Campbell to make the Movement what it came to be; and the turning point in his life was that dramatic moment in which he turned his back against the party of his fathers and resolved to be a free man in Christ.

In 1823, Alexander Campbell, who had replaced his father as the movement's most effective leader, broadened his agitation for reform through the medium of the press. He began to publish a periodical, The Christian Baptist. From 1830 to 1868 this periodical, under a new name, The Millennial Harbinger, formed the backbone of the movement's literature. Under its influence, individual congregations all across the midwestern and southern portions of the United States repudiated their denominational creeds in an

attempt to rely upon the Bible as their sole authority in faith and practice.¹⁷

In spite of the difficulties of travel and communication, these separate streams of dissatisfaction within existing religious conditions slowly became aware of one another and began to merge into one significant restoration effort. By 1820, the works of Jones in New England and O'Kelly in Virginia and North Carolina, generally united in purpose with the action of Barton W. Stone. In 1831, the followers of Campbell and the followers of Stone met in Lexington, Kentucky, to explore merger possibilities. At the meeting's end, a new and significantly large church body, popularly called the Disciples of Christ, was born. "Raccoon" John Smith, one of the influential restoration preachers, gave the concluding address. He declared: "Let us, then, my Brethren, be no longer Campbellites or Stonites, new lights or old lights, or any other kind of lights, but let us come to the Bible and to the Bible alone, as the only book in the world that can give us all the light we need."¹⁸

Alexander Campbell did not profess that his teachings were new and original but that they were true, and the truth he proclaimed rested upon the authority and inspiration of the infallible Scriptures. The movement was begun not to found something different in organization and theology, but to restore the ancient order of things as revealed in the Word of God.

From the outset the purposes of Stone and Campbell included those tenets held dear to the present stage of the movement. A

horror was displayed against human creeds and pretensions of a clergy class. They sought authorization for faith and practice from the Scriptures alone--the court of final appeal was the Word of God. They maintained the independence of the local church and sought unity among Christians by conformity to the New Testament pattern. The atonement of Jesus Christ was not limited in a Calvinistic way, but confession and obedience to God's Son was an invitation open to all.

Twentieth Century Developments

The churches of the Restoration Movement were one of the few religious bodies that did not divide over the issues of the Civil War. Although the slavery question and the debate as to whether the Christian could take up arms during civil strife caused violent repercussions in the movement, the absence of centralized organization spared the brotherhood from a major split. The post-war period, however, saw this bright outlook and unified effort quickly darken. Religious unity had been maintained in the face of political division, but dark clouds of dissension began casting their shadows over the church concerning issues which were considered matters of Biblical faith by some and matters of personal opinion by others.

The two principle issues of disagreement concerned the use of instrumental music in worship and the practice of "open membership"--receiving the pious unimmersed into the fellowship of the church. Thus, a gradual and almost imperceptible separation began

to occur as the conservatives alleged that the progressives were departing from the original platform under Campbell and Stone. By the turn of the century the lines of division were being drawn on both of these issues.

The Instrumental Music Controversy

Shortly after the Civil War and just a month after Alexander Campbell's death, Moses E. Lard wrote in his Quarterly that the Restoration Movement would never divide. Now that it had withstood the turmoil of war, nothing could divide it.¹⁹ Restoration leaders were still talking that way in 1883. David Lipscomb, editor of the Gospel Advocate wrote:

We have never seen a circumstance in which we were willing to advise division in a church of Christ. Our friends have frequently, when evils have entered a church, blamed us for not advising division, withdrawal from a church, etc. They have chided us with cowardice in action--we plead this. We are too cowardly to advise a step in religion never advised by the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God so far as we have learned, never saw a church of God so corrupted as to advise withdrawal from it.²⁰

Lipscomb's language was both forthright and consistent with the ideals laid down by the pioneers of the movement. His views were conservative, though moderate. He opposed instrumental music, which was then in no more than a dozen congregations, but he refused to make it a test of fellowship.

The question of the use of instrumental music in public worship was the result of two conflicting interpretations of the church. There were, on the one hand, those who believed the church should move on with the rest of the world and adapt the spirit of

the New Testament to conditions that were in constant flux. They held that, when not forbidden by the New Testament, they were free to adapt their program to changing needs. On the other hand, there were those who believed the matter of the church was fixed for all time, and the fact that certain things were not sanctioned was sufficient ground for rejecting them. The men on both sides were equally honest, but they had a different approach to the issues that were raised. It should be noted that those who opposed the use of instrumental music in public worship were not "anti-progressive," but rather "anti-digressive;" they were opposed to any digression from what they understood to be the divinely instituted worship of God. They did not argue that there must be explicit authority for every accessory of worship such as meeting houses, pulpits, pews, hymn books, etc, but only that every element of worship must be scripturally authorized. They insisted that there was either precept or precedent for sermon, song, prayer, scripture-reading, and the Lord's Supper, but none for instrumental music.

All historians among the Restoration Movement churches credit Dr. L. L. Pinkerton, of Lexington, Kentucky, with introducing the first musical instrument into the worship of the church, in 1859. By 1889 division over the use of instrumental music seemed inevitable. Daniel Sommer, editor of the Octographic Review in Indianapolis, embarked on a plan to bring the pro-instrument people to account. He arranged for a mass meeting of the faithful at Sand Creek, Illinois, which attracted six thousand

people. By the meeting's end it was determined that those who use the instrument could not and would not be regarded as brethren.²¹ Interestingly, David Lipscomb had by this time, shifted his position from one of moderation to one of exclusivism.

In 1906, S. N. North, director of the United States Census Bureau, was confused with the data he had on Christian Churches, Churches of Christ, and Disciples of Christ. He wrote to David Lipscomb to determine if Churches of Christ should be considered separate. Lipscomb had already prepared a list of "faithful" churches and preachers. He informed North that a separate listing would be appropriate.

Unity in Diversity.--To Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone, and their long line of descendants, the only unity that had ever been or ever could be was, and is, unity in diversity. This concept was the very genius of the American Restoration Movement. The pioneers not only saw the essential oneness of the church, even in the maze of sectarian divisions, but they realized that unity could find outward expression only in diversity of opinion. So their plea became "in essentials unity, in non-essentials (opinions) liberty, in all things love." Restoration advocates could not accept his slogan and argue for unity only on the ground of conformity. They affirmed that there must be unanimity or conformity in matters of faith--truths and principles that are clearly and distinctly set forth in scripture, but diverse areas subject to various interpretations must be kept open and free.

Over the years, this philosophy of Restoration has been the prevailing and guiding influence of every North American Christian Convention. Hence, the programs have included names from those churches which do not choose to use instrumental music in public worship as well as many who employ it as an aid to singing. The finest spirit is expressed toward representatives of each group by the other. The Convention has proven to be a demonstration of unity in diversity.

The Open-Membership Controversy

"Open-membership" was the practice of some Christian Churches and Churches of Christ of admitting into full voting membership in the congregation persons who had never been immersed (baptized), but wished to transfer membership from some denominational group.

The very first church which might be considered a definite congregation to the American Restoration Movement, the Brush Run Church where Thomas Campbell preached, was, in 1811, an "open-membership" congregation. That is, there were many unimmersed persons in its membership, including Thomas Campbell himself. At this time, the baptismal question had not been raised. Later, after careful and long deliberation, Thomas and Alexander Campbell and their wives, were immersed and the apparent New Testament position on baptism by immersion was adopted. However, as the twentieth century began to dawn "open-membership" was both considered and adopted by some restoration congregations. This move

away from the conservative New Testament position of the Campbells was not a new "adventure in understanding" but represented a repudiation of some of the distinctive insights which were arrived at by deep study, soul-searching, and sacrificial obedience by early leaders of the Restoration Movement.

It is also true that Barton W. Stone, who was the leader of the "Christian Church" movement in Kentucky, did not hold quite the same views on the significance of baptism held by the Campbells and their followers. While he believed in "immersion for the forgiveness of sins," his general emphasis on the importance of "spiritual experience and Christian character" as the main thrust of Christian preaching caused him to think of baptism as of little practical concern. The influence of such views may well have been in the background of some liberal attitudes toward "open-membership."

In tracing the history of open-membership in a thesis submitted to Butler University for the Bachelor of Divinity degree, which was later published in the Christian Standard,²² Carl S. Ledbetter said of the origin of the question:

L. L. Pinkerton, it seems, was the earliest open advocate of the practice. In the Christian Standard of 1873, appeared a series of articles over Mr. Pinkerton's name entitled, "No Immersion--No Membership in a Church of the Reformation." . . . Pinkerton's position was that if left to him, he would admit the un-immersed, yet he himself felt that baptism and immersion meant "one and the same thing."²³

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the rise of Protestant liberalism and the urbanization of many congregations tended to further the open-membership cause in many

areas. It is significant that the combination of liberalism in theology and an urban location is seen in practically every instance where this practice was adopted. Sydney E. Ahlstrom names "the philosopher, psychologist of religion, and theological radical Edward S. Ames, and the biblical scholar Herbert L. Willet" both associated with the Chicago Divinity House as the most eminent Disciple liberals. He then adds: "Immeasurably more influential was Charles Clayton Morrison, who in 1908 founded the Christian Century and made it a potent ecumenical, socially oriented journal."²⁴ Morrison promoted open-membership in a series of articles in the Christian Century in 1911. Discussing the men most responsible for the open-membership movement among the Christian churches and churches of Christ, and against whom the greatest fight had been made, Ledbetter cited Ames, Morrison and Willet as "the most vital and forceful proponents of the open-membership program in this century."²⁵

Debates were hot and personalities entered heartily into the discussions. The problem of open-membership rested principally in a question about the Scriptures, their historicity and authority. The relaxation of insistence on Scriptural immersion indicated, to the conservatives, a prior relaxation of conviction concerning the Scriptures themselves. Hence, the controversy over open-membership, apparently placed the churches of the Restoration Movement squarely in the middle of the Modernist-Fundamentalist controversy. Ahlstrom states that these churches along with the Northern Presbyterian

Church and the Northern Baptist Convention "were torn by the Fundamentalist controversy far more violently than other denominations."²⁶ Stewart G. Cole also states in his significant book, The History of Fundamentalism: "At the present time [1931] the Disciples' denomination is more seriously divided than is any other evangelical people in America."²⁷

Although no "official" break occurred between the conservatives and the liberals due to the autonomous nature of the individual congregations, there is currently no fellowship between the two groups. In fact, The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is no longer considered, in a practical sense, to be a part of the American Restoration Movement, in that it has admittedly forsaken the historic plea to restore the ancient order which prevailed in the church of the first century. Liberal Disciple historian, A. W. Fortune, well summarized some of the differences to be found between the liberals of today and the pioneers of yesterday:

There have been some radical changes in the church since the days of Barton Stone and the Campbells. If they were to come back and visit our churches today, they would not feel at home. They might feel that we have departed from the faith. There have been many changes in the organization. They would find societies, especially of the women and young people, of which they had not dreamed. Instead of the elders and deacons managing the affairs of the church, they would find administrative boards, of which the heads of departments are members. They would perhaps be amazed when they found that there are women on these administrative boards.²⁸

Further emphasizing the departure of Disciple liberals from the Restoration Movement in particular and conservative Christianity in general, Joseph W. Grundner wrote in his Christian Denominations:

The Disciples of Christ have departed farthest in doctrine from Christianity. The fundamental principle of their system is rationalism. . . . They reject many of the supernatural truths of faith, including the eternal generation of the Son and the divinity of the Holy Ghost.²⁹

The liberals and conservatives are further distinguished as separate groups when growth rate statistics are considered.

C. Stanley Lowell, in his book The Ecumenical Mirage declared:

The churches with the most evangelistic vigor are the non-ecumenical bodies. The biggest gainer by far during the the last two decades has been the nonecumenical Churches of Christ which even boast of the fact that they have no denominational connectionalism whatsoever. Their rate of growth was 116 per cent from 1940-50 and it was 222 per cent from 1950-60! For an enlightening comparison place these figures along side of the ultra-ecumenical sister denomination, the Disciples of Christ. This denomination recorded a gain of less than 1 per cent between 1940 and 1950 and 5-1/2 per cent between 1950 and 1960.³⁰

The North American Christian Convention was born out of the controversy of the twenties. It was a reaction against and response to modern religious liberalism. It continues to function as the principle voice and reflection of New Testament Christianity embodied in those churches identified historically and doctrinally with the 19th century American Restoration Movement and the first century Church.

Fundamentalism and the Restoration Movement

The Fundamentalist controversy which affected the churches of the American mainstream during the first three decades of the twentieth century, was paralleled by the forementioned smaller but not less disastrous controversy in the Restoration Movement. These

two strivings, whether rising from the same or separate sources issued into two spiritual contests, the contestants of which were labeled "liberal" and "conservative." One was a widespread theological struggle, the other was contained within a single religious body. The widespread controversy began in renowned theological centers. The smaller struggle took the form of intercongregational and interinstitutional strife. While different, both the fundamentalist controversy and the debate over "open-membership" were started at about the same time, though as with all struggles it is difficult to say precisely when. In like manner, both reached unofficial climaxes at approximately the same time. The larger controversy drew towards conclusion at Dayton, Tennessee, in 1925. The smaller struggle approached its climax at Memphis, Tennessee, in 1926.

In the realm of broad and basic theological dogma restorationists and fundamentalists were in essential agreement. While it is true that even the most extremely fundamental of the fundamentalists churches subscribed to certain doctrines which restorationists considered to be "liberal" innovations, this in no way suggests that they were to be found even further to the right than fundamentalism on the doctrinal continuum. As shall be seen later, their argument with mainstream conservative Protestantism did not center in theological detail but in the very nature of the church. If they were not to the right, neither were they to the left of fundamentalism. The historian of the era would not have discovered restorationists among those many critics labeling fundamentalism as a

hyperconservative cause deserving to fail because of its overly orthodox interpretation of basic Christian doctrine.

Were restorationists also fundamentalists? Fundamentalism is describable in terms of its origin, creed, and disposition. Ernest Sandeen's definitive study, The Roots of Fundamentalism identifies the two movements which converged to form the twentieth century phenomena known as fundamentalism. These are British millenarianism "especially the form of futurism taught by John Nelson Darby and known . . . as dispensationalism;"³¹ and the deeply Calvinistic Princeton theology. Sandeen uncovered no evidence indicating that a Disciple of Christ ever attended any millenarian conference or wrote for any of the periodicals published by them.³² While concurring with other historians (Ahlstrom, Funiss, Cole) that the Disciples of Christ were seriously divided by the controversy of the 1920's, Sandeen interestingly concludes:

In this case, millenarian beliefs did not contribute to the dispute. In fact, it has proved impossible to find more than a handful of Disciples represented in millenarian activities. The denomination seems to have been practically immune to millenarian ideas, possibly because of its strong anti-Calvinist theological stance. At any rate, millenarianism does not help explain the issues or outcome of the struggle in the Disciples denomination during the 1920's.³³

If restorationists can in no way be identified with the converging "roots" of fundamentalism; if indeed they were theologically opposed to both dispensational millenarianism and Calvinism, it seems unlikely that they were a part of and in sympathy with the fundamentalist movement. It therefore appears that Cole's extensive treatment of the Disciples of Christ in his History of Fundamentalism

is misplaced, and that the controversy in their ranks must be explained in terms other than fundamentalism.

Furthermore, the principles upon which the Restoration Movement was based may be clearly distinguished from fundamentalism. With regard to creed, restorationists held that their faith was in a Person--Jesus the Christ, not in a series of propositions. Hence, a believer need not state his views on the nature of Scripture, atonement, the second coming of Christ or many other important doctrines. In contrast, fundamentalism "centered on creeds, and not deeds. Truth had no relationships, as it were, unless it was accompanied by an open declaration of faith in specific statements, conceived as statements of truth."³⁴

In addition, the Campbellian approach to Scripture was different from that of the fundamentalists. In place of a Biblical positivism or an uncritical reading of the Bible considered equally authoritative in all its parts, Alexander Campbell called for careful attention to the data of "historical criticism." That is, every text must be interpreted in the light of the total historical situation which occasioned it and to which it was addressed. Who wrote the passage, to whom, under what circumstances, for what purpose, in what linguistic form? To the restorationists, these were some of the essential questions which must be put to every Biblical text if the Word of God was to be understood.

Campbell noted that the Bible contained both supernatural or revealed truth and historical material. Apparently the function of inspiration in supernaturally revealed truth differed somewhat

from the inspiration of written history. Further, Campbell argued for the progressive character of the revelation disclosed in Scripture. In all his study of the Bible, Campbell made use of the best scholarship of his day.

The fathers of the Restoration Movement considered the documents of the Bible to be witnesses to Christ, hence, their faith was not in the Bible but in the Christ. Even so, they considered the Scriptures a reliable and faithful testimony to Him in whom they were saved.

In the judgement of the restorationists, fundamentalism accented private aspects of orthodox belief to the serious neglect of the doctrine of the church. To be saved was one thing to the fundamentalist; to be a member of the church was something else. For this reason fundamentalists neglected or at best minimized the importance of the sacraments. If the church was of secondary importance, then baptism and the Lord's Supper were not essential concerns. This view of the church had its effective origin in the teachings of John Nelson Darby. Darby, the high priest of "dispensational premillennialism," held that the church was a parenthesis in history; an institution created by God because the Jews had crucified Christ--a tragedy which God had not planned or even anticipated. Restorationists, on the other hand, considered the church to have been a part of the divine design even "before the foundation of the world," hence, they considered the sacraments as indispensable marks of the church--a fact which makes clear why the

controversy over open-membership caused chaos and schism in the Restoration Movement but was not even contemplated by fundamentalists.

In disposition, the fundamentalist was characteristically dogmatic, sectarian, and alert for intimations of heresy in everyone except himself. He interpreted the Bible legalistically and was intolerant of alternative understandings. Fundamentalism displayed great reluctance to acknowledge the validity of a profession of Christian faith which did not subscribe to every article of its creed. Unless a person held to the theory of the verbal and plenary inspiration of Scripture, the complete inerrancy of its autographs, and the authority of Scripture-legalistically applied, he could not be genuinely Christian. The whole Bible stood or fell as a unit. The smallest discrepancy rendered the entire revelation questionable.

In contrast to fundamentalism, the spirit of the Campbellian movement was apparently one of openness and generosity toward all. They did not claim to be the only Christians but "Christians only." Inherent in the ethos of restorationism was an unwillingness to identify with any doctrinal tradition. They were not Augustinians, Lutherans, Calvinists, Wesleyans, or even Campbellites. Restorationists appreciated the contribution of these and many other scholars in the history of the church without becoming their disciples. They considered themselves disciples of Christ. This was surely one of the implications of their motto, "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are

silent." For this reason there were written no restorationist textbooks in theology, or official statements of doctrine. They were content to accept the writings of the Old and New Testaments as the record of events in which God revealed himself and His will to mankind. The treatises of devout and able men, while acknowledged with respect, were considered human opinion.

On the surface, the average historian of the period from 1900 to 1930 might have been prone to speculation. He may even have guessed that the conservative and autonomous Churches of Christ and Christian Churches were an off-shoot of the liberal Disciples of Christ denomination, created by violence in the mainstream of controversy. Such is the interpretation of Stewart G. Cole's treatment, "The 'Restoration Movement' in the Disciples Denomination" in his History of Fundamentalism.³⁵ Incompatible with Cole's statement, but equally erroneous, is Louis Gasper's assessment of the controversy's outcome within the Disciples of Christ:

Denominational strife was rampant during the 1920's particularly in the North among the Baptists, Presbyterians, and Disciples of Christ. By 1929 the Disciples of Christ, however, discovered a formula to settle its differences without division, something which the other two churches were unfortunately unable to do.³⁶

Unfortunately the formula of which Gasper writes was a well-kept secret, for in 1926 as the International Convention of Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) convened in Memphis, Tennessee, the debate over open-membership became so heated and the controversy so intense and the cause so hopeless that the conservatives walked

out, severing permanently their connection with the liberals who now controlled most of the denomination's agencies, including the powerful United Christian Missionary Society. James DeForst Murch described the circumstances and consequences of the 1926 convention:

The U.C.M.S.'s own white-wash of the open-membership charges was featured in a report of a "Commission to the Orient," headed by Cleveland J. Kleihaver, minister of the open-membership University Church, Seattle. Mark Collis, W. D. Cunningham, and other evangelicals who dared to take the platform to state their grievances were insulted and made to appear as fools. The official Memphis Convention was a complete "Vindication" and victory for the liberal cause, and many conservatives went home determined that they would never again set foot in such a national gathering. . . . The United Society now became a test of fellowship which sundered old ties at local as well as national and state levels.³⁷

The conservatives retreated to the Pantages Theater, a short distance from the Memphis Convention Center. There, before a capacity crowd, several sermons were preached decrying the practice of open-membership. The most notable address in this series was delivered by P. H. Welshimer, who would in subsequent years serve three terms as president of the North American Christian Convention.³⁸ His address, "The Folly of Open-Membership" is included as an appendix. It is representative of the conservative protest against the practice of open-membership. Groundwork was laid for the first meeting in this significant series of conventions to be held the following year in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The item of controversy traditionally assigned to the division among Disciples as its dissension producing cause was the

practice of open-membership; but did this item of debate go fully to the heart of the schism between conservatives and liberals? Is there explained in open-membership the essence of the split and schism? It was, unquestionably, the tangible, emotion-packed issue of specific contention; an issue so tangible that the leading thinkers of the movement were compelled to make a choice. With the choosing came the contention which split homes, congregations, and severed an entire movement.

This was the issue of division, but there is a difference between issues and causes. It may be soundly stated that open-membership was not the primary cause but rather secondary. It was the issue; the result. The result was occasioned by the real root cause: a loss of respect among some men in the movement for the "New Testament as a perfect constitution for the worship, discipline, and government of the New Testament Church, and as a perfect rule for the particular duties of its members."³⁹ That premise from Thomas Campbell's "Declaration and Address" was no longer acceptable to liberal Disciples. The dramatic loss of confidence in the Bible which was sweeping across the nation in the wake of evolution and higher criticism was no respecter of church boundry lines. Conservatives charged that it had slipped over into the Disciple camp and had taken captive a number of articulate preachers.

The spiritual unrest which the questions of evolution and higher criticism brought to the mainstream had an influence upon the comparatively mild open-membership question which came to

trouble the movement. The questions which agitated both movements were related to the larger science-religion controversy. The first--the primary questions posed by evolution and higher criticism--brought forth the national controversy. The more secondary question of open-membership was raised by the controversy. The primary one conspired to create doubt as to the authority of the Bible. The secondary question was an inevitable by-product of that doubt. There is therefore, little question that the conservative response within the Disciples of Christ was profoundly effected by the issues and questions raised during the turbulent 1920's. The North American Christian Convention, born out of controversy, was and continues to be a significant conservative reaction to modern religious liberalism and an important forum through which the restorationist mentality may be viewed.

The fundamentalist controversy was related causally to the division among the Disciples of Christ, and hence, was related to the events which gave birth to the North American Christian Convention. That is, the root cause of the fundamentalist controversy and the root cause of division within Disciple ranks stemmed directly from the issues of the science-religion encounter at the turn of the twentieth century.

CHAPTER II

FOOTNOTES

¹James Truslow Adams, The March of Democracy (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933), p. 110.

²Ibid., p. 115.

³David Edwin Harrell, Jr., Quest for a Christian America (Nashville: Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 1966), pp. 28-29.

⁴Stephen Neill, ed., Twentieth Century Christianity (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1963), p. 179.

⁵F. E. Mayer, The Religious Bodies of America (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1956), p. 372; see also, Stephen Neil, ed., Twentieth Century Christianity (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1963), p. 181.

⁶Homer Hailey, Attitudes and Consequences (Rosemead, California: Old Paths Book Club, 1945), pp. 38-42.

⁷Ibid., p. 42.

⁸James R. Rogers, The Cane Ridge Meeting House (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Co., 1910), pp. 157-158.

⁹Ibid., p. 173.

¹⁰F. D. Kershner, "The Message of Thomas Campbell," Christian Standard (March 16, 1940): 5, 6, 8, 23.

¹¹F. E. Mayer, The Religious Bodies of America (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1956), p. 374.

¹²Frederick D. Kershner, The Restoration Handbook, Vol. 1 (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Co., 1918), p. 15. The most recent publication of the "Declaration and Address" is in Knobel Stanton, The Paraphrase of Thomas Campbell's "Declaration and Address" (Joplin, Missouri: College Press, 1977).

¹³James DeForest Murch, Christians Only: A History of the Restoration Movement (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Co., 1962), p. 57.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 55.

¹⁵Donald F. Durnbaugh, The Believers Church (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1968), p. 150.

¹⁶Robert Richardson, Memoirs of Alexander Campbell, Vol. 1 (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1871), p. 190.

¹⁷B. B. Tyler, A History of the Disciples of Christ (New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1894), pp. 133-135.

¹⁸B. A. Abbott, The Disciples: An Interpretation (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1924), p. 14.

¹⁹Earl I. West, The Search for the Ancient Order, Vol. 1 (Nashville, Tennessee: Gospel Advocate Co., 1949), p. 297.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 298.

²¹James DeForest Murch, Christians Only (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Co., 1962), pp. 216, 217.

²²Christian Standard (August 31, 1940 through February 8, 1941).

²³Carl S. Ledbetter, "Open-Membership," Christian Standard (August 31, 1940): 5.

²⁴Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 777.

²⁵Carl S. Ledbetter, "Open-Membership," Christian Standard (September 21, 1940): 3.

²⁶Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 775.

²⁷Stewart G. Cole, The History of Fundamentalism (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1931), p. 160.

²⁸A. W. Fortune, Adventuring with Disciple Pioneers (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1942), p. 76.

²⁹Konrad Algermissen, trans., Joseph W. Grundner, Christian Denominations (London: B. Herder Book Co., 1945), pp. 826-827.

³⁰C. Stanley Lowell, The Ecumenical Mirage (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1967), p. 61.

³¹Ernest R. Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. xix.

³²*Ibid.*, p. 163.

³³*Ibid.*, p. 264.

³⁴Nelson Hodges Hart, "The True and the False: the Worlds of an Emerging Evangelical Protestant Fundamentalism in America, 1890-1920" (Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1976), p. 178.

³⁵Stewart G. Cole, The History of Fundamentalism (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1931), pp. 132-162.

³⁶Louis Gasper, The Fundamentalist Movement (Paris: Mouton and Co., 1962), p. 15.

³⁷James DeForest Murch, Christians Only (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Co., 1962), p. 253.

³⁸P. H. Welshimer, "The Folly of Open-Membership," an address representative of the conservative protest against open-membership and is included as an appendix to this study.

³⁹Thomas Campbell, "Declaration and Address" (Pittsburgh: Centennial Edition, 1909).

CHAPTER III

THE NORTH AMERICAN CHRISTIAN CONVENTION

Introduction

The North American Christian Convention is one of the largest religious gatherings of its kind in the world, usually registering more than 50,000 people from the United States and foreign countries. Planned and programmed by leaders of Christian Churches and Churches of Christ, the Convention offers a yearly platform for Biblical preaching and discussion on vital issues of Christian concern, an opportunity for Christian people to share the experiences of fellowship with other Christians.

Origin and Purpose

The North American Christian Convention was born in a time of crisis and controversy. Conservatives called for such a gathering because of a widespread departure from "the faith once delivered to the saints" in the religious body known variously as the Disciples of Christ, Christian Churches, and Churches of Christ.

Long before the dawning of the twentieth century there had arisen a new interpretation of Christianity. This new interpretation had its origin in scientific naturalism and resulted in the abandonment of such vital Christian doctrines as the inspiration and authority of the Bible, the unique deity of Christ, the

centrality of atonement for sin, the bodily resurrection of Christ, the personal resurrection of the saints, the second coming of Christ unto final judgement, the doctrines of heaven and hell, and every vestige of the supernatural elements of the Christian faith. The Restoration Movement, as has been demonstrated, was a victim of this trend. Colleges, conventions, and missionary societies became prey to this new "heresy" and the brotherhood was torn from center to circumference with controversy. As the possibility of halting or reversing the trend diminished, the conservatives took the important step in 1927 of organizing the North American Christian Convention.¹ After several years of earnest effort to correct the departures from the faith within Disciple ranks, all hope was abandoned by the conservatives and they looked to a new day of cooperation and advance outside the orbit of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). These men were not opposed to cooperation, but they felt very deeply that brethren "could not walk together except they were agreed" in the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

On November 12, 1926, a meeting was called at Memphis, Tennessee, which voted unanimously to set up a "Committee on Future Action." The Committee named, consisted of P. H. Welshimer, chairman; W. R. Walker, O. A. Trinkle, W. E. Sweeney, F. S. Dowdy, R. S. Tuck, and Mark Collis. Early in 1927 the Committee assembled in Columbus, Ohio, and decided to issue a call for a North American Christian Convention to be held in Indianapolis, Indiana, October 12-16 of that year. The main themes under discussion there were to be:

"The Deity of Christ," "The Integrity of the Scriptures," "The Church," and "Christian Evangelism." The conservatives were determined to deal with the basic issues upon which their brotherhood had divided. It was their hope that a constructive restatement of the historic Bible faith, apart from extraneous conflicting charges and countercharges, might again bring a measure of unity among a strife-torn people.

The Christian Standard of March 19, 1927, carried the first Convention announcement. Mark Collis, minister of the Broadway Christian Church in Lexington, Kentucky, was chosen as spokesman of the Committee, to state the spirit and purpose of the forthcoming meeting. He declared that the Convention in Indianapolis was to be a mass meeting of "believers" which would cause "enemies of the truth and righteousness to take notice." It was to be a convention, not in the usual denominational sense, but of all those whose members are born from above, born of the water and the spirit, who are walking according to the Spirit, and whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life--in other words, not a denominational or sectarian assembly.

No form of rationalism, unitarianism, nor unbelief was to be expressed from the platform. The faith of the brethren was to be strengthened by a consideration of the cardinal doctrines of the apostolic church. It was not to be a "Fundamentalist" convention, but a completely Christian convention.² While the first convention was born in controversy, the conservatives were determined that it would not be controversial. The best defense was to be

aggressive proclamation. P. H. Welshimer, who presided over the first Convention, described the nature of the Indianapolis program:

In these last days too many of our churches and preachers are being entangled in a yoke of bondage. Modernism of the rankest type has made its inroads into the thinking of the preaching of some. . . . The Indianapolis convention will be a clarion call back to the old paths. The convention program will not leave the old paths to fight or quarrel with anyone, but it will constructively present the things that need to be stressed in this hour, and any man not in sympathy with the procedure of this gathering will be manifesting in no uncertain manner the fact that he is out of step with the great Restoration movement.³

Welshimer stressed that the meeting in Indianapolis would be a constructive preaching convention which would treat such themes as: "Saved by the Blood of Christ," "Faith," "Repentance," "Baptisms," "What Must I do to be Saved?" sermons of each of the New Testament conversion accounts, "The Inspiration of the Scriptures," and addresses on such subjects as: "The Great Apostacy," "The Reformation," "The Restoration," and "Christian Unity."⁴

The Convention was called into existence on the premise that the people committed to the restoration principle needed and desired a time when they could come together to listen and share in the public proclamation of the Word of God. This emphasis has continued through the years. Edwin Hayden defined the purpose of the Convention as one of defending, reviving and furthering the plea for the restoration of New Testament Christianity:

In each generation the restoration plea faces new attacks from which it needs to be defended, it endures new neglects in which it needs to be revived, and it finds new opportunities in which it needs to be furthered. The furthering would provide a sufficient goal and purpose if and when no defending or reviving were needed.⁵

Dr. Dean E. Walker, chancellor of Milligan College, suggested that the North American Christian Convention had a five-fold purpose:

1. Sociologically: to exhibit the quality of people in Christ.
2. Theologically: to educate people in the revelation of God in Christ.
3. Religiously: to inspire the practice of the faith in Christ.
4. Evangelistically: to proclaim Christ as Savior and Lord.
5. Eschatologically: to point toward restoration of man to filial relationship with God, fraternal relationship with one another, through reception of the Way, the Truth, and the Life--in Christ.⁶

Edwin S. Sweeney, one of the first Convention speakers, gave the object of the assembly in this statement:

The primary object of this convention is that members of the entire brotherhood be given an opportunity of assembling here to take part in and hear a restatement of the fundamental principles for which we, as a people, stand--a reaffirmation of the principles upon the Scriptural validity of which rests our right to a separate existence in the religious world. Unlike the Athenians who "spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or hear some new thing" we are here to tell and hear some of the old things--"those things most surely believed among us."⁷

It is difficult to determine with accuracy the attendance figures at the first North American Christian Convention. S. S. Lappin reported that 1,140 had registered before the first session. He estimated the first audience at 3,500 and according to his count there were 6,000 persons present for the Sunday afternoon communion service.⁸ James T. Nichols, reporting the Convention for the Christian Standard, made this statement relative to the registration: "In this convention, 1,190 people outside of Indianapolis had gone to the expense and hardship of the journey, and paid the

fifty cents' registration fee before the opening session."⁹ The Indianapolis Star reported that the Convention opened with a registration of 1,054 and estimated the first audience at 4,000.¹⁰ This newspaper estimated the attendance at the Sunday afternoon service at 8,000.¹¹

S. S. Lappin characterized the 1927 Convention as a "turn in the road" toward a better day in the brotherhood. He said there was "a noticeable absence of bitterness, wrangling, or protest." The sessions throughout were "constructive, educational, and inspirational." So happy were the people that they passed unanimously a call for a second Convention recognizing "a growing sentiment for a yearly meeting" with no "official Convention machinery" and dedicated to the same purposes which marked the Indianapolis Convention.¹²

The only resolution passed by the North American Christian Convention in Indianapolis was a resolution providing for another such meeting. The resolution read as follows:

The Indianapolis Convention will soon adjourn "sine die," and cease to be. That is well. There should be no continuing convention officary or machinery whatsoever, but it is only the part of wisdom that each yearly meeting should make provision for its successor. Therefore, it is: Resolved, That a committee be, and is hereby appointed to arrange for the next general yearly meeting, to be held in the month of October, 1928; and aforesaid committee to decide upon date and place, issue the general call, promote publicity, prepare the program, and perform such services as may be required; and that this committee be composed of the following brethren: Wallace Tharp, Alabama; Edwin R. Errett, Ohio; J. H. Stambaugh, West Virginia; W. S. Martin, Georgia; C. C. Taylor, Oklahoma; Ira M. Boswell, Kentucky; J. H. O. Smith, Missouri.¹³

The continuation committed named above laid plans immediately for a convention in Kansas City, Missouri, October 10-14, 1928.

The committee reiterated the aims set forth by their predecessors. From Kansas City through the years to the present time there has been strict and faithful adherence to the purposes to which the gathering was first committed.

The Convention experienced years of decline as attendance sometimes dipped and fluctuated between 1,200 and 2,000. Lack of adequate promotional machinery kept the meetings in Indianapolis where local congregational facilities assured basic needs and personnel. The Convention almost degenerated into a "preachers meeting" and lost its appeal to the "grassroots" leadership of the churches throughout the nation. Then in 1960 at Columbus, Ohio, the North American Christian Convention and the National Christian Education Convention combined their resources to provide conferences, panel discussions, and workshops for Bible school and church workers. The Convention had become a family gathering and had caught a vision of service to local congregations everywhere. Later a youth convention developed with a program relevant to their unique needs.

In 1961 at Lexington, Kentucky, there were 7,800 registrations. Then came Long Beach, California, with 10,648; St. Louis with 17,378; Tulsa with 19,378; Louisville with 25,551. In Cincinnati in 1972 all the city's rooming and convention facilities overflowed as some 28,000 assembled at Riverfront Stadium for the Friday evening Convention session--the largest single gathering in the history of the Restoration Movement. The 1977 edition of the

North American Christian Convention was also held in Cincinnati, Ohio. Total registrations for the gathering were 51,134.¹⁴

By nature, a North American Christian Convention is not a convention of churches. It is instead a "Christian" convention, a gathering of Christian persons, in which a follower of Christ need no additional identification to establish his membership. Since a North American Christian Convention is not a church convention, it cannot do church business. It limits itself to making provision for other such gatherings in future years. This significant series of meetings has been held for half a century without any formal constitution or by-laws.

Structure and Organization

After the Columbus, Ohio, Convention in 1960, it became evident that the assembly was soon to become one of the largest annual religious gatherings in America. No longer could it adequately be served by volunteer services. It was also increasingly evident that the conditions in the "brotherhood" (namely, the persistent tendency toward theological liberalism) which the Convention had sought to correct had become permanent, and the necessity for its continuing existence had become greater than ever.

Structurally, a North American Christian Convention is made up of three groups: members, committees, and employees.

The members are those persons who attend and/or register for a Convention. Since it is not a delegate convention, each member represents only himself. By their financial support,

attendance, participation, and communication of ideas and suggestions, the members determine the quality of both a convention in session and conventions yet to come. Members vote only once a year, and that is to approve or disapprove a slate of forty nominees to the Convention Committee to prepare future conventions. The roster to be voted on has been developed by a nominating committee and has been screened by the 120 member Convention Committee.

Considered of greater significance than the formal vote is the member's use of the evaluation sheet that is made available to him at each Convention. He is urged to make comments on the program, personnel, and to offer suggestions about future conventions.

The ultimate responsibility for any Convention in this series rests with the Convention Committee, whose basic membership is 120, with forty being chosen each year for a three-year term. The Convention Committee, through its own democratic process appoints an Executive Committee which is responsible for Convention business when the Convention Committee is not in session. Officers for each Convention are the president, president-elect, secretary, and treasurer. Officers are appointed to their position for one year and one Convention. Continuity is maintained in that most of the officers are men who have served in various capacities with the Convention Committee before being elected to office. The Committee also chooses a president-elect, who observes the operation for a year before accepting responsibility for his own Convention.

In fifty years, the Convention Committee had evolved from a half-dozen men to 120, representing the whole nation

geographically and virtually every possible phase and description of Christian ministry and service.

With reference to schedule, the Convention itself had changed from totally separate gatherings called at undesignated times, to annual meetings with dates, places, and themes chosen several years in advance. Advanced planning for future Conventions was necessitated by the increased difficulty in securing adequate facilities to accommodate the large gathering of people.

Accordingly, in 1963, a full-time salaried position of "Convention Director" was created with Leonard G. Wymore chosen to serve in that office. The "Convention Director" is not an officer of the Convention, but an employee. His duties have to do with the mechanics of Convention planning and not with policy. He is ultimately answerable to the Convention Committee, he cannot be a member of that Committee; and he cannot speak for the Convention or in any way officially represent it to any religious body.

As a safe-guard to preserve and protect the original purpose and function of the North American Christian Convention, the Convention Committee imposed upon itself restrictions, which if faithfully obeyed, will keep it true to that nature envisioned by its founders and to the spirit of the Restoration Movement of which it is a part:

Realizing the dangers of any extra-Scriptural or human form of organization and/or cooperation, due to habit, instinct, place, learning, and the physical senses, the North American Christian Convention commits itself now and henceforth to the following safeguards of individual, group, and congregational freedom in the body of Christ: The Convention shall assume no

official or exclusive character. . . . It shall at all times respect the freedom and authority of the local church. . . . It shall not assume the character or functions of the church of Christ. . . . It shall not assume the character of a church council or synod, nor in its relation to the churches enact regulations; make rulings or recommendations; pass resolutions; propose; sanction, or legalize procedures; invest with authority; ordain to special ministries; endorse, forbid, exclude, or excommunicate persons, groups, or agencies; or exercise controls of any nature. . . . It considers Christian fellowship to be personal, vital, and spiritual, rather than structural or organizational; moral, not legal; voluntary, not coerced; natural, not artificial; and predicated upon faith in and wholehearted commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. . . . It shall have no affiliation with parties, factions, agencies, institutions, or special interests; neither shall it seek to imprison the fellowship of Christian brethren within the frontiers of any single form of human organization.¹⁵

The Convention Speakers

The North American Christian Convention is first and foremost a preaching convention. The convention was called into existence on the premise that the people committed to the restoration principle needed and desired a time when they could come together to listen and share in the public proclamation of the Word of God. The expressed wish was for a general meeting of Restorationists, not for the purpose of listening to business reports and agency promotion, but for the single purpose of preaching "whatever brought us into being as a separate religious people and justifies our continued existence as such."¹⁶ This emphasis has continued through the years.

When the National Christian Education Convention merged with the North American Christian Convention in 1960, there was some concern that preaching would be de-emphasized. That has not happened.

On the contrary, the larger audiences and the varying age groups have been an apparent stimulus in producing greater interest and proficiency in preaching. When a Convention speaker stands before thousands of people, his months of preparation take on added significance and he is stirred to pulpit eloquence.

The Executive Committee in consultation with the Convention Committee, is charged with the responsibility each year of choosing appropriate themes and speakers. An analysis of the programs of the North American Christian Convention, from 1927 to 1977, revealed that they have followed faithfully the principles of program subject matter and personnel, as projected by the early Convention advocates.

Convention themes are chosen and designed with a view to promoting messages which will be Biblically oriented. The men who are chosen to speak on specific subjects are expected to be aware of the political and social situation out of which they speak and show the relevancy of the message of Christ to that moment in history. For instance, in 1927 when the Convention was inaugurated in Indianapolis, there was real concern that the Disciples of Christ, a large body of people who had historical connection with the Restoration Movement had abandoned restoration principles and were willing to return to the denominational background out of which the movement arose. Thus, the theme for the Indianapolis Convention was "Preach the Word." In 1968, when the Convention met in Cincinnati, the United States was intensely involved in Vietnam. Young people questioned the moral implications of the nation's participation in

the conflict as well as their personal involvement. The quest for truth and free choice led people into actions that were sometimes confusing and often contradictory. The Convention messages that year centered around the theme in John 8:32, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Themes are also chosen that will promote messages which embody the basic principles of the Restoration Movement. The people who have attended this Convention series over the years have heard over and over again of the lordship of Christ, the authority of Scripture, and the effort to restore in faith and life the ideal church revealed in the New Testament.

The Convention Committee has sought themes which, if handled properly, would provoke action rather than reaction. Themes are selected with a view to reconciling people on the basis of what Restorationists are for, not what they are against. The desire of the committee has been to find a message that will treat not only the problems of people, but especially their possibilities.

Nearly three-fourths of the addresses delivered at the North American Christian Convention have been presented by college faculty, administrators, and trustees. The remaining portion have been presented by ministers, missionaries, and a small number of business and professional people who were known to be effective communicators and efficient and successful administrators in their respective fields of endeavor.

The roster of speakers indicates that participants have been selected on the basis of their perceived commitment to the

Christian faith and especially to the principles of the Restoration Movement. Mark Collis, offering guidelines for the original program in 1927, presented the qualifications expected in speakers who are invited to the Convention platform:

No one should be put on this program who cannot be trusted to give the people his best thought, expressed in the very best manner, and delivered with all the grace and force of which he is capable.¹⁷

The committee makes a diligent effort to find those men who can intelligently and inventively present the Biblical message. However, the first and foremost requirement is that the speaker believe in the truthfulness of the subject that he has been assigned and that he be totally committed to its proclamation.

Speakers are chosen whose ministries have been successful. There are in the Restoration Movement a rich variety of ministries. They include the local church, the college classroom, the publishing house, the campus ministry, the mission field, as well as other areas of service. An attempt is made to find men who have proved faithful to whatever task they believe God has given them and whose lives provide models of successful ministry. E. Ray Jones, a member of the Executive Committee in 1972, explained:

The committee seeks men who have evidence in their ministry a sense of fervency--men whose ministries indicate that the Christian faith is no mere academic exercises. They have a concern that men come to know the Christ who alone possesses and dispenses eternal life. An attempt is made to find men whose ministries have had in them a real sense of urgency--men who have been grasped by the gospel--men who not only possess a great faith, but are possessed by that faith and have a supreme desire to be fruitful in its delivery.¹⁸

An attempt is made to choose speakers whose ministry has earned the respect of the church. For this the committee depends not only on its own acquaintance with potential speakers, but also on the recommendations coming from members of the Convention audience, either directed to committeemen or indicated on the evaluation sheets that are given to all who attend each year's Convention. By directing such a recommendation, members have a part in choosing Convention personnel.

Speakers at the North American Christian Convention are free to use whatever method of communication they choose. They are at liberty to use a manuscript or to speak with or without notes. They are also given the freedom to choose their approach to the subject or topic given to them. Certain guidelines are handed to speakers so that there will not be unnecessary overlapping, but in their development of the message they have complete freedom. These men speak only for themselves. They do not represent the Convention in the sense that their thoughts are the "official" Convention position. The Convention holds no "official" position. It is a forum which does nothing more than reflect the thinking of the movement's best thinkers.

Mark Collis described the 1927 Convention in Indianapolis with this observation:

The committee did not think it necessary to bring in sectarian speakers to make any of these addresses. They showed the people that our own brethren can make great speeches. Several on the program, who proved themselves to be men of great platform ability, had never been heard in one of our conventions before.¹⁹

Sam Stone, current editor of the Christian Standard, offered this interesting comparison between the 1927 and the 1977 Convention speakers:

The golden anniversary celebration of the North American Christian Convention concluded in Cincinnati, Ohio, on July 8. "It is impossible to do justice to all the addresses and sermons. The meeting was exactly what the committee designed it to be--a preaching meeting. Almost without an exception, the addresses gave evidence of the most careful preparation. There were thought, polish, finish, and force to every one of them. Thousands of the brethren expressed happy surprise at the discovery of remarkable ability in men of whom they had never heard. The committee itself was most agreeably surprised at the uniformly high character of the work of the speakers." The quotation above was from Edwin R. Errett's evaluation of the first North American Christian Convention held in Indianapolis, Ind., October 12-16, 1927. His description of the sermons is also an accurate tribute to the preachers at this year's gathering.²⁰

The North American Christian Convention came into being to provide an international platform for Biblical preaching in a day when the Bible was being challenged, discounted, and negated due to Philosophical Rationalism and Theological Liberalism. In the judgement of Restorationists it is still needed in the face of today's subjectivism and insistence on relativism. Hence, this unusual Convention series is becoming a religious phenomenon unique in the annals of American history. True to its original ideals, the North American Christian Convention continues to (1) preach that the Biblical message is perpetually relevant to all of life, (2) promote Christian fellowship, (3) evangelize the lost, (4) perfect and encourage the program of the local congregation, and (5) proclaim the divine plan for the achievement of Christian unity.

CHAPTER III

FOOTNOTES

¹Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 914.

²Mark Collis, "The Convention Proposed for this Fall," Christian Standard (March 19, 1927): 5.

³P. H. Welshimer, "A Clarion Call to Followers of the Old Paths," Christian Standard (May 21, 1927): 3.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Edwin V. Hayden, "Still My Convention," Christian Standard (August 6, 1978): 6.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Edwin S. Sweeney, "Autonomy of the Local Church," Christian Standard (November 5, 1927): 7.

⁸S. S. Lappin, "A Turn in the Road," Christian Standard (October 22, 1927): 9.

⁹James T. Nichols, "With One Accord in One Place," Christian Standard (November 5, 1927): 7.

¹⁰Indianapolis Star, October 12, 1927.

¹¹Indianapolis Star, October 16, 1927.

¹²S. S. Lappin, "A Turn in the Road," Christian Standard (October 22, 1927): 10.

¹³"A Resolution Adopted at Indianapolis," Christian Standard (October 22, 1927): 5.

¹⁴Sam Stone, "Reluctant to Change," Christian Standard (August 28, 1977): 3.

¹⁵Edwin V. Hayden, "Report: Committee on Restudy" (Cincinnati: North American Christian Convention, 1972).

¹⁶William E. Sweeney, "Our Position is a Plea," Christian Standard (July 16, 1927): 3.

¹⁷Mark Collis, "The Convention Proposed for this Fall," Christian Standard (March 19, 1927): 5.

¹⁸E. Ray Jones, "Of Preachers and Sermons," Christian Standard (March 5, 1927): 7.

¹⁹Mark Collis, "The Brethren Review the Convention," Christian Standard (October 29, 1927): 6.

²⁰Sam Stone, "A Great Preaching Convention," Christian Standard (August 28, 1977): 7.

PART II

MAJOR ISSUES AND IDEAS

CHAPTER IV

THE BIBLE

Introduction

The ideal of a righteous character built after the pattern of Christ and according to the revelation of the Holy Spirit by which we shall share the fellowship of our Savior and the redeemed of earth throughout eternity, has stood practically unchallenged through the centuries as man's highest ideal. Destroy or take away this ideal and you destroy the thing of greatest value.

Is there any danger of this ideal being lost? No, not lost to the whole race, but it may be lost to many. . . . Since many now consider the Bible to be a record of myths and traditions, written centuries ago by men who were ignorant of the things now discovered by modern thought, how can they hold the Bible as authoritative or its picture of God and Christ as true. . . . Preachers purported to be ambassadors of Christ and messengers of His cross are found side-slapping the blood atonement, the deity of Jesus and the inspiration of the Scriptures.¹

It was indeed appropriate that C. C. Taylor should include these words in the opening paragraphs of one of the first addresses ever delivered at a North American Christian Convention. The inerrant authority of the Bible was the indispensable cornerstone upon which the Restoration Movement had been founded. And yet, by the first decade of the twentieth century, church historians could quite accurately report: "One of the most obvious effects of the scientific spirit has been to weaken the unquestioning acceptance of the authority of the Bible."² For the convention speakers to ignore the problems pertaining to science was to forfeit their

claims as "seekers of truth." To surrender to the evidence was to impeach the validity of the book upon which their faith was founded. The inevitable response was one of unyielding defense. Convention speakers were under obligation to show that the Bible stands the test of criticism.

It was more than coincidental that P. H. Welshimer and his colleagues were setting the foundation upon which the platform of the North American Christian Convention would rest. All across the nation distressed conservatives organized in reaction. Williston Walker reveals that many of those who "were shaken by the new ideas . . . reacted by holding to their view of biblical infallibility with greater rigidity. They founded a series of important Bible conferences in defense of their views--Niagara, Winona, Rocky Mountain."³ In his book History of Fundamentalism, Stewart G. Cole describes "the Bible and prophetic conference movement," as one of the chief means of organized reaction to liberal Christianity.⁴

No annual retreat or conference did more to reinforce old-fashioned Protestantism than the Niagara Bible Conference. From this conference in 1878 came the Niagara Creed, "one of the most significant documents in the history of the Fundamentalist movement."⁵ The creed contained fourteen articles or points which "gave life and shape to the Fundamentalist movement." Later, in 1910, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church put forth the celebrated Five-Points of doctrine which eventually came to represent the creedal statement of conservative Protestantism. The five affirmations, declared to be essential, were: the inerrancy of the

Scriptures, the virgin birth of Christ, the substitutionary atonement of Christ, the physical resurrection of Christ, and the miracles of Christ.⁶

In 1919, over 6,000 people gathered in Philadelphia for the World's Bible Conference. Many of the most widely known exponents of conservative Protestant theology presented their ideas at the conference. They represented the organized, militant mind of reactionary evangelicalism. Beginning with biblical inspiration, the speakers discussed the doctrines of God, Christ, Satan, sin, atonement, sanctification, grace, redemption, Church, second advent, prophecy, resurrection, and future punishment. As a result of the Conference, the World's Christian Fundamentals Association was born.⁷ In addition, scores of Bible conferences have been conducted annually throughout America. Men of revivalistic temperament have cultivated their convictions and preserved the faith of their fathers by means of these mass meetings. Cole revealed some of the ingredients which by 1920 had combined to transform the Bible conference movement into a permanent type of social institution within Christianity:

The hearty singing of revival hymns, the spirit of deep piety, the vigorous doctrinal convictions awakened by different types of preachers, and the development of suspicion and distrust toward progressive churchmen, empowered the company with a sense of Christian invincibility and with one of divine commission to champion the threatened faith.⁸

Rather than being an isolated complaint, the North American Christian Convention was but one voice in this loud chorus of vigorous protestations. Historians have frequently labeled this

counter-chorus the "fundamentalist movement." The avalanche of publicity it received on the front pages of the American press in the early 1920's was described by Ralph H. Gabriel as "both a novel and unexpected American phenomenon."⁹ The North American Christian Convention must be interpreted in connection with this phenomenon, as one contribution to a national movement. While a handful of the assemblies which arose to champion orthodoxy were able to enjoin the loyalty of conservative Christians from many faiths, most of them represented some particular religious group and made their appeals to their own constituency. Such was the case with the North American Christian Convention. The founders of the Convention had never visited an assembly at Niagara, Winona, or Rocky Mountain, and they made no conscious effort to duplicate these Bible conferences. The same social and religious conditions, however, that gave rise to these nationally prominent conferences, motivated P. H. Welshimer and the Committee for Future Action to provide a medium through which the forces of the Restoration Movement might be solidified. The ideas and issues of the North American Christian Convention must be viewed, therefore, against the bold backdrop of the fundamentalist reaction to liberal Christianity, the whole of which the North American Christian Convention was apparently a part.

The basis for the clash between fundamentalism and modernism centered around their differing attitudes toward the nature and proper use of the Bible. For centuries Christians had assumed that

the Bible was a special revelation from God and that whatever it declared was to be accepted as truth without question. By 1878, however, Julius Wellhausen was questioning both the Mosaic authorship and the literary unity of the Pentateuch and thereby undermining the idea of the Bible as the verbally inerrant Word of God.¹⁰ For the typical modernist of the early twentieth century, the Bible was a varied literature issuing out of the long development of Hebrew and Christian religion. Its validity as a final authority for belief was questionable, but was exceedingly valuable when approached like any other literature, for whatever inspiration and guidance its various parts actually contained. The modernist reasoned that it was no longer necessary to spend time or effort harmonizing the hopelessly discordant in the interest of an artificial theory of verbal inspiration. Above all, he claimed that the spiritual force of the Bible was not weakened but strengthened when so used. Shortly before the turn of the century, Washington Gladden phrased the compromise position of many so-called modernists:

Are not the idolaters who make it reason to disbelieve a single word of the Bible, and the iconoclasts who treat it as nothing better than any other book, equally far from the truth? Is it not the part of wisdom to use the book rationally, but reverently; to refrain from worshipping the letter, but to rejoice in the gifts of the Spirit which it proffers?¹¹

The fundamentalists responded that under such qualifying clauses the Bible was no longer a revelation. Instead of a message from God to men, it was merely men's thoughts about God. Christianity, the fundamentalists contended, has been founded upon an

infallible message from God, to which all human reason must be subjected. If in the event of conflict between revelation and scholarship human judgement was to be the knife which bisected the Bible into portions of truth and error, then, argued the conservatives, reason rather than revelation has become the norm in religion. In his 1927 address, "The Menace of Modernism," convention speaker C. C. Taylor charged:

The modernist adopts the methods of historical and literary science in the study of the Bible and religion. He uses science to test the values of inherited orthodoxy, and of course he includes the theory of evolution as science. He uses historical and literary criticism, which includes much of German rationalism, for the same purpose. The common ground of these two instruments which modernists use is to explain everything by natural law; there is no miracle.¹²

It was into this agitated emotional and intellectual environment that speakers at the North American Christian Convention stepped when they rose to address their audiences on the nature and purpose of the Bible. This chapter considers those Convention addresses which dealt with the Bible--its inspiration, its relationship to science and the evolutionary hypothesis, the higher criticism of the Bible, and the study of the Bible.

The Inspiration of the Bible

To the men who spoke and for the audience which listened, there was no question more vital than that of inspiration. If the Bible were not of divine origin, they should not bow to its claims of authority, rely on its statements of fact, and could not derive hope and comfort from its premises. In fact, the journey from

their homes to the Convention had no real purpose if the Bible was but the work of men. On the other hand, if the Bible came from God, its authority was unquestionable and its statements infallible. For those who spoke and for those who listened, much was at stake.

The question of inspiration was not only crucial to the Convention assembly but was at the very heart of the orthodox reaction across the nation. Other conservative bodies took official action to reaffirm their faith in the Bible as an inspired revelation. In 1923, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church readopted the "Five-Points" originally passed at its 1910 session. The minutes of the meeting read:

Furthermore, the General Assembly calls the attention of the Presbyteries to the deliverance of the General Assembly of 1910, which deliverance is hereby affirmed and which is as follows:

1. It is an essential doctrine of the Word of God and our standards that the Holy Spirit did so inspire, guide and move the writers of the Holy Scripture as to keep them from error.¹³

A year earlier, the Northern Baptist denomination had passed a similar resolution. In a strategy move designed to offset the advances of liberalism, the convention's minutes read:

Whereas: the Northern Baptist Convention, in its 1922 session, held at Indianapolis, officially declared the New Testament to be the sufficient ground of its faith, and
Whereas: there is a wide difference of opinion among our Baptist people as to what the New Testament does teach,
Therefore: Be it resolved that the Bible teaches, and we believe,

1. Of the Scriptures--that the Bible was written by men supernaturally inspired; that it has truth without any admixture of error for its matter; that, as originally written, it is both scientifically and historically true and correct; and therefore is and shall remain to the end of the

age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; the true center of the Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.¹⁴

In 1923, William Jennings Bryan, the titular head of the fundamentalist party, wrote an article on the "Five-Points." He declared that "the Bible is either the Word of God or a man-made book." Concerning the first of the fundamentals, the inspiration of the Bible, Bryan said:

Upon the first proposition all the rest depend. If the Bible is true--that is, so divinely inspired as to be free from error--then the second, third, fourth, and fifth propositions follow inevitably, because they are based on what the Bible actually says in language clear and unmistakable. If, on the other hand, the Bible is not to be accepted as true, there is no reason why any body should believe anything in it that he objects to, no matter upon what his objection is founded.¹⁵

To these fundamentalist reaffirmations the modernists responded that they likewise believed the Bible to be in a sense inspired, but not infallibly so; to be valuable but not perfect; to contain the Word of God, but not equaling the Word of God. The appeal of their position was undergirded with the insistent plea that their new view was not the destroyer but the saviour of the Bible.

William Newton Clarke, a well-known advocate of the new theology, said succinctly: "The Bible is inspired as it is inspired, and not as we think it ought to be inspired."¹⁶ An editorial in the Christian Century declared in 1924:

On the otherhand, the Modernist starts with no preconception as to what the Bible ought to be, but is interested to discover what it actually reveals regarding its origin and nature. He perceives that the Protestant reaction from the papal dogma of an infallible church resulted in the opposing

doctrine of the infallible Bible, and that neither of these claims rests upon valid grounds. The Bible is not a supernaturally produced or safeguarded collection of documents, but the honest and reverent work of men living at various periods in the history of the Hebrew and Jewish people, over an interval of more than a thousand years; that it is a record of the most notable chapters in the history of religion. . . . These writings lay no claims to exactness in matters of history, chronology, or science.¹⁷

"The greatest of all books," continued Robert A. Ashworth, "is the Bible, the supreme literature of the spiritual life, . . . but it is not infallible or inerrant, nor does it claim to be so."¹⁸ Shailer Matthews in his definitive work, The Faith of Modernism, maintained that deep within the modernist movement was a method of appreciating and using the Bible. He contended that the crucial conflict between the modernist and the fundamentalist did not lie in differing degrees of loyalty to or respect for the Bible, but in dissimilar presuppositions for studying it. Explaining his contention, he asserted:

The true method is followed by the Modernist: to study the Bible with full respect for its sanctity but with equal respect for the students intellectual integrity. We must begin with the facts concerning it, interpret its actual value and use it for what it is actually worth. Only thus can it properly minister to our spiritual needs.¹⁹

Bedell, Sandon, and Wellborn, authors of the significant book, Religion in America, summarized the modernistic view of biblical inspiration:

. . . the Bible was studied with the same attitude and the same objective, scientific methods as those applied to any other ancient document. What appeared to the critics to be errors and contradictions in the biblical text were pointed out; questions of the date and authorship of the various books of the Bible were raised. Time-honored beliefs, such as the conservative assumption that Moses himself had written the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament,

were denied. The critics concluded that the biblical documents were written by many different authors, edited, and re-edited across the centuries. Books like Isaiah were classified as having two or more different authors, whose works had been combined. From the perspective of the new sciences the belief that the Bible enjoyed a unique status as a reliable, authoritative source of truth was challenged.²⁰

In their defense of the doctrine of inerrant inspiration, the convention speakers were in essential agreement with such fundamentalist leaders as Machen, Bryan, Macartney, Riley, Gray, and Torrey. Although in their printed addresses the speakers rarely referred to the writings of these men, it is reasonable to assume that they were familiar with and encouraged by the vigilance of their contemporaries in the larger struggle. In 1927, J. H. Stambaugh served as one of the principle speakers at the Convention. His message entitled, "Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem" occasionally demonstrated awareness of the basic writings of the fundamentalist leaders. Emphasizing the superiority of Biblical teaching as evidencing divine inspiration, Stambaugh cited the titular head of fundamentalism and champion of Bible believers, William Jennings Bryan:

William Jennings Bryan challenged the scoffers and infidels in a 1921 address delivered at the Moody Bible Institute when he said, "We believe that this Bible was by inspiration given. Let those who say this Book is not of divine origin put their theory to the test. Let them gather their best, not from a single race or section, but from every race and clime. Let them take these selected few and give them the advantage of all the libraries and all the colleges, and then let them give the world a book to take the place of this Bible of ours. If they cannot do it, they must admit either that our Book comes from a source higher than man, or that nineteen centuries of civilization have so dragged us down that man cannot be expected to do today what man could do then.

Will they accept this challenge? No; they will take the Bible and look through it to find some words or phrases or sentences that they can construe as contradicting some words or phrases or sentences somewhere else.²¹

In discussing their concept of Biblical inspiration, the speakers frequently referred to the etymology of the word "inspiration." The Vice President of Academic Affairs at Pacific Christian College, Dr. Paul R. McReynolds, told his 1974 Convention audience:

There is only one legitimate passage which we can use exegetically to understand a Biblical nature of inspiration and that is found in II Timothy 3:15-17. I say this because it is the only passage of scripture that contains the word "God-inspired." Another passage which closely approximates II Timothy is II Peter 1:19-21. But we also have to make some deductions and consider things together that are not automatically as they are in these two passages. The word theopneustos means "God breathed." This is the only occurrence of this word throughout the whole New Testament. In classical usage it refers to dreams given by God instead of the ordinary dreams of men, but it implies visions occurring in a man's mind so that he might understand the ideas of God. The closest parallel I find to this in scripture is the word theodidaktos in Thessalonians 4:9 meaning "taught by God." Because of this, and for other reasons, I see the scripture teaching "All scripture is God-breathed." It is one word or breathed out by God.²²

To the Convention speakers, inspiration was a supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit upon divinely chosen men. Consequently, their writings became authoritative and infallible. McReynolds explained:

Inspiration is the influence of the Holy Spirit on the mind of selected people which, in turn, enables them to adequately and accurately pen God's word for men. . . . John writes that the task of the Holy Spirit is to convince/convict the world of sin, righteousness and the judgment. He does this in and through the scriptures which He inspires. He then continues to make evident that the living Word of God has value for all people.²³

The unity of the scriptures demonstrated by their internal quality was most often pointed to as an evidence of inspiration. The speakers were in agreement with fundamentalists at large in this stress upon the Bible's unity. James M. Gray, the Dean of Moody Bible Institute, wrote: "The character of its contents, the unity of its parts, the fulfillment of its prophecies . . . all these go to show that it is divine, and if so, that it may be believed in what it says about itself."²⁴ Archibald Alexander Hodge's 1928 book, Outline of Theology, was typical of scores of volumes dedicated to exposing the "destructiveness of modernist theology." On the point of internal evidence of inspiration and Biblical unity, Hodge declared:

We do not reason in a circle when we rest the truth of the inspiration of the Scriptures on their own assertions. We come to this question already believing in their credibility as histories, and in that of their writers as witnesses of facts, and in the truth of Christianity and in the divinity of Christ. Whatever Christ affirms of the Old Testament, and whatever he promises to the Apostles, and whatever they assert as to the divine influence acting in and through themselves, or as to the infallibility and authority of their writings, must be true. Especially as all their claims were indorsed by God working with them by signs and wonders and gifts of the Holy Ghost. It is evident that if their claims to inspiration and to the infallibility and authority of their writings are denied, they are consequently charged with fanatical presumption and gross misrepresentation, and the validity of their testimony on all points is denied.²⁵

Dr. Leroy J. Garrett, editor of the Restoration Review, journeyed to the Convention in Anaheim, California, in 1974 to speak of "The Nature of Biblical Authority and the Restoration Movement." With regard to the essential nature of Biblical unity, he declared:

I take the position that the authoritative basis of our religion is centered, not in a book per se, but in a Person, the Founder of our faith and the Captain of our salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible describes him as the Word of God (Rev. 19:13), and that Word was an authoritative reality long before there were any New Covenant scriptures. And even the Old Covenant scriptures, which was the only Bible that the earliest Christians had, was (and is) accepted as authoritative in that Jesus set the seal of his own authority upon them. . . . Since God is ultimate truth, only He has absolute authority. This authority He has given to his Son. It is to the extent that we discern this truth in Jesus in the scriptures that the Bible is authoritative to us. The scriptures of both Old and New Covenants are thus authoritative in that they reflect him and bear witness to his mission in this world.²⁶

In 1966, Richard Phillips emphasized the unity and harmony of the Biblical record by citing the different authors and their backgrounds:

The Bible consists of sixty-six books, composed by about thirty different authors, during a period of about sixteen hundred years, and under the most diverse circumstances conceivable. Moses wrote the Pentateuch in the wilderness, when science, literature, and the arts were in their infancy. Daniel and Ezekiel prophesied in captivity. Paul dictated several of his most important epistles while he was a prisoner at Rome, and under the care and vigilance of a Roman guard, and John wrote the Revelation while he was banished to Patmos. . . . and yet, with all of this diversity of time, place, and people, there is not a single error or contradiction in it.²⁷

"The Bible," said Thomas Hagger in 1927, "is the one book which contains law, prophecy, poetry, biography, history and letters. Yet all the writers unite in presenting one grand theme. It is out of the question that such remarkable unity could be the product of an accident."²⁸

While stressing this general thematic unity, many speakers also mentioned the fulfillment of prophecy, historical accuracy, and

scientific foreknowledge as features of the Bible which support its harmony and consonance with other fields of learning.

In addition to the unity of the Bible, speakers often pointed to the superiority of Biblical teaching as evidence of divine inspiration. This was also a means of proof commonly used by leading fundamentalist writers. For instance, in 1925, Thomas J. McCrossan, a professor of biblical languages, published a book for the Presbytery of Minneapolis, which featured five reasons "why we know the Bible is inspired by God." In addition to prophetic fulfillment, scientific foreknowledge, and historical accuracy, two of his "reasons" were related to the character and influence of the biblical message: "the moral and spiritual teachings of the Bible," and the fact that its teachings "alone can transform character."²⁹

In an effort to negate the infallibility of the scriptures, modernist writers countered that while the Bible contains noble and elevating inspirations, they are mingled with gross and immoral ideas. Durant Drake declared:

God's anger and desire for vengeance are repeatedly mentioned; and the picture the unprejudiced reader would form of this Jewish deity from many Old Testament passages is that of a cruel, and blood-thirsty tyrant. He "hardens Pharaoh's heart" that he may punish the Egyptians in a spectacular manner; He throws stones down from Heaven on Israel's foes; He commands the sun to stand still that more of them may be slain before dark; He bids His chosen people invade the land of a neighboring tribe, burn all their cities, slay all the males, adults and children, and all the married women, and keep the virgins for their own enjoyment; He slays seventy-thousand innocent Israelites for David's sin in taking a census of the people.³⁰

Although the Convention speakers did not deal with the liberal charge that the "Jewish deity was a cruel and blood-thirsty

tyrant," they did exert much effort in emphasizing the moral worth of the Bible. In a 1929 address, Henrietta Heron remarked:

Hidden in the Book is the story of the Christ, the record of His marvelous teachings about "the way" of life--here are the blessed promises, here the solution to all of life's problems, here the key to rising victoriously over every outer circumstance. Here is the assurance of immortality, here the certainty that we have a risen Lord by our side. Here are strength for the weak, comfort for the sorrowing, light for the bewildered, hope for the despairing, victory for the tempted, courage for the faint, light for those in darkness. In quiet meditation and study of God's word, motives are righted, eyes are opened, knowledge increased, values of life adjusted, purposes strengthened, courage renewed, spirits refreshed and power replenished.³¹

In illustrating the power and influence of Bible teachings, speakers gave attention to its impact upon world civilization, its cultural contributions, and its transforming power. L. H. Apple's 1964 address, "Preaching the Word of God," discussed the relationship and influence of the Bible on the church and unchurched community. He credited the impact of the scripture with advances against moral conflict, racial strife, and spiritual crises in the churches. "It has done more," said Apple, "to answer the basic needs of men today than any other force in the world. With all of the progress that has been made in science, education and health, only the word of God is able to lift man up mentally, physically, and spiritually."³²

After discussing in detail the moral, intellectual, and emotional contributions made through Biblical teaching, James G. VanBuren concluded in 1958:

The Word has been able to lay hold of a Luther writhing in the toils of Roman monasticism; it has motivated the shoe cobbler, William Carey, so that he became the translator of the Word for millions in India; it moved the

Campbells, father and son, to lift the standard of Christian reformation in the nineteenth century, and it still can work its wonders today. Right now, in some Indian village, in some Himalayan mountain hut, or in some ornate American mansion the miracle of the living, energetic, incisive, and critical word is at work.³³

An interesting facet of the controversy between fundamentalism and modernism which was reflected in the Convention addresses concerned the method or nature of divine inspiration. In spite of the open conflicts, liberal leaders frequently insisted that the two groups held a significantly large body of beliefs in common. An article in the Christian Century asserted: "Both hold that the Bible is inspired of God, and is in a unique sense, the Word of God . . ."³⁴

Modernists claimed that fundamentalists' insistence upon a rigid scriptural inerrancy reflected human insecurity, and that it represented not so much a high view of Scripture as a rigid and over-limited one. Modernists did not consider that errors in the Bible affected its purpose at all, but rather that the reality of a historical event did not depend upon an inerrant account of the event. In fact, contended the modernists, errors were the inevitable accompaniments of the process of a progressive revelation, constituting primitive and temporary forms through which the essential Biblical message was passing to maturity.

In essence, then, fundamentalists argued that the Bible came into existence through a process of divine, supernatural inspiration and that it was to be used as a final, absolute, and infallible authority. Modernists, in contrast, denied Biblical

infallibility and chose to interpret the Bible as they interpreted other great literature, preferring an appreciative rather than an authoritative view of the Bible's religious insights. Convention speaker J. E. de Gafferelly warned his audience in 1931 that while modernism tended to accept the general religious ethic taught in the Bible, it had rejected the language of the Bible.³⁵ Such a rejection was grounds for Ernest Hunter Wray's indictment: "Thousands of preachers across the country now no longer believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures."³⁶ C. C. Taylor suggested the problem in his 1927 message:

In view of the many ways in which the word "inspired" has been defined, it is not enough to say that the Bible is inspired. Most modernists, while not accepting the Bible as a trustworthy record of the revelation of God, do accept it as a trustworthy record of the human experiences of God. So might the Book of the Dead of the Egyptians be, the Vedas of the Hindus, and the Koran of the Mohammedans.³⁷

Some modernists maintained that the Bible did not teach a single, harmonious system of doctrine and moreover, was not infallible with regard to scientific opinion, ethical theories, historical judgments, or spiritual insights.³⁸ They held that the writers of the Bible had recorded thoughts that may have been given to them by God, but that they were not under special guidance in the selection of language. Gerald Birney Smith suggested that such thoughts had perhaps been given to the writers by means of their personal experiences with God. This concept of inspiration was frequently labeled the "natural" or "thought" theory.³⁹ The modernists were particularly irritated with the apparent mechanical and literalistic nature of the verbal position, charging that it reduced the writers

to mere passive machines. The incomparable Harry Emerson Fosdick reflected the modernist tone when he declared: "They [the fundamentalists] insist that we must all believe . . . in a special theory of inspiration--that the original documents of the scripture, which, of course, we no longer possess, were inerrantly dictated to men a good deal as a man might dictate to a stenographer."⁴⁰ Modernists also asserted that many conscientious people having been taught to believe "all the Bible or none at all," had become disenchanted with the literalistic word-for-word theory and were thus driven into skepticism.

The Fundamentalists met the liberal assault upon the verbal theory by reasoning that divine guidance in the selection of language was essential to the production of an infallible revelation. Benjamin B. Warfield in his significant book, The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible, summarized the historic position of many fundamentalists:

The Church has held from the beginning that the Bible is the Word of God in such a sense that its words, though written by men and bearing indelibly impressed upon them the marks of their human origin, were written, nevertheless, under such an influence of the Holy Ghost as to be also the words of God, the adequate expression of His mind and will. It has always recognized that this conception of co-authorship implies that the Spirit's superintendence extends to the choice of the words by the human authors [verbal inspiration, but not a mechanical dictation!] and preserves its product from everything inconsistent with a divine authorship--thus securing, among other things, that entire truthfulness which is everywhere presupposed in and asserted by Scripture by the biblical writers' [inerrancy].⁴¹

J. Gresham Machen reasoned that the fundamentalist position with regard to the inspiration of the Bible did not deny the human characteristics of the biblical writers, "but it holds that by the

Spirit of God these writers were preserved from the errors which are found in other books.⁴² Hence, the question of verbal inspiration was, to the fundamentalist, the key which determined whether the Bible was of human or divine origin. If the Bible was composed of nothing more than the record of the religious experiences of certain men, or even a more or less questionable record of what they thought they experienced, then it was both solely human and imperfect in character. If the Scriptures were merely man's enlarging thought and discovery of God rather than God's revelation of Himself to man, then they were worthless as a guide from the predicament of sin. Writing in the Princeton Theological Review, a scholarly journal which supported conservative views, Professor George Johnson summed up the conservative position: "If inspiration does not render the holy Scriptures infallible, their nature is no longer divine but human."⁴³

The verbal theory of inspiration, sometimes called the plenary theory, was clearly the position which the speakers at the North American Christian Convention defended. The early speakers who touched upon the method of inspiration maintained that the Holy Spirit guided the pen in the writing of the words in the original or autograph documents. Claude C. Taylor, a professor of theology at Phillips University, was the first speaker to suggest the nature of Biblical inspiration. His understanding of the verbal theory led him to conclude that the writers of the Bible simply recorded the words given them by the Holy Spirit. In his 1927 address, Taylor attacked the modernist views of Shailer Matthews:

What is the attitude of modernists to the inspiration of the Scriptures? I shall quote from Professor Matthews again. He says: "The modernist believes in studying the Bible according to accredited historical and literary methods. These methods, though not theological, but scientific, are used in the interest of the religious life." What is this scientific method to which he refers? Hear him again: "For nearly a century the Bible has been studied scientifically. Such study has not started from the assumption of supernatural revelation, but has sought information regarding the origin, time of writing and the integrity of the Biblical material."

A little later he says: "But no sooner do men thus study the Bible than facts appear which make belief in its verbal inerrancy untenable." By the phrase, "verbal inerrancy," I am sure the author would not insinuate that any scholar believes that the text from which our English versions are translated is an exact duplicate of the original. He means to cast doubt upon the belief in the inspiration of the Word. That there are errors of transcription are all agreed. But it is quite another thing to hold that God had nothing to do with guiding the words of the original text.⁴⁴

Taylor concluded that if God left the wording of the Bible to the erring judgment of fallible man, "I would put a question mark after every command and every promise recorded in Scripture."⁴⁵

While some conservatives defended the concept of inerrant revelation by means of such direct counter-attack, others claimed that the modernists had actually misrepresented the real doctrine of verbal inspiration. They urged that the verbal theory be not confounded with the mechanical or dictation theory, a concept of inspiration which implied the absolute suppression of the human element. In 1933, Basil Holt reported that if the verbal theory were to be equated with the mechanical concept, even moderate conservatives would immediately consider it an untenable explanation for the method of inspiration.⁴⁶ The conservatives quickly responded that no tension existed between an accurate understanding

of the verbal theory and the presence of the human element in the wording of the Scriptures.

Although the Convention speakers were united in their rejection of the "natural" or "thought" theory as an explanation of inspiration--that the Bible writers were inspired in the same sense as were Milton, Browning, or Shakespeare--there was a significant division of feeling as to the nature of the theory of verbal inspiration. Leroy J. Garrett, in his 1974 address, carefully qualified the verbal theory to include the dimension of human personality in the wording of the Scriptures. "While the Scriptures are completely inspired," said Garrett, "there is no evidence that every word is given of the Holy Spirit."⁴⁷ He continued his disclaimer with an appeal to the view of verbal inspiration held by Alexander Campbell, the titular head of the Disciples of Christ:

He said: "We must regard these writers as using their own modes of speech, and as selecting their own words, both in speaking and writing; yet so plenary was their inspiration that they could not select an improper term or a word not in accordance with the mind of the Spirit. That they did select different words to express the same ideas cannot be disputed" (Mill. Harb, 1834, p. 200). Rejecting the dictation theory commonly held, he believed the Spirit directed the writers in the selection of the sources, but left them free to write out of their own individual uniqueness.⁴⁸

In 1974, Paul R. McReynolds, while supporting Garrett's view that "the personalities of the writers are allowed to be expressed,"⁴⁹ moved away from the use of the term "verbal" to the term "dynamic." In essence, the speakers were not far apart in their view of inspiration. McReynold's "dynamic" view held that the Holy Spirit guided the writers as He did all the Apostles and so

the scripture in a real sense is like Christ, that is, "fully divine and fully human." McReynolds said, "We don't fully understand that in reference to Christ and I don't totally understand that in reference to the Scriptures."⁵⁰

The "dynamic" view contains elements of both human personality and "dictation" theory. McReynolds explained:

I accept the dynamic view because of a number of passages in scripture. One I want to refer to in particular is Revelation 1:11. John is listening to God speak to him in a vision and he hears, "Write what you see and send to the churches." And so John wrote what he saw. Because he was also told to write what he saw, he wrote it, as I see it, in his own words. Therefore, the book of Revelation includes John's human interpretation of the things he saw. There is certainly some dictation within the scriptures. When one looks into the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai, we see that God wrote down the words Himself. There are passages in Revelation and passages in other books in the New Testament which have been dictated word by word. For example, in Revelation the author has the ideas and then writes them down as he sees the words coming in order that he can convey the ideas with which he is inspired.⁵¹

Recent speakers while coming out strongly for a verbal theory of inspiration have voiced general agreement with Garret and McReynolds and appear to recommend a more moderate brand of verbal inspiration than that advocated by several earlier speakers. Currently, the Convention speakers tend to agree that the writers of Scripture were free to speak through their own individual background, personality, vocabulary, and style. In concluding his 1974 address, Paul McReynolds selected conservative language to articulate a position with which all other Convention speakers and their auditors would heartily agree:

In conclusion, then, inspiration is the influence of the Holy Spirit on the minds of selected men, enabling them to adequately and accurately produce God's Word for all people. . . . The Bible is the Word of God objectively, but it also becomes the Word of God alive as the Spirit uses it again and again to encounter persons . . . And without the Spirit, the words are only written on paper with ink. We can know, without doubt, every scripture is God breathed, beneficial for teaching, for demonstrating what is wrong, for correction, and training in what is right, so that the man of God may be an artisan, totally equipped for every good work.⁵²

The Bible and Evolutionary Theory

The question of an inerrant Bible came conspicuously into focus in connection with the creation of the world and the origin of man. "The doctrine of evolution is directly antagonistic to that of creation. Evolution, if consistently accepted, makes it impossible to believe in the Bible." Although not many modernists would have subscribed to this statement attributed to Huxley, the proponents of both liberal and conservative causes were well aware that the roots of the theories regarding the inspiration of the Bible could be traced to the evolutionary hypothesis. The theological naturalism which was given birth by evolutionism encouraged the view that the Bible, and therefore, the religion which it embodied, were the products of naturalistic development.

The avant-gard of the science-religion controversy of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was Charles Darwin's 1859 publication of the Origin of Species. Believing that all life had evolved from pre-existent life, Darwin suggested that animals and plants had gradually developed in the course of countless centuries. Discounting the Genesis account of creation, man was

presented, not as the handiwork of divine purpose, but as the chance product of a process of natural selection. With the January, 1860, circulation of an American edition of Darwin's book an irrepressible conflict of ideas on science and religion began.

Perhaps the conflict was never more irrepressible than during the emotional moments of the modernist-fundamentalist controversy of the 1920's. In fact, fundamentalism's zenith mark was reached on a hot and sultry day in 1925 in a packed Dayton, Tennessee, courtroom when William Jennings Bryan and Clarence Darrow conducted a verbal battle over the fatherhood of man.⁵³ The circumstances which led two of the leading figures of the era to square off before a judge and a jury in the Scopes "monkey trial" are relevant to an understanding of the attitude toward evolution held by speakers at the North American Christian Convention.

By the turn of the century the most ardent defenders of orthodoxy were forced to admit that the doctrine of evolution, though an unproved hypothesis, had become an integral part of the modern mind. As Richard Hofstadter points out, John Fiske and Asa Gray had crowned the movement with respectability.⁵⁴ In 1892, Lyman Abbott published The Evolution of Christianity, in which he described evolution as God's method of doing things. He "sought to show that in the spiritual, as in the physical, God is the secret and source of light. Accordingly, Abbott spoke of the evolution of the Bible, the Church, Christian Society, and the Soul."⁵⁵ By the early 1900's many religious leaders had taken it for granted that

the evolutionary hypothesis could be positively used in the interpretation of the Christian religion. Although there were various levels of acceptance, the modernists gave general assent to the doctrine, arguing that the story of evolution furnished new evidence for the existence of God and the creation of the world, and was more spiritually and intellectually satisfying than the argument from special creation. It was particularly welcomed as a reasonable relief from the difficulties implicit within the Genesis account. The modernist maintained that the essence of the Bible and the Christian religion were both salvaged and made relevant to modern man by the doctrine of theistic evolution. They reasoned that man's opportunities for understanding God and being related to Him were not terminated but greatly enhanced in the findings of science. Harry Emerson Fosdick, in a New York Times article, "A Reply to Bryan in the Name of Religion," asserted:

In a world nailed together like a box, God, the Creator, had been thought of as a carpenter who created the universe long ago; now, in a world growing like a tree, even putting out new roots and branches, God has more and more been seen as the indwelling spiritual life . . . Positively the idea of an immanent God, which is the God of evolution, is infinitely grander than the occasional wonder-worker who is the God of an old theology.⁵⁶

The modernists had very little patience with what they termed the "sweeping generalizations and uninformed denials" of their adversaries. Edwin Grant Conklin, a scientist at Princeton University, charged that Billy Sunday and William Jennings Bryan avoided even a "second hand" study of the evidence for evolution and hence failed "to qualify as trustworthy witnesses." Citing

the evidences drawn from morphology, physiology, embryology, palentology, homology, heredity and variation, Conklin observed:

Against all the mountain of evidence which Mr. Bryan tries to blow away by a word, what does he bring in support of his view of special creation? Only this, that evolution denies the Biblical account of creation of man.

In face of all these facts, Mr. Bryan and all his kind hurl their medieval theology. It would be amusing if it were not so pathetic and disheartening to see these modern defenders of the faith beating their gongs and firing their giant crackers against the ramparts of science.⁵⁷

Henry F. Osborn, president of the American Museum of Natural History, was another scientist who questioned the scholarship of the fundamentalists. The Earth Speaks to Bryan and Evolution and Religion in Education were the two volumes he contributed to the verbal battle over science and the Bible. Suggesting that the Bible itself supports the spiritual and moral evolution of man, he asserted: "Evolution by no means takes God out of the universe, as Mr. Bryan supposes, but it greatly increases both the wonder, the mystery, and the marvelous order which we call 'natural law,' pervading all nature."⁵⁸ Reviewing for readers of the New York Times the Foxhall, Piltdown, Heidelberg, Neanderthal, and Cro-Magnon fossil discoveries, Osborn concluded:

It is a dramatic circumstance that Darwin had within his reach the head of the Neanderthal man without realizing that it constituted the "missing link" between man and the lower order of creation. All this evidence is today within reach of every schoolboy. It is at the service of Mr. Bryan.⁵⁹

For the fundamentalist cause, on the other hand, the doctrine of evolution quickly became a giant in the land which threatened faith in the Bible, the Church, the whole of the Christian system.

It seemed obvious that the theories of verbal inspiration and evolution could not exist side by side. Evolution not only cut to ribbons the first chapters of Genesis, but equally contradicted the whole of Christ's substitutionary atonement which is built upon man's fall and need for redemption. The conservatives maintained that the Bible was structured around the doctrine of sin inherent in the account of the fall of Adam and Eve. If sin were only the remains of the ape in man, then it was not only less serious, but man was less guilty. To the fundamentalist, man's need of salvation by a divine redeemer was challenged; the very life of the Christian religion was at stake. Admitting that God could have used evolution as the tool of creation had He so elected, they replied that the Bible distinctly teaches that man did not evolve from lower species but was created by special design. Theistic evolution was blamed for the Godlessness which prevailed in intellectual circles. Charging that as materialists most evolutionists were admitted atheists or agnostics, William Jennings Bryan said of those claiming to be theistic evolutionists:

Some call themselves "theistic evolutionists," but the theistic evolutionist puts God so far away that he ceases to be a present influence in the life. . . . This is a living world. Why not a living God upon the throne? Why not allow Him to work now? . . . The real question is, Did God use evolution as His plan? If it could be shown that man, instead of being made in the image of God, is a development of beasts, we would have to accept it, regardless of its effect, for truth is truth and must prevail. But when there is no proof we have a right to consider the effect of the acceptance of an unsupported hypothesis.⁶⁰

The persistent and stubborn fundamentalists introduced into the legislatures of nearly half the states of the union, bills

designed to forbid the teaching of evolution. While in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas and South Carolina they pushed such bills through one house only to fail in the other, in Tennessee, Florida, and Mississippi their injunctions were written into law.⁶¹ But the intensity of feeling was perhaps best attested by the numerous leagues which sprang up with a view to eliminating the theory from America. In 1923, William B. Riley instituted the Anti-Evolution League of Minnesota, which a year later became the Anti-Evolution League of America. J. W. Porter, a Kentucky minister, was the first president of the national organization, and geologist George M. Price, advertised as one of the greatest living scientists, was its prominent spokesman. A second organization, the Bryan Bible League, was almost singlehandedly the work of Paul W. Rood of Turlock, California. Rood testified: "In the year that Bryan died, I saw also the Lord."⁶² Harry Rimmer of Los Angeles, who had been a science student for a number of years, became a Christian in 1920 and immediately set out to reconcile the facts of science with the teachings of the Bible. In 1921, he and fifty other men established still another league, the Research Science Bureau, "the only scientific association in existence whose charter specifically states that it is a corporation that is set for the scientific defense of the Word of God."⁶³ Cole was of the opinion that Rimmer's efforts against evolution consisted of nothing more than pseudo-science. In 1927, Rimmer joined forces with the Defenders of the Christian Faith, an organization headed by the popular lecturer Gerald B. Winrod of Kansas. It was Winrod who characterized Harry Emerson

Fosdick as the one who looked for the genesis of man in a speck of jelly. The Bible Crusaders of America was the Anti-Evolution League headed by the wealthy Florida capitalist George F. Washburn. He urged faithful churchmen to compel legislators in every state to enact anti-evolution laws, or to replace them with men who would do so. Washburn also offered five hundred dollars to any "Agnostic, Modernist, Evolutionist, or Atheist of equal prominence," who would meet Riley, John R. Straton, or J. Frank Norris in public debate.⁶⁴ Two thousand dollars was offered to any opponent willing to enter into a series of six debates. Edward Y. Clark was the founder of the Supreme Kingdom, a secret anti-evolution society patterned after the Klu Klux Klan. The show-window of the leagues headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, featured a gorilla shackled in chains.

Ultimately, the fundamentalists came to center their opposition in the charge that evolution, at its best, was but an unproved hypothesis. They frequently pointed to such scientific admissions of incomplete evidence as William Bateson's 1921 address to the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Toronto, Canada. Theologian Gerald Birney Smith rebutted that Bateson's message but "shows how far removed is his attitude of scientific honesty from the dogmatic attitude of the anti-evolutionists."⁶⁵ Bryan, however, continued to emphasize that "the word 'hypothesis,' though euphonious, dignified, and high sounding, is merely a scientific synonym for the old-fashioned word 'guess.'" Asserting that

the proponents of theistic evolution reduce the Bible to a "scrap of paper" he called upon all Christians everywhere to arise and "protect religion from its most insidious enemy."⁶⁶

The speakers on the program of the North American Christian Convention were among those who rose to meet the enemy's challenge. Although the evolutionary hypothesis was not a major issue within the Convention, from 1927 to 1977 more than a dozen speakers discussed the problems posed by the teaching. An analysis of their addresses reveals a united attitude toward the theory of evolution, theistic or otherwise--absolute rejection.

From the very first, the Convention speakers were unable to envisage any level of harmony between the evolutionary hypothesis and the teachings of the Bible. In the early programs the methods of refutation, resembling those used by the nationally prominent conservatives, ranged from righteous indignation to heated, bitter and abusive language. While some speakers dwelt on the frailties of science in general, others attempted to discredit the evolutionary hypothesis by criticizing its various facets. In 1927, Glenn G. Cole reminded his listeners that, "The list of scientists who have tired of the assumptions of the unprovable theory [had] swollen to large numbers." Cole cited a number of anti-evolution books written by "some of the best scientists" expressing themselves in "clear-cut statements as to the false claims of the theory."⁶⁷

L. A. Chapman continued the attack on evolution in his 1928 message, "Whence Came Man?":

. . . in the name of scientific truth, we must affirm that there is no shred of trustworthy evidence that there has been any transmutation of species from one type to another. The findings of the best scientists in the world do not support the theory of the origin of species by natural selection. . . . When it is said that a man had an ape for his grandfather, we are talking nonsense if we are talking by the principles of sane reason. . . . Evolution cannot account for the beginning of life on this planet, for the facts of consciousness, nor for moral freedom and personality. It confesses that it is helpless here, and this is a crucial point.⁶⁸

In J. B. Briney's 1928 Convention address the "law of reversion" was used to refute the theory of evolution. Briney suggested that facts and experiments show that nature, instead of "lifting itself by its own bootstrap from lower to higher plans of life," struggles, when diverted from its normal courses, to get back to primordial conditions, or stubbornly refused to continue in the direction into which it was diverted. "We have a conspicuous example . . . in the case of the mule," said Briney. "This animal is a cross between the horse and donkey, and cannot take another step, being sterile." Dealing more specifically with Darwinism, Briney also discussed and discounted the Pithecanthropus, Heidelberg, Piltdown, Neanderthal, Cro-Magnon, and Talgai fossil specimens as possible "missing links" from lower to higher life forms. He concluded the address with the firm declaration that, "There is absolutely no proof that a lower species ever produced a higher species, or any species different from itself. Such a phenomenon never had any existence except in the fertile brain of an evolutionist."⁶⁹

The most thorough analysis of the Darwinian theory was John Ralls' 1964 speech, "Creation Versus Evolution." His crucial point,

in agreement with all of the speakers preceding him, was that the evolutionary theory is but a theory with no evidence in its support.

Ralls declared:

So little has science substantiated the claim of chance and accidental formation and development of life that the scientist, Loren Eiseley, calls the evolutionary theory a myth. He confesses that, in order to avoid embarrassment, science felt impelled "to create a mythology of its own: namely, the assumption that what, after long effort, could not be proved to take place today had in truth taken place in the primeval past" (The Immense Journey, p. 144).

Contrary to popularly accepted brash assertions that all came by accident not only is there no supporting evidence, as Eiseley admits, but Professor Conklin, biologist at Princeton University, speaking of probability of life originating from accident is comparable to the probability of the Unabridged Dictionary resulting from an explosion in a printing shop."⁷⁰

The words of all the Convention speakers were strikingly reminiscent of William Jennings Bryan's stated position:

Christianity has nothing to fear from any truth; no fact distrubs the Christian religion or the Christian. It is the unsupported guess that is substituted for science to which opposition is made, and I think the objection is a valid one.⁷¹

Inherent within all the speeches on evolution presented at the North American Christian Convention was a deep concern for the consequences of such a doctrine in the lives of people. In his 1965 address, James S. McKowen voiced the sentiment of the Convention audience when he warned of the "giant" that seeks to destroy us:

He rears his ugly head in many schools in the teaching of a godless system of the origin of man. Now we are not arguing against the scientist who believes that evidence overwhelmingly supports an orderly biological development of man. We are protesting against any theory of origin that makes man's nature only that of an animal, but with a more usable body and a keener mind.

Today's great revolution is called spuriously, "The New Morality." It is not new--it is a tried way, and has been found wanting in every decadent society known to man. It is as old-fashioned as the Garden of Eden and everlastingly fatal for anyone to forget that he is a child of God--stamped with God's image, and destined to work out God's purposes.

This giant puts pressure on you from every side to act like an animal. Your instincts are natural; express them, he demands. He has an entire repertoire of songs, books, and movies which plead with you to let yourself go and enjoy life. Always enjoyment is linked with surrender to physical urges.

Of course, when we live like an animal we must die like an animal; without hope and without God, cast, as Tennyson says, as rubbish to the void.⁷²

Science and the Bible

Even among the fundamentalists, the prestige of science during the first three decades of the twentieth century was colossal. Kenneth Scott Latourette points out that additions to the knowledge and mastery of the physical environment contributed to great and transforming changes in the life of mankind.⁷³ Under the deluge of new machines and the dictums of Albert Einstein, the man in the street and the woman in the kitchen were ready to believe that science could accomplish almost anything. Harry Emerson Fosdick well stated the effect of the prestige of science upon churchmen:

When a prominent scientist comes out strongly for religion, all the churches thank Heaven and take courage as though it were the highest possible compliment to God to have Eddington believe in Him.⁷⁴

In the interest of survival, the fundamentalists had seen no alternative but to attack the evolutionary hypothesis. They did not, however feel disposed to take on the whole scientific spirit of the age. To fight evolution had been risky, but essential; to

fight science would have been suicidal. In searching for a solution to their dilemma, the conservatives were reminded that evolution had been disposed of on the grounds that it was an unproven theory. They concluded therefore, that the Christian faith could accommodate the verified findings of science. Gatewood observed, "Fundamentalists, no less than modernists, recognized that they lived in an age of science; in fact, the aim of their struggle was to achieve religious certitude in an age of science."⁷⁵

It is certainly true that while the North American Christian Convention speakers unanimously rejected the theory of evolution as unproven and inferior to the Genesis record, their attitudes toward scientific knowledge in general were favorable. The addresses which treated the science-religion controversy suggested attempts to reconciliation. Generally, the messages sought to harmonize proven scientific facts with the teachings of the Bible, to demonstrate the compatibility of science and religion.

In 1928, Arthur Holmes, a professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, was the first Convention speaker to affirm unwaveringly, "There is no conflict between religion and science when science is properly defined:"

How can this profound and dangerous issue be ameliorated or removed? It cannot be accomplished by eliminating religion. That is man's oldest and best grounded discipline. Nor by the denial of science. Its triumphs have been too brilliant to deny, and its benefits too valuable to be rejected. These two antagonists must find a common ground upon which they can live, and can both serve mankind with fidelity to their principles and value to their constituents. . . . Against practical science religion has no objection unless it is misused to manufacture weapons to slay human beings. The real battleground, therefore lies between theology and pure science, or

the attempt to build by observation and induction an organized system of all possible knowledge, made up of theories and laws designed to guide human thinking and human conduct.⁷⁶

Thirty-six years later, John Ralls, a professor at Lincoln Christian College echoed Holmes' 1928 affirmation. He asserted that science had been the benefactor of mankind in medicine, in animal husbandry and agriculture, in entertainment and in comfort and conveniences. "Now some would use this popularity and prestige of science as a mask," Ralls concluded, "for propagating a theory that is not substantiated by fact, in order to spread a denial of God and rejection of Christ--in short, to further a materialistic philosophy, an atheistic religion."⁷⁷

The Higher Criticism

In the eyes of the fundamentalist groups, not only did the Darwinian hypothesis imperil the foundations of faith in the God of the Bible, but its companion, the higher criticism, represented an equally treacherous threat to the infallibility of the Bible. Stemming from the application of scientific methods to the study of history, the higher criticism subjected the Bible to rigorous historical analysis. Imported from German university centers, higher criticism was the use of accepted methods of historical investigation to answer certain questions about the Scriptures:

Who wrote them? Are the documents, as we have them, genuine compositions of the authors who were supposed to have written them? Has material been added? Have they been altered? What were the historic circumstances under which they have been written? Do the writings show reflections of those circumstances?⁷⁸

Biblical scholars, known as higher critics, sought to discover the original purpose and distinctive message of each book of the Bible, actual authorship, approximate date of writing, and other pertinent facts to show the relevance of each book to its time. They proceeded on the assumption that the Hebrew religion developed from primitive to more advanced ethical concepts.⁷⁹ The higher critics insisted that the Scriptures were human documents containing the errors one might expect to find in such a monumental literary production.⁸⁰ By 1924, Shailer Matthews could render the following summary of the work of the critics:

. . . there is practical unanimity in the belief that the Pentateuch and many other Old Testament writings are combinations of much older material; that the Biblical material has been subjected to successive editings; that many of the Old Testament writings are centuries younger than the events they record; and that several of the New Testament books did not spring from apostolic sources in the sense that they were written by the apostles themselves. . . . At the end of thirty years of widespread critical and historical study of the Scriptures it would seem as if ministers, at least, would know these conclusions. The fact that the rank and file of ministers are not only unacquainted with a scientific study of the Bible, but are ignorant of some of the more elementary facts concerning the Scriptures is a commentary on the working of the dogmatic mind.⁸¹

Without concurring with Matthews' conclusions regarding the historical method, the Convention speakers would have agreed, that for the most part, the Convention audiences did not consider the problem of higher criticism to really be a problem. "While it is not easy to over-emphasize the importance of the issues raised by modern science," wrote William A. Brown in 1922, "it is well to remember that the number of persons directly and consciously affected

by them is less than we are apt to suppose. . . ."82 At any rate, whether for lack of information or in deference to the greater needs of the audience, many Convention speakers either avoided the issue altogether or bypassed it. It should be remembered that the higher criticism created its greatest turbulence around the turn of the century and by 1927 was beginning to subside.⁸³ Modernists viewed this lull in the struggle as a clear indication that the fight for scientific technique and its accompanying spiritual freedom had been won. They maintained that the historical method was finally coming of age. Speaking of the established position of higher criticism, E. F. Scott of Union Theological Seminary wrote in 1921: "We know at last what our religion is based on; faith has found a real starting point."⁸⁴ The conservatives, however, were inclined to assign to the lull a note of surrender and admission of error on the part of the liberals. John L. Campbell in his book, The Bible Under Fire, declared:

The tide has turned. In the realm of scholarship the battle against Higher Criticism has been fought and won. The haughty boast of Scientific Methods and assured results no more occasion any alarm. . . . An abler scholarship has pricked the bubble.⁸⁵

Campbell's comments were similar to those of J. B. Briney at the 1928 Convention in Kansas City, Missouri:

The "positive and arrogant" claims of "higher critics" have been so often and so thoroughly discredited, that it is somewhat marvelous that they can hold up their heads and look an intelligent public fully in the face while exploiting their theories at the present time. Indeed, the leaders of thought along this line are not as "positive and arrogant" in presenting their claims, as they once were, although the "small fry," who adopt ideas at second or third hand, and

seem to think it smart to masquerade in the cast-off duds of an antiquated German "kultur," are still making considerable noise by rattling the dry bones that are to be found in the limbo of critical fads.

It may not be amiss to occasionally bring out before the public some of the ghosts of departed critical theories, that intelligent people may see their ungainliness, and appreciate their harmlessness.⁸⁶

It is apparent that both modernists and conservatives were claiming victory, but whether the peace was more due to a truce than a settlement is perhaps not certain.⁸⁷

It is possible to conclude that by 1927 the opposing positions had become so fixed and the gulf between them so great that any meaningful dialogue was virtually impossible. Strife within certain large religious groups or denominations was rampant during the 1920's, especially in the North among the Baptists, Presbyterians, and Disciples of Christ. Louis Gasper inaccurately asserts: "By 1929 the Disciples of Christ . . . discovered a formula to settle its differences without division. . . ."⁸⁸ However, Sydney Ahlstrom's more accurate scholarship reveals:

As the possibility of halting or reversing these several trends ["liberal theology and biblical criticism"] diminished, the conservatives took the important step in 1927 of organizing the North American Christian Convention. No formal separation took place, but two quite distinct fellowships arose and the denomination's leading historian would subsequently speak of the conservatives as constituting a second group. . . .⁸⁹

Although the turbulence created by higher criticism had been felt years earlier by theology in general, its impact was just beginning in many conservative camps by the time the North American Christian Convention was being founded. It is therefore not surprising

that the chief spokesmen for a movement which had been founded upon the inerrancy of the Scriptures should react sharply against such criticism of the Bible. In the 1927 address that inaugurated the Convention, Wallace Tharp gave the orthodox answer to higher criticism:

At once I can hear multitudes of good people saying: "We will never have anything to do with the higher criticism." But if they will just stop and take a sober second thought, they may discover that the higher criticism is a legitimate branch of human knowledge. Practically all of the ancient literature of the world has come down to us in its present form through the labor of the lower and the higher critics. Think of the sifting of all this ancient literature, discovering the manuscripts, securing a pure text and a definite history of each ancient book, its compilation, discovering its author and his whereabouts. . . . In its purity, then, it is to be noted, the higher criticism of the Old Testament is simply an honest investigation of the facts about the historical revelation of God to determine, just as in a truly scientific study of nature, how God actually did proceed, not how he must have proceeded. We have then, no fight to make against criticism properly and legitimately conducted. Our fight is against the destructive criticism of the rationalistic school. Higher criticism has been perverted from its proper, natural and intended purpose of assisting earnest believers in investigating and studying the Bible, and has been prostituted to savage, destructive attacks upon the Bible and the supernatural character of the Holy Scriptures by unbelievers and infidels.⁹⁰

Tharp's address was typical of other Convention messages that treated higher criticism. Two dominant themes were repeatedly discussed. First, there was a willingness to accept the concept of criticism; the speakers having confidence that the Bible would be uninjured by the close scrutiny of historical analysis. Concurrent with this respect for the technique of criticism, there was a firm rejection of many conclusions which the "rationalistic school" of higher critics ultimately reached. In his 1927 address, Claude C. Taylor, noting that higher criticism was championed by the advocates

of religious modernism, offered vociferously a definition in answer to the question, "What is a modernist?":

. . . he uses science to test the values of inherited orthodoxy, and, of course, he includes the theory of evolution as science. He uses historical and literary criticism, which includes much of German rationalism, for the same purpose. The common ground of these two instruments which modernists use is to explain everything by natural law; there is no miracle.

. . . If miracles are rejected, as they are usually by those who accept the theory of evolution and the results of destructive criticism, there is no possibility of holding Christ to be anything more than man. Hence we see modernists at one in their thought of Christ with atheists, ethicists, agnostics, materialists and Unitarians.⁹¹

While Taylor was outspoken in his attitude toward modernists, he demonstrated a friendly attitude toward "legitimate" higher criticism:

Higher criticism is a legitimate study and helpful, if friendly, to an understanding of the Bible. But the fact is that modernists have accepted the conclusions of that branch of criticism, which many have chosen to call destructive, because it destroys faith in the inspiration of the Scriptures, and, therefore, causes skepticism as to their authenticity.⁹²

In 1974, Leroy Garrett approached the problem of Biblical criticism from a historical perspective. With reference to the founders of the Restoration Movement and Alexander Campbell in particular, the speaker thought it appropriate to ask, "To what extent are our views of Biblical criticism consistent with theirs?" Garrett observed that even though Campbell lived before the dawn of modern scientific biblical criticism, his own grammatico-historical approach to the scriptures was well in advance of his time:

He had no fear of an honest, vigorous examination of the Bible in its historical and cultural setting. He laid down principles of interpretation that alarmed the clergy, such as: "the same philological principles, deduced from the nature of language, or the same laws of interpretation which are applied to the language of other books, are to be applied to the language of the Bible" (Christian Systems, p. 4). . . . Nor was Campbell alarmed by a possible error here and there in scriptures. Asked in the Campbell-Owen debate about the reference to Jeremiah in Matt. 27:9 instead of Zechariah, he explained that a writer could easily make such a mistake since the Old Testament was divided in a different way then; but even if it be an error it in no wise affects the credibility of Matthew's testimony concerning Jesus, he insisted.⁹³

Paul K. McAlister echoed the thought and sentiment of Alexander Campbell in his 1977 address, "Inspiration, Written Word, and Truth." He contended that the statement, "the Bible is true" could maintain cognitive status only if it conformed to truth criteria that would confirm or disconfirm any cognitively significant claim.

It would seem imperative that the phenomena of scripture should speak for itself and that it be judged true or false on the same basis that one would judge any cognitively significant document.

Such tests as internal consistency or external corroboration as well as the manuscript or biblical tests must be considered relevant. To reject propositional revelation by pre-supposition or to reject propositional revelation by means of creating a special "faith-truth" both lead to a vacuous concept of revelation.⁹⁴

In response to the alleged contradictions and discrepancies of the Bible which were often emphasized by the higher critics, McAlister declared: "Are we not most reverent if we say that many of the matters that detractors of the sacred scriptures have decried as error are accidental to the divine revelation and do not affect its substance?" He concluded:

What may be considered an error may be nothing more than the fact that our standards of exactness were unimportant to a Biblical author rounding off a number or with regard to the nature of genealogies. This kind of example leads one to believe that what needs to be accomplished is the renewed commitment hermeneutically to allow the authors to define their own purpose of writing. Their purpose will act as a guide so that we do not read into a given context something the author was unconcerned about.⁹⁶

In a similar vein, Leroy Garrett, in his 1974 address, asserted that divine revelation had come to us through "earthen vessels" and consequently bore the mark of human imperfections. Garrett added:

I agree with the likes of T. H. Horne and Wescott & Hort that the inerrancy of scripture means that there is no substantial error in the Bible. There is no imperfection that materially affects its message or its great teachings. Witnesses to any event do not have to agree in every particular for their testimony to be valid. Indeed, it is the variations that indicate that there has been no collusion.⁹⁷

Studying the Bible

Langdon Gilkey offered the following observation of American church life in 1963:

Our churches are, to be sure, full, respected, loved, and supported by staggering donations of human time, energy, and money. Their membership, their physical plant, and their activities increase yearly. . . . The Bible is seldom read and its contents are virtually unknown--though it is in theory greatly revered.⁹⁸

Similar observations on the part of speakers at the North American Christian Convention prompted them to discuss the need and methods for Bible study. Addresses in this category ranged from hints on how to do an exegesis to suggestions on which versions to use.

Numerous speakers made mention of the rules for studying the Bible. "Study the passage, keeping in mind to whom it was written, who is writing, for what purpose, and under what circumstances."⁹⁹ In addition, Convention audiences were frequently reminded to study a text within its context, study every passage in the Bible that relates to a given subject, and approach the study with an honest and open heart "rightly dividing the Word of truth."¹⁰⁰

With reference to methodology in the study of the Bible, Leroy Garrett returned to the counsel of Alexander Campbell:

Influenced as he was by Francis Bacon and John Locke, Campbell insisted that the student must approach the scriptures inductively rather than deductively. He believed in the kind of free inquiry that was void of all presuppositions in approaching the biblical text. The "textuary divines," as he called them in his more ungracious moments, have their premises already in hand, and so they proceed to find those texts that will justify their conclusions. He laid down a standard for biblical study that hardly anyone could be expected to follow perfectly, including himself: "I have endeavored to read the scriptures as though no one had read them before me; and I am as much on my guard against reading them today, through the medium of my own views yesterday, or a week ago, as I am against being influence dy any foreign name, authority, or system, whatever" (Christian Baptist, 1826, p. 201).¹⁰¹

The concluding remarks of Paul K. McAlister's 1977 address are appropriate:

Often liberals and conservatives are "poles apart in agreement." The liberals have considered revelation as subjectivity. And too often because of the lack of serious content, conservative preaching and witness puts the faith at the same level of subjectivity by claiming that, or acting as though, faith equals emotion.

We must be pressed into a serious question of hermeneutics --to let the text speak for itself. We must be set for the defense of scripture as the true word of God. The Bible is not a special kind of truth, it is simply "true." If the

propositions are not true in the context of the author's intent, we have no sure word. We have much at stake in the reliability of the scripture, "they have been written that we might all believe."¹⁰²

Summary

To the Convention speakers, Christianity was the religion of the Bible, the religion of a fixed and finished book of Scripture. The Restoration Movement had been established upon the authority of the Bible. By 1927, they had become the church's lifeline and vital support. The speakers believed that specially selected men had come under the influence of the Holy Spirit and recorded the final and infallible will of God in the Bible.

The early speakers were generally agreed that the Bible was absolutely or verbally inspired; that God guided the writers both in their thought and in the selection of their words. A few speakers, however, perhaps conscious of the imposing conclusions of the higher critics, suggested that the writers enjoyed the latitude of individual or personal expression in the recording of their accounts. While agreeing with the idea that God inspired and protected the message of the original autographs, a few recent speakers proposed that transmission or copyset flaws of several varieties had entered the text since the original canon was completed. Perhaps it would be accurate to conclude that the majority of the latter speakers favored a modified verbal theory, as applied only to the original autographs. That is, while believing that the Holy Spirit influenced the very wording of the Scriptures, they were nonetheless

repelled by the mechanical or dictation concepts of the strict verbal view. On the other hand, while believing that each writer was free to color his account with his own style, personality, and background, they were vigorously suspicious of a theory which did not involve God in the actual selection of the language. It can also be concluded that the various shades of differences in the speaker's opinions found a common denominator in the doctrine of Biblical infallibility.

To the Convention speakers, the Christian faith and the theory of evolution were mutually exclusive. They, with one accord, were unable to tolerate any measure of compatibility between the implications of Darwinism, and the concept of an infallible Bible.

While the speakers unanimously rejected the evolutionary hypothesis as unproven and inferior to the Biblical account of creation, their attitudes toward scientific knowledge in general were favorable. Generally, the Convention speakers sought to harmonize proven scientific facts with the teachings of the Bible in an effort to demonstrate the positive compatibility between the two.

Though reacting vigorously against the accusations of the "rationalistic school" of "destructive critics," the speakers nonetheless encouraged a favorable disposition towards historical analysis and critical investigation. They challenged the widespread conclusions of the higher critics as being unsound, but at the same time applied to their own study of the Bible many of the valuable

tools and techniques of their opponents. The speakers rejected the findings of the rationalistic higher critics as being motivated by the unproven theory of evolution, as being shaped by prejudiced and presupposed disdain for the supernatural, and as being nurtured on the false notion that the Bible is replete with inconsistencies and contradictions.

Finally, the observation that legitimate Bible study had begun to decline in recent years led several speakers to remind their audiences of the need and methods for Bible study. Emphasis was given to the inductive method and "commitment to serious exegesis" was demanded.¹⁰³

CHAPTER IV

FOOTNOTES

¹C. C. Taylor, "The Manace of Modernism," Christian Standard (November 19, 1927): 1.

²William A. Brown, The Church in America (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922), p. 142.

³Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), p. 517.

⁴Stewart G. Cole, History of Fundamentalism (New York: Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1931), p. 31.

⁵Ernest R. Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. xiv.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., p. 243.

⁸Cole, History of Fundamentalism, p. 233.

⁹Ralph H. Gabriel, Christianity and Modern Thought (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1924), p. v.

¹⁰Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 772.

¹¹Washington Gladden, Who Wrote the Bible? (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1891), pp. 380-381.

¹²Taylor, "The Meance of Modernism," p. 1. Taylor was a professor in the College of the Bible at Phillips University, Enid, Oklahoma.

¹³E. C. Vanderlaan, Fundamentalism Versus Modernism (New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1925), p. 21.

¹⁴Christian Work (May 31, 1924): 702.

- ¹⁵"The Fundamentals," Forum (July, 1923): 1666.
- ¹⁶William Newton Clarke, Sixty Years With the Bible (New York: Scribner and Sons, 1917), p. 133.
- ¹⁷Christian Century, (April 3, 1924): 424.
- ¹⁸Robert A. Ashworth, "Modernism and Christian Assurance," Christian Work (March 1, 1924): 269.
- ¹⁹Shailer Matthews, The Faith of Modernism (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924), p. 48.
- ²⁰George Bedell, et al., Religion in America (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1975), p. 222.
- ²¹J. H. Stambaugh, "Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem," Christian Standard (November 12, 1927): 5.
- ²²Paul R. McReynolds, "The Biblical Nature of Inspiration," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.
- ²³Ibid.
- ²⁴James M. Gray, The Fundamentals, III, p. 17, as quoted by Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism, p. 205.
- ²⁵Archibald Alexander Hodge, Outlines of Theology (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1928), p. 69.
- ²⁶Leroy J. Garrett, "The Nature of Biblical Authority and the Restoration Movement," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.
- ²⁷Richard Phillips, "The Christian Student and the Intellectual Revolution" (mimeographed: NACC), 1966.
- ²⁸Thomas Hagger, "The Book We Should Read," Christian Standard (November 19, 1927): 5.
- ²⁹Thomas J. McCrossan, The Bible: Its Christ and Modernism (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1925), p. 5.
- ³⁰Durant Drake, Problems of Religion: An Introductory Survey (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916), p. 272.
- ³¹Henrietta Heron, "Pentecost Preparation Power," Christian Standard (November 23, 1929): 7.

³²L. H. Apple, "Preaching the Word of God," Christian Standard (September 5, 1964): 3.

³³James G. VanBuren, "God's Word Lives," Christian Standard (August 2, 1958): 7.

³⁴Christian Century (April 3, 1924): 424.

³⁵J. E. de Gafferelly, "The Bible, the Word of God," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Lexington, Kentucky, 18 June 1931 (manuscript).

³⁶Ernest Hunter Wray, "Faithful Until Death," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Lexington, Kentucky, 19 June 1931 (manuscript).

³⁷C. C. Taylor, "The Menace of Modernism," Christian Standard (November 19, 1927): 1.

³⁸Harry Emerson Fosdick, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" as quoted in Ernest Wragge and Barnet Baskerville, Contemporary Forum (New York: Harper and Row, 1943), pp. 97ff.

³⁹Gerald Birney Smith, A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1916), p. 555.

⁴⁰Fosdick, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" Contemporary Forum, p. 99.

⁴¹Benjamin B. Warfield, The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1948), p. 173.

⁴²J. Gresham Machen, "Christianity Vs. Modern Liberalism" as quoted in Ernest Wragge and Barnet Baskerville, Contemporary Forum (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 127.

⁴³George Johnson, The Princeton Theological Review, article, 1914, p. 461.

⁴⁴C. C. Taylor, "The Menace of Modernism," Christian Standard (November 19, 1927): 4.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

⁴⁶Basil Holt, "The Inspiration of the Scriptures," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Springfield, Illinois, 22 June 1933 (manuscript).

⁴⁷Leroy J. Garrett, "The Nature of Biblical Authority and the Restoration Movement," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Paul R. McReynolds, "The Biblical Nature of Inspiration," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Louis Gasper, The Fundamentalist Movement (Paris: Mouton and Co., 1963), p. 18.

⁵⁴Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, 1860-1915 (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), p. 14. The chapter entitled "The Coming of Darwinism," recounts in detail the reception of evolution in America by scientists and theologians.

⁵⁵Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 771.

⁵⁶New York Times, March 12, 1922.

⁵⁷New York Times, March 5, 1922.

⁵⁸Henry F. Osborn, Evolution and Religion in Education (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), pp. 34-35.

⁵⁹New York Times, March 5, 1922.

⁶⁰New York Times, February 26, 1922.

⁶¹Willard B. Gatewood, Jr., ed., Controversy in the Twenties (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1969), p. 287.

⁶²Stewart G. Cole, The History of Fundamentalism (New York: Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1931), p. 262.

⁶³Ibid., p. 264.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 272.

⁶⁵Gerlad B. Smith, Journal of Religion, May 1922.

⁶⁶New York Times, February 26, 1922.

⁶⁷ Glenn G. Cole, "The Present Status of Evolution," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 14 October 1927 (manuscript). Cole cited the following anti-evolution books: The Case Against Evolution by George Barry O'Toole, Ph.D.; The Dogma of Evolution by Louis T. Moore, Ph.D.; Faith and Knowledge by Edmund Hoppe, Ph.D.; The Problem of Origins by L. S. Keyser; The Logic of Evolution by Charles B. McMullen, Ph.D.; and The New Geology by Price.

⁶⁸ L. A. Chapman, "Whence Came Man?" address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Kansas City, Missouri, 11 October 1928 (manuscript).

⁶⁹ J. B. Briney, "The Theory of Evolution Examined," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Kansas City, Missouri, 11 October 1928 (manuscript).

⁷⁰ John Ralls, "Creation Versus Evolution," Christian Standard (January 23, 1965): 7.

⁷¹ New York Times, February 26, 1922.

⁷² James S. McKowen, "How to Kill a Giant," Christian Standard (September 11, 1965): 3.

⁷³ Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of Christianity (New York: Harper and Row Co., 1953), p. 1064.

⁷⁴ Frederick L. Allen, Only Yesterday (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1931), p. 199.

⁷⁵ Willard B. Gatewood, Jr., Controversy in the Twenties (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1969), p. 150.

⁷⁶ Arthur Holmes, "Passion and Precision in Preaching Christ," Christian Standard (November 19, 1928): 3.

⁷⁷ John Ralls, "Creation Versus Evolution," Christian Standard (January 16, 1965): 4.

⁷⁸ Dore R. Sharpe, Walter Rauschenbusch (New York: Macmillan Company, 1942), p. 6.

⁷⁹ Louis Gasper, The Fundamentalist Movement (Paris: Mouton and Co., 1963), p. 8.

⁸⁰ Washington Gladden, Recollections (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1909), p. 259.

⁸¹Shailer Matthews, The Faith of Modernism (New York: Macmillan Co., 1924), p. 42.

⁸²William A. Brown, The Church in America (New York: Macmillan Co., 1922), p. 140.

⁸³Between 1882 and 1926 the Christian Standard carried 480 articles denouncing the claims of "destructive higher criticism." From 1927 to 1976 only six such articles appeared; a clear indication that by the time of the inaugural Convention in 1927 the struggle with the higher critics was on the decline.

⁸⁴E. F. Scott, The New Testament Today (New York: Macmillan Co., 1921), p. 87.

⁸⁵John L. Campbell, The Bible Under Fire (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1929), p. 105.

⁸⁶J. B. Briney, "The Authority of the Bible," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Kansas City, Missouri, 13 October 1928 (manuscript).

⁸⁷William E. Hocking, Science and the Idea of God (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944), pp. 3-26. See the chapter entitled, "Science and Religion Today: A Truce or a Settlement."

⁸⁸Louis Gasper, The Fundamentalist Movement (Paris: Mouton and Co., 1963), p. 15.

⁸⁹Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 914. Ahlstrom cites Alfred T. DeGroot as "the denomination's leading historian."

⁹⁰Wallace Tharp, "The Deity of Jesus," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 12 October 1927 (manuscript).

⁹¹Claude C. Taylor, "The Meance of Modernism," Christian Standard (November 19, 1927): 3.

⁹²*Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁹³Leroy Garrett, "The Nature of Biblical Authority and the Restoration Movement," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.

⁹⁴Paul K. McAlister, "Inspiration, Written Word and Truth," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Leroy Garrett, "The Nature of Biblical Authority and the Restoration Movement," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.

⁹⁸Langdon Gilkey, Naming the Whirlwind: The Renewal of God Language (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963), p. 104.

⁹⁹Knofel L. Staton, "Stimulating Adults to Study the Bible," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention 13 July 1973 (manuscript).

¹⁰⁰P. H. Welshimer, "Preach the Word," Christian Standard (October 12, 1940): 2.

¹⁰¹Leroy Garrett, "The Nature of Biblical Authority and the Restoration Movement," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.

¹⁰²Paul K. McAlister, "Inspiration, Written Word and Truth," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.

¹⁰³Ibid.

CHAPTER V

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD, MAN, AND SALVATION

Introduction

Woodrow Wilson, reflecting "a wide spread and highly traditional American belief--that most European governments were callous or corrupt or even sinful," entered the war "to make the world safe for democracy," but it ended in bitterness and cynicism.¹ Full of doubts about their role in history, Americans began to doubt themselves. Many turned against the historic traditions of generosity, idealism, and tolerance. Convinced that in them alone reposed purity and virtue in a world dominated by corruption and evil, Americans sought to isolate themselves from sin. Church attendance declined because people could no longer be assured that they were going to meet God when they went to worship. Science had undermined ancient faiths, and new life-styles that emphasized leisure flouted "tried-and-true" virtues. Tradition-honored ideas of right and wrong were questioned at the very source of their transcendental authority, and frequently abandoned. High school students pondered the accident of genetics that had placed them on an insignificant satellite spinning aimlessly through one of the countless millions of galaxies scattered throughout space. In 1916 James Lenba, a professor of psychology at Bryn Mawr College, published a shocking

study of college students which showed that young people had suffered a definite loss of faith during their four years of exposure to modern ideas.² The unceasing pronouncements of science and scholarship boldly confronted believers with the if, why, where, and how of God's existence, while supplying few satisfying answers. To the list of disintegrating influences of the 1920's, Paul Goodman and Frank Gatell added these:

Americans were torn between traditional values and new standards quickly adopted by young people. Now more than ever, science rather than religion promised to unlock the secrets of the universe, and with waning faith came moral attitudes that transformed interpersonal relations. Women seeking first-class citizenship tried to work out more satisfying roles in society. The family lost cohesiveness as its members made greater demands for autonomy that weakened the authority of the once all-powerful patriarch. And men and women experimented with new attitudes toward sexuality which made sensual pleasure an integral part of the pursuit of happiness, not the occasion for the growth of guilt complexes.³

One of the basic tenets of Orthodox Christianity which came under fire during this age of uncertainty was the doctrine of the Trinity or Godhead. This conceptualization which was formalized in the creeds of Nicaea and Constantinople had been accepted by the great majority of Christians in all ages, wrote Lewis Stearns, "not because it was proclaimed by universal councils, but because it commended itself to the Christian consciousness of the Church as scriptural and true."⁴ The essence of the theory which strives to lay equal emphasis on the unity and trinality of God, can be simply stated as: God is one; the Father is God; the Son is God; the Holy Spirit is God; yet the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are

eternally distinct. Stearns, whose Present Day Theology was published in 1898, stated it in greater detail:

God in His essence or nature is indivisibly One. To this one nature belong the divine attributes, infinity, eternity, immensity, immutability, omnipotence, omniscience, wisdom, holiness, righteousness, truth, and love. These are not three Eternals, but only one Eternal. . . . But in the unity of the Godhead three Eternal distinctions, which are called, in the technical language of theology, hypostases or persons. . . . But the three divine persons possess the same nature, the one identical essence. They do not divide it, they do not share it; it is their common nature in the sense that each possessed the whole in its indivisible unity.⁵

More than fifty addresses at the North American Christian Convention were devoted to a discussion of the doctrine of the Godhead or the nature of one of its three personalities. Although there were a few earlier references to the relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Convention yielded no definitive study of the doctrine of the Godhead until Arthur Holmes' 1931 address, "The Personality of God." Early in his message he summed up the Trinitarian doctrine:

God, as Spirit, has been pleased to give certain self-revelations of himself to men, the chief of which is the hypostatical manifestation "sonwise," or in Son, as affirmed by the writer to the Hebrews (Hebrews 1:2). To this should be added, at least, John's explanation that "no man hath seen God at any time, God's only begotten has declared him" (John 1:18). Acceptance of these facts of the manifestation of God, enables one to appreciate more fully the implications of such terms as "Father," "Son," and "Holy Spirit," hypostatical references to the one God as originator, revealer, and administrator of himself and His relations to humanity, by Son through Spirit.⁶

Holmes reflected the prevailing attitude of the Convention speakers toward the unsolved mysteries of the Trinity when in his conclusion he declared: "Emerson once said, 'When we attempt to

define and describe God, both language and thought desert us, and we are as helpless as fools and savages.' It is obvious that only God can comprehend God. Rather than being scholars about the Godhead, let us be reverent and obedient to the Godhead."⁷

God, the Father

"The Christian churches of America," wrote Anton T. Boisen, "are agreed in believing that human destiny is under an intelligent and friendly control that can best be represented by the idea of a Heavenly Father." It is likely that this basic belief was never more suspect and subject to greater challenge than during the opening decades of the twentieth century. The course of Christianity during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, according to the historian Kenneth Scott Latourette, had been sorely challenged.⁸ By 1900, the theory of evolution, Biblical criticism, and the Social Gospel had convincingly asserted that much of the Reformation orthodoxy was mere myth. In short, the new ideas seemed to many "to destroy the very foundations of religion, and leave the individual forsaken in a Godless world!"¹⁰

Paul K. McAlister, in his 1977 treatment of "Inspiration, Written Word and Truth," described a twentieth century God-concept against which he and his Convention colleagues recoiled in shock.

Let us begin with a parable. It is a parable developed from a tale told by John Wisdom in his haunting and revelatory article "Gods." Once upon a time two explorers came upon a clearing in the jungle. In the clearing were growing many flowers. One explorer says "Some gardener must tend this plot." The other disagrees, "There is no gardener." So they pitch their tents and set a watch. No gardener is ever seen. "But perhaps he is an invisible gardener." So they

set up a barbed-wire fence. They electrify it. They patrol with bloodhounds. (For they remember how H. G. Wells' The Invisible Man could both be smelt and touched though he could not be seen.) But no shrieks ever suggest that some intruder has received a shock. No movements of the wire ever betray an invisible climber. The bloodhounds never give cry. Yet still the Believer is not convinced. "But there is a gardener, invisible, intangible, insensible to electric shocks, a gardener who has no scent and makes no sound, a gardener who comes secretly to look after the garden which he loves." At last the Sceptic despairs, "But what remains of your original assertion? Just how does what you call invisible, intangible, eternally elusive gardener differ from an imaginary gardener or even from no gardener at all?"¹¹

Many liberals no longer appeared to God as the designer and guardian of religion. Religion, it seemed, would continue, even if God ceased to play any part in religious thinking. "We are thus brought face to face with the question," wrote Gerald B. Smith, "whether such a religion needs inevitably to affirm the existence of God. Is theism essential to religion?"¹² For liberal theologians or churchmen who did not sense the reality of God, the doctrine of God was not a rigid religious essential.

Consequently, as brotherhood spokesmen made preparation for Convention addresses they sensed the challenge to defend the concept of God as revealed in the Bible on two battlefronts; not only that He existed, but that He existed as a personal, Heavenly Father.

The Existence of God

In his article on "Classical Protestantism," Robert M. Brown suggested a prevailing Protestant attitude toward attempts to prove the existence of God:

. . . classical Protestantism has by and large taken a dim view of attempts to prove the existence of God. Not only are the proofs usually suspect on grounds of logical or philosophical analysis, but even if valid their cumulative effect is no more than to suggest that the evidence points toward a "Something Somewhere," that appears to have a slightly better than fifty-fifty chance of existing. This is a far cry from the outgoing, seeking God of the Bible.¹³

Convention speaker A. N. Hinrichsen, in his 1954 address, "The Fact of God," echoed Brown's suspicion. Hinrichsen said: "The opening sentence of the Bible is dazzling in its majestic daring. The Bible never argues for the existence of the obvious--God. It takes for granted this patent truth." He further contended that evidence for God's existence is abundant in the Bible while arguments for it are not. "Jesus," said Hinrichsen, "never argues concerning God. 'If it were not true, I would have told you!' expresses His attitude."¹⁴

In spite of an announced disdain for "proofs of God," a few Convention speakers specifically designed their messages to demonstrate His existence through the use of extra-Biblical lines of reasoning. The traditional philosophical arguments for the existence of God provided a basic structure for analyzing the various "proofs" offered by the brotherhood's leading voices. There are four principle traditional arguments for the existence of God which seek to answer affirmatively the question, "Does God exist?" They are the ontological argument, the cosmological argument, the teleological, and the moral argument. The first three attempt to answer the question of God's existence inferentially, by rational demonstration. The last is an appeal to the presence and experience of moral values.

The ontological argument, based on the "idea" of the existence of a perfect Being, claims Anselm and Descartes as its chief advocates. Assuming the position, "I do not seek to understand so that I may believe; but I believe so that I may understand. For . . . unless I believe, I shall not understand," Anselm declared that the existence of God is self-evident.¹⁵ He concluded:

Even the Fool, then, is forced to agree that something-than-which-nothing-greater-can-be-thought-exists in the mind, since he understands this when he hears it, and whatever is understood is in the mind. And surely that-than-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought cannot exist in the mind alone. For if it exists solely in the mind even, it can be thought to exist in reality also, which is greater. If then that-than-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought exists in the mind alone, this same that-than-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought is that-than-which-a-greater-can-be-thought. But this is obviously impossible. Therefore there is absolutely no doubt that something-than-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought exists both in mind and in reality.¹⁶

In short, man's very ability to conceive an infinite and perfect being testifies to His existence. Williston Walker describes the theory, which was opposed by Gaunilo, a monk of Marmoutiers, in Anselm's lifetime, as a play on words, but he admits that its permanent validity has not lacked defenders.¹⁷

In 1931, P. H. Welshimer asserted at the North American Christian Convention: "We believe in God because we cannot help it! . . . Faith in God's existence and reality is axiomatic, one of the many self-evident facts in life."¹⁸ G. H. Cachiaras supported the argument in 1942, referring to belief in the existence of God as "a universal phenomenon of humanity." Cachiaras reviewed for his audience the "idea" of God as expressed by the ancients.

The ancients, lacking the advantageous aid of the Hebrew Scriptures, gave much thought to this most wonderful assumption and most magnificent postulate ever laid down in human thought. Homer wrote: "As young birds open their mouths for food so all men crave the gods." Plutarch said: "No one ever saw a city without temples and gods, one which does not have recourse to prayers or oaths, or oracles, which does not offer sacrifices to obtain blessings, or celebrate rites to avert evils." And, Cicero wrote: "There is no people so wild and savage as not to have believed in a god even if they have been unacquainted with his nature. . . . Now, a thing concerning which the nature of all men agrees, must of necessity be true."¹⁹

Welshimer, in 1931, and Cachiaras, in 1942, also advanced the cosmological theory. The argument, which was based on the cause-effect hypothesis, suggested that the final cause of all things must be the one self-existent Being, God.²⁰ Plato and Aristotle were among the first to say that every created thing must be created by some cause. Since there are countless secondary causes in existence, beyond all secondary causes there must be an uncaused and self-existent Original-First Cause. Lewis Sperry Chafer explained the argument:

Ex nihilo, nihil fin--out of nothing, nothing can rise--is an axiom which has been recognized by philosophers of all the ages. To assert that anything has caused itself to exist is to assert that it acted before it existed, which is an absurdity. Nonexistence cannot engender existence. Had there ever been a situation in eternity when there was neither matter nor spirit, no being of any description--intelligent or unintelligent, created or uncreated--, the universe itself a boundless vacuity, thus it must have remained forever.²¹

From the Convention platform in 1954, A. N. Hinrichsen similarly reasoned:

Nature without and within tells us He is there. The external glory of the heavens and of nature evokes and elicits the dependent and worshipful spirit of man. The "law of universal causation" is a necessary assumption.

The very nature of our rational faculties compels us to assume that every contingent thing has an efficient or adequate cause. We are forced to find a beginning, a first cause. We are forced to find a beginning, a first cause, necessary and self-existing, not an unending series of caused causes. The Bible satisfies us at that point (Genesis 1:1), and there we base our faith and our reason.²²

Burris Butler also spoke in 1963 about the reasonableness of viewing God as the first cause. He pinpointed the cosmological premise:

Everything God has said and done is evidence that God is. I do not see Him with my eye directly and unveiled; but neither do I see your personality except by the material form you inhabit and control, by which you manifest yourself in words and deed. Only by these do I learn what you know, or how you feel, or what is your choice or will. So also we know what God is by what He has said and done, and by the physical forms in which He has displayed His power. Something must have been the ultimate source and cause of all things that exist. Some may guess that matter or blind, impersonal force always was, and produced all things. But that would suppose an unintelligent and nonliving source and an inadequate cause for a universe including life and personality. Matter is destructible and does not have the characteristics of necessary and eternal being. Only God could be an adequate cause and Creator of all things.²³

Probably one of the most historically forceful arguments for the existence of God is the teleological argument, commonly called the argument from design or order. It suggests that the presence of order in the universe points to God as the source of that order.²⁴ It is, therefore, really a specialized application of the cosmological argument. The Darwinian doctrine of natural selection would purport to undermine the effectiveness of the theory by showing that changes have come about through purely natural causes rather than by supernatural design. Although both Trueblood and Chafer

admit that the teleological argument cannot stand alone, Trueblood defends it by asserting that Darwin's attack is "no longer evident today,"²⁵ and Chafer adds that "no division of naturalistic theism is so engaging or so capable of endless illustration as the teleological argument."²⁶ A century before Christ, the Stoic philosopher, Cicero, in De Divinatione, expressed the argument from order and design.

Can anything be done by chance which has all the marks of design? Four dice may be chance turn up their aces; but, do you think that four hundred dice, when thrown by chance, will turn up four hundred aces? Colours, when thrown upon canvas without design, may have some resemblance to a human face, but do you think they could make a picture as beautiful as the Coan Venus? . . . The truth is, indeed, that chance never perfectly imitates design.²⁷

It is significant that the opening paragraph of Alexander Campbell's The Christian System makes reference to the orderly design of the universe.

ONE God, one system of nature, one universe. That universe is composed of innumerable systems, which, in perfect concert, move forward in subordination to one supreme end. That one end of all things is the sovereign and infinite pleasure of Him who inhabits eternity and animates the universe with his presence. So worship and adore the heavenly hierarchies, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou has created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."²⁸

Again, in chapter two, "The Bible," Campbell asserted:

ONE God, one moral system, one Bible. If nature be a system, religion is no less so. God is "a God of order," and that is the same as to say he is a God of system. Nature and religion, the offspring of the same supreme intelligence, bear the image of one father--twin sisters of the same divine parentage.²⁹

Several Convention speakers advanced the teleological argument for God's existence. In his 1960 address, Dr. George Schweitzer, Associate Professor of Chemistry at the University of Tennessee, stated the Christian thesis: ". . . the universe expresses the unity of God. It is ruled by one Mind, not many. . . . The most distant heavenly body reveals the same chemical compounds as we have on earth." Schweitzer concluded, "By God's grand design they are all governed by the same laws of gravitation, cohesion, and chemical affinity. The astronomer can depend on them to do what they have always done, and . . . predict exactly what they will do a thousand years from now."³⁰ In 1963, Reggie Thomas alluded to the teleological theory by describing the immutable laws of the universe as fixed and unchangeable, suggesting that "unity and design are shown in all branches of knowledge, whether geology, . . . or biology, . . . or anthropology . . ."³¹ Paley's classical illustration of the watch in his Natural Theology, the habits of insects and animals, the grandeur of the human body, and the precision of the stars and planets were data Welshimer and Cachiaras used in support of this theory. The former pointed to the statement of astronomer Sir Robert Ball: "There are five hundred movements in every star--900,000,000 stars kept going since time began--and every movement according to law and order."³² John Ralls' 1964 address, "Creation versus Evolution," reaffirmed the teleological theory in his conservative Christian response to materialistic science and philosophy. He suggested that ". . . science with all its discoveries had yet

found no adequate cause for things as they exist, and we may say that they have failed to find it because they have lacked the will to believe in God." Ralls further explained:

The universe has more than being. It has order--many evidences of plan and intelligent design. The more we see of it the more we are impressed with the skill and wisdom of Him who made it. The creation is a mathematical organization of a fixed number of simple elements combined upon orderly principles, as the alphabet is combined to produce the poem "Evangeline" or a play by Shakespeare with all its beauty of form and meaning. Can chance do that? To believe that the orderly world of delicate checks and balances, intricate designs, and marvelous adaptations all came from "fortuitous concourse of atoms" or mass particles in motion through eons of time, we may as well believe that the works of Shakespeare happened by means of a long series of explosions in a printing shop! Can natural law account for it all? Law must be enacted. Law is what proves the law maker. Law in itself a creation, not a creator. Natural law is only man's statement of uniformities observed in God's creation.³³

The fourth theory which the Convention speakers employed as a proof of the existence of God was the anthropological or moral argument. Though some forms of the moral argument are more ancient, it is generally associated with Immanuel Kant. "Two things fill the mind with a new and increasing admiration and awe," asserted Kant, ". . . the starry heavens above and the moral law within."³⁴ In 1954, Convention speaker A. N. Hinrichsen, explained: "Kant argued from the moral imperative, the inward law written on a man's heart, in his constitution. It is in this set-up or constitution that religion takes its rise or basis."³⁵ Hinrichsen stated the essence of the moral theory with the observation that "the universe includes persons who have moral nature and consciousness of responsibility. . . . The adequate cause for such an effect must be Himself a person who is possessed of a moral nature."³⁶

Cachiaras expanded his 1942 discussion to include man's sense of benevolence as a proof of God's existence. He reminded his audience that the daily blessings and sustaining power that are evident everywhere witness to the existence of God who made and controls heaven and earth. "Who cannot believe in a living, benevolent God," asked Cachiaras, "when he thinks of all the blessings he continues to enjoy at His hands, in spite of his sinfulness?"³⁷

The cosmological, ontological, and teleological proof are closely related. Some historians of philosophy have viewed them as variations of the cosmological argument. "The best that might be claimed for them," said MacGregor, "is that one helps out the other, but no one of them by itself does the required job."³⁸ James Oliver Buswell also concluded: "There is no argument known to us which, as an argument, leads to more than a probable conclusion."³⁹ The very fact that a plurality of such arguments is needed indicates that not one of them is alone sufficient to prove God's existence. Perhaps Anselm, who did not profess to be able to demonstrate God's existence to the unbeliever but sought only to justify to his own intellect the faith that he held, has established the purpose which these traditional arguments best serve. The moral argument, which had great influence in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, does not purport to prove the existence of God by the exercise of pure reason, but suggests that the existence of moral law demands an ultimate Being which exists independently as the source of all morality. It was to this argument that the Convention speakers most frequently, if inferentially, appealed. Edwin Burt

observes that although the conservative uses the three arguments of natural theology, he tends to rely most heavily upon the appeal to man's moral conscience.⁴⁰

In summation, a portion of G. H. Cachiaras' concluding statement is appropriate:

This is our case for God. The existence of the universe presupposes the being of an almighty and infinitely wise designer and creator. The very fact of life witnesses to a living God, who is the possessor of life. The benevolent and providential care that we enjoy testifies to a kindly and loving Father in heaven. Truly, God is!⁴¹

The Divine Nature

The question of God's existence was in reality not as central to the controversy of the 1920's as was the question of the nature or type of God which existed. An editorial in the Christian Century declared: "In a debate on God the minds of the Fundamentalists and the Modernists do not meet. To oppose system against system involves endless and sterile disputation."⁴² Here definitely was a major source of difference between the two minds. Rather than putting theism against atheism, the two systems actually began with two different gods. The essential qualities of one system's god was totally repugnant to the nature of the other god.

The conservatives had inherited from the Reformation leaders the traditional Protestant concept of God as a Being with personality, possessing both will and intelligence, and immeasurably more personal than mere idealized reality or absolute energy.⁴³ The theology of fundamentalism was basically Calvinistic, and its chief

theologian, J. Gresham Machen, served as professor at the Presbyterian affiliated Princeton Theological Seminary.⁴⁴ Hence, the god-concept of the movement was in the tradition of Calvin's system of election, foreordination, and predestination. Although some of the conservatives rejected the Calvinistic theory of inherited guilt, preferring the doctrine of Arminianism and transmitted guilt, there was complete accord that God was a personal Father, the Creator, Ruler, Savior, and ultimate Judge of the world.⁴⁵

To the liberal mind, the only hope for Christianity rested in the depersonalization of God from the "conception of a diety whose character is on a level with that of Moloch."⁴⁶ Horace Bridges, in his attack upon the "God of Fundamentalism," confronted Machen:

I challenge Dr. Machen to say whether a human parent could under any circumstances have the right to consign his own child, for any offence whatsoever, to lifelong torture. More particulaly, could we have the right to do so if the child's offence were admittedly due to some hereditary defect of nature which it could not avert? Add to this the supposition that the father, before begetting the child, had known what it would do and had deliberately prepared the torture chamber in advance of its reception. That is an exact a parallel as can be drawn between human action and the procedure of God as described by Fundamentalism.⁴⁷

For modernism, God was not thought of as a transcendent personality "higher than, and independent of, the universe He has made,"⁴⁸ but rather as the immanent "ground" of all being, as the unity and totality of finite things, and as a universal essence which all existence shares.⁴⁹ To the liberals, the doctrine of divine immanence served to bridge the gap between nature and the supernatural and make them completely one.

Asserting that the critical mind could no longer allow the idea of a transcendent God, many liberals insisted that He did not exist, except perhaps as a figment of frightened imaginations conjured up to meet a psychological need. "My position then," announced Dr. William L. Davidson, "is that God is a necessity of human nature."⁵⁰ In denying existence to the personal God of the Bible, the liberals not only disclaimed possessing any fear of incurring the divine wrath, but manifestly insisted that they were giving honor to the God which actually existed. The liberals, therefore, deemed all of the conservative doctrines concerning God, His covenants, His modes of operation, and His plans for eternal reward and punishment, fictitious and unethical.

In the judgment of conservatives, aside from the rejection of the inspiration of the Bible; the depersonalization of God was liberalism's most devastating contribution. They considered the doctrine of divine immanence to be the satanic product of evolution and the arch-enemy of Christian truth.

Many of the speakers of the North American Christian Convention had sought to prove the existence of God and several more answered the call to protect His personal character and preserve the idgnity of the divine nature. Paul McAlister's 1977 address pictured for the Convention audience the abstract theory of God which many speakers attacked. Describing the theological situation at the turn of the century, McAlister said:

With the growing acceptance of natural law came a corresponding rejection of the notion of God's presence or activity in the world. Since the categories of supernatural theism were

denied, the only place left for God was to relegate Him to a deistic never-never land. Instead of a world of God's creation and government, the "spirit of the age" posited that this world is naturally governed, and in fact, the system of this world came a closed system in which there was no room at all for a free and sovereign deity. The growing advances in science seemed to fan the flames of anti-supernaturalism. The classical liberalism of the late 19th century offered overwhelming optimism. The optimism, however, was short-lived. In the early 20th century, world war, economic strife and social struggle threatened human subscription to optimism. Man on his own demonstrated his inability to be master of his own fate. Karl Barth, German pastor schooled in liberalism, dropped a bomb upon the literal view of man. His commentary on Romans recognized that despair had dethroned optimism and that man stood in need of a transcendent God. It was during this same time that the major thrust of existentialist despair began to be reflected in literature.⁵¹

Speaking fifty years earlier, Mark Collis countered the liberal position with the Biblical description of the first person of the Godhead:

The disbeliever, sometimes in the pulpit or the professor's chair, ridicules our faith in God saying that we believe in a God that is like an old man with hands and feet and face and eyes and ears and heart. The rational believer has such a conception of God. We believe that God is spirit, that He is incorporeal, that He is invisible to human eyes, except when for purposes of revelation, He assumes a form that man could look upon. When the apostle says we are to "put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him," and that "Christ, being in the form of God, thought it not a thing to be grasped to be on an equality with God," the terms "image" and "form" are not used in a physical sense; the likeness is spiritual. It is a likeness in knowledge and righteousness, and holiness.

All this implies that God is not a principle, a law or a force, but a person. And so the Bible presents Him. God speaks; He uses the personal pronouns I, mine, me; He thinks, He plans, He executes His plans; He loves and wants to be loved; He is pleased and is grieved; He commands and required obedience; He consciously rewards and punishes.⁵²

The God-concept of fundamentalism was attacked by some modernists who claimed that God had a dual nature. The problem of

reconciling the wrath or anger of God in the Old Testament with His teachings concerning mercy in the New Testament was disturbing. The modernist tried to solve the problem by advancing a "Two God" theory. They suggested that the God of the Old Testament period was a "tribal God," a "God of war." This God was apparently forced out by the demands of a more enlightened or evolutionally progressive people, and in His place came the God of the New Testament era. This view, characteristic of certain ancient Gnostic systems, was opposed vigorously by fundamentalists.

Among the many hundreds of addresses delivered at the North American Christian Convention, only one was found which treated the "Two God" theory; an indication that the Convention speakers considered the theory to be no serious threat or that they felt other needs were more pressing. Arthur Holmes' 1931 address, "The Personality of God," offered the following conclusions:

The first conclusion is that there is ONE God. This is a "universe," not a multiverse." Therefore, more than one God would be superfluous. This one God "is over all, and through all, and in you all." The second conclusion is that God is capable of wrath, but that He is "abundant in loving-kindness and tender mercies." In God, "wrath" and "mercy" are blended perfectly. "Who could respect a God incapable of wrath, and who could love a God incapable of mercy?"

The third conclusion is that God is holy. He is unequivocally opposed to all unrighteousness. He has set, as His goal, a new world "wherein dwelleth righteousness." Our task is more than to merely pray "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." Our task is to help bring it to pass. And that transformation begins in your heart and mine! Let us resolve to be more worthy of His mercies and help to save a sinful world from His righteous wrath, that it might share with all the redeemed the infinite scope of His everlasting mercies.⁵³

Revolting against the immanentism of classical liberalism, a modernistic theory which emphasized the transcendence of God began to sweep across the country. Defeat and destruction in World War I deflated optimism and formally ended the philosophical reign of radical divine immanence. Karl Barth, a theologian whose emphasis on "the otherness of God" depersonalized God into a kind of disinterested, motionless, impersonal force;⁵⁴ recognized that man stood in need of a transcendent God. In his 1977 address, Paul K. McAlister referred to the "legacy" which the nineteenth century theologian G. W. F. Hegel contributed to this concept:

For Hegel the transcendence arises out of the flow of history. Transcendence was located in the process. Whatever the intention, the result was that the transcendent was not so much viewed as above as now ahead. Subsequent theology influenced by Hegel has opted for the future as the locus of the transcendent. But the transcendence of the future still remains unaccessible. Hegel's legacy has provided numerous difficulties, e.g., one must account for the fact that though man is viewed as part of the process, indeed everything is part of the process, but if that is true, who is standing outside the process who could inform us as to the goal of the process.⁵⁵

The Convention speakers rejected the extremes of these views of God on the grounds that they tended to depersonalize the divine nature. The first because it tended toward pantheism, and the second because it reduced God to an unapproachable, impersonal abstraction. They agreed, however, that the personal God of the Bible is both immanent and transcendent. Burris Butler stated in his 1963 address:

The church speaks of God, self-existent and transcendent. "In the beginning, God," posits the very first sentence of Genesis. That God is, is properly the first revelation of God concerning Himself. When Moses, the first known recorder

of this revelation, had his confrontation with God at the burning bush, he asked His name. "Who shall I say hath sent me?" "Say that I AM THAT I AM hath sent you." Here is the personal, spiritual, self-existent, totally other first cause.

. . . we have a finite universe--a finite creation, but an infinite God, an infinite Creator. God is in all and through all, but this is not the "god" of pantheism, for God is at the same time wholly other--separate from, and infinitely superior to, and sovereign over the universe that He has created. The church speaks of God immanent. "In the beginning, God created." This great, infinite God was present and personally involved in every detail of creation.

. . . this is no mechanistic process in which personified force winds up a world and turns it loose to run itself down, while He amuses himself with other things. In the course of every electron and every galaxy, the direct personal will of God is involved. In the clothing of the flower, in the feeding of the bird, God is there; He is involved. He is actively at work. . . .

This immanent omnipresent God is omniscient--He knows all. He is omnipotent--all powerful. Now recognize that He is holy--the moral absolute. Add to this that He created us for holiness and holds us to a moral accounting. Is it any wonder that one of old exclaimed, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."⁵⁶

Through the years many speakers dealt with various facets of the divine nature. A glance at the addresses reveals the speakers concept of the character and personality of God. In 1933 Evariste Hebert named peace, holiness, mercy, justice, love, power, truth and grace as being characteristics of God's nature.⁵⁷ In 1940, Morris Butler Book listed four basic features of God's personality: "God's divine nature is life, light, and truth, but above all it is love."⁵⁸ In the same year, Basil Holt referred to God as "the one universal, perfect, personality--originating producing, making possible all things in the universe."⁵⁹ Two years later, J. H. Dampier stated: "God is a Father and thus provides, guides,

disciplines, educates, protects, directs, and exemplifies redemptive love and perfection. He is represented as both immanent and transcendent."⁶⁰

A. N. Hinrichsen's 1954 address, "The Fact of God," was the platform's most thorough examination of God's nature in terms of His omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent characteristics.

Hinrichsen reflected the attitude of all the speakers who had attempted to articulate the divine nature as he concluded:

For us to see God in one unitary glance is a most difficult task, yet it is proper that we attempt to view Him in His many features. Indeed, it is imperatively important that we try to see Him in His whole. He is a person and is not to be separated into or reduced to "principles" or "attributes." God is more than attributes or the sum total of all His attributes, for He is the "living God." He is more than "laws," "forces," or "rules" for He is clothed with the vitality of life. Our fellowship is not with impersonal law nor a system of abstractions, but the living God who can be loved and served.⁶¹

Jesus Christ, the Son of God

There was no emphasis more central to the Convention platform than the deity and absolute sovereignty of Christ. In the preface to B. B. Warfield's The Person and Work of Christ, Samuel G. Craig revealed that this Christocentric emphasis was not peculiar to the churches of the Restoration Movement: "The view of the person of Christ . . . that He was perfect deity and complete humanity united in one person . . . has been confessed for nearly two thousand years by practically all of those calling themselves Christians." In addition, Craig asserted: "Every great branch of the Christian Church has assigned to His death--the place of

primary importance."⁶² Frank Stagg, in his New Testament Theology, stated the classical position of conservative Protestantism with regard to the centrality of Christ:

The New Testament is from first to last about Jesus Christ. He is the one alone indispensable to its concern. Every other person in the New Testament has importance only in relationship to Jesus: for or against him friend or foe. He is the unmistakable center to the total event which the New Testament describes. God has acted in self-revelation and in redemption, and this divine event is centered in One alone. God who "in many measures and in many manners of old" did speak to the fathers in the prophets has in these last days spoken in his Son (Hebrews 1:1f).⁶³

In 1943 the conservative National Association of Evangelicals, convening in Chicago, drafted a statement of faith on which the delegates representing forty denominations could agree. Without a dissenting vote the delegates affirmed:

We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, and His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.⁶⁴

This Christocentric emphasis, basic to the life of the North American Christian Convention, was articulated by Ernest E. Laughlin in his 1946 address, "What Christ Taught About Himself:" "Jesus Christ is the central figure of human history. All history before Calvary converges upon Him. All history since Calvary diverges from Him. History is His story."⁶⁵

Throughout the platform's five decades, Christ was featured as the heart and life of Christianity. Year after year the speakers affirmed that Christ was the foundation and "Chief Cornerstone" of the Church. In 1946 Russell E. Boatman said the apostles and prophets agreed concerning the centrality of Jesus Christ.

The prophets present Christ as our prophet, priest, and King. He is our substitute and our Saviour, God's Son and our sacrifice. He is deity and is to be heard and heeded. When Paul said the church is builded on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself being the chief cornerstone, he was saying what the hymn writer was declaring when he wrote, "The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord." There is no variance in the teaching of the apostles and the prophets concerning our Lord Jesus Christ.⁶⁶

The Incarnation of Christ.--The Convention speakers

described Jesus, using distinctively biblical language: "the Good Shepherd, the Bread of Life, the Door, the Way, the Water of Life, the Resurrection, the Light of the World." But speaker P. H. Welshimer captured the characteristic most basic to Christ's nature by citing the opening words of the Gospel of John:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.⁶⁷

Logos, the Word, was a philosophical Greek term used to characterize the divine nature of Christ. Its use, however, led to the posing of many questions: What is the nature of the Logos? How was Christ both man and God? Were there two Gods, the Father and the Son? The Convention's answer to the ageless christological controversy can be simply stated: although the human mind cannot fully conceive the nature of Christ, His complete humanity and complete divinity completely qualify Him to be man's savior.

"Paul's deep seated conviction that Jesus is the incarnate God," declared John E. Greenlee in 1959, "is often precise, sometimes almost matter of fact, but, nevertheless, unquestionable."⁶⁸ The

main point of Robert O. Fife's 1963 address was that "God's self-disclosure reached its perfect climax in Jesus of Nazareth, the Word of God made flesh." Fife said, "In Jesus so dwelt 'all the fulness of the Godhead bodily' that He could say with unadorned realism to His most intimate associates, 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.'"⁶⁹

The most thorough investigation of the Logos was in the 1959 address by Henry E. Webb, "The Power of the Word of God." Webb explained that the Greeks and Romans who read the Gospel of John did not share our difficulty in understanding the Logos concept because it was old and widely understood in John's day.⁷⁰

Webb informed his audience that the philosophers of Greece had no revelation from God, and so it was impossible for them to know Him as a person. The only way they could know about God was to look at His handiwork; His creation in nature and man. The creative intelligence which is reflected in the created order of the universe the Greeks referred to as Logos. He said that although most of the better Greek and Roman thinkers agreed that there had to be some kind of a divine, powerful, creative intelligence, or Logos, their agreement ended there. Some held that the Logos was a great world-soul, from which each individual soul derived its origin. Others held that the Logos was impersonal--a mere rational force. "This confusion is not surprising," Webb asserted, "for these are questions that only revelation can answer, because the answer lies beyond the limits of purely human investigation."⁷¹

Webb then made six important, but not unique affirmations about the Logos from the Gospel of John, after which, he concluded with the essential seventh proposition, namely, that the Logos became flesh.

(1) John asserts that the Logos was in the beginning, and hence is eternal, and uncreated.

(2) He claims that the Logos was with God. The proposition used is one that originally meant face-to-face and suggests a most intimate personal fellowship. This is most important. God is a person, not a force. Because He is a person, He can have fellowship with men, who are persons. Men are persons because they are created after the likeness of a personal God. Because God is a person, ultimate truth, which is of God, is also personal; and it can be communicated to man on an intelligent personal basis, which God does in revelation.

(3) "The Logos was God" (Greek: "God was the Logos"). John asserts that the Word was deity, not a god, but One God.

(4) John asserts that the Logos was the Creator. This same sentiment is expressed in Psalm 33:6. "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made." The philosophers would agree with John here.

(5) John claims that the Logos is the source of life.

(6) The Logos is the source of knowledge and understanding, the illuminator of men.

With these six points neither Greek nor Jew would find serious disagreement. But, after discussing the witness-bearing ministry of John the Baptist, John blasts his readers with a seventh, and an unbelievable assertion; that this divine, eternal, creative, intelligent life-giving Logos became flesh and dwelt temporarily as a man among men. It is well-nigh impossible for us to comprehend the antithesis which this statement suggested to the people of John's day. The Logos represented everything high, noble, divine, and perfect, while flesh represented the epitome of evil, imperfection, and corruption.⁷²

It was Webb's judgment that the endless philosophical speculations in connection with the Logos christological problem did little except divide and confuse Christendom. He emphasized that a concept of the Logos which could not be expressed in the language of the Bible should not be bound upon the church.⁷³

The Deity of Christ.--By 1920, the empirical method of modern science and the fruits of higher criticism had openly, and to many convincingly, challenged the deity of Christ. C. C. Taylor, a 1927 speaker, quoted Shailer Matthews: "And thus we come to the real basis of confidence in what the church calls the deity of Christ. It is the religious appeal of Jesus Himself, His power to evoke religious faith. . . . For He functions in life as a revelation of God, not as a man who has been given apotheosis." Taylor concluded: "Surely this is enough to show that this modernist does not believe in the deity of Jesus as set forth in the Scriptures."⁷⁴

As a result of the slashing attacks of liberal theology, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1910 and again in 1916 and 1923 adopted a five point doctrinal statement which they declared to be essential.⁷⁵ Four of the five points, the virgin birth of Christ, the atonement of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, and the miracle working power of Christ, were designed to reinforce the believer's confidence in the divinity and authority of Christ. The key to understanding the differences between the fundamentalist view of Jesus and the modernist view is found in the dissimilar attitude with which the opposing forces approached Him. The conservative respect for Biblical revelation produced a conceptualization in which Jesus was the instrument of the "plan of salvation" which had engaged the divine mind from the beginning. Modernism, in its historical approach to Jesus, insisted that the personality of Christ as a fact of history must be reinterpreted in fresh and

vital terms for every age. In short, the former approached Jesus primarily as a fact of faith; the latter primarily as a fact of history.

Just as differences regarding the God-concept did not emerge as much from a question of God's existence as from the discussions of the nature of that existence, so the center of the controversy over Christ was not to decide whether Christ was divine, but to determine the nature of that divinity. Was Christ truly God, or just a man with some type of "Messianic consciousness?" This was the issue at question. The Watchman-Examiner stated the terms of the debate as the conservatives saw it: "The Bible and the Bible only can settle the questions at issue. Let Fundamentalists and Liberals come forth to battle armed with their Bibles."⁷⁶ William Jennings Bryan presented the nature of Christ and the type of divinity to which the fundamentalist mentality subscribed:

The Bible, from beginning to end, teaches the deity of Christ. In the Old Testament, His coming is foretold and His Divine character is plainly announced. Seven hundred years before His incarnation, Isaiah said, "He shall be called Mighty God, the everlasting Father;" adding, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." Isaiah describes also the substitutionary atonement of the promised Messiah.

Matthew announces the Virgin Birth of Jesus, who was to "save his people from their sins." Luke describes in greater detail the conception of Jesus by the Holy Ghost and says that "of his kingdom there shall be no end."⁷⁷

The liberals also subscribed to the divinity of Christ, although at best, indirectly.⁷⁸ The doctrine of divine immanence appeared to have its most striking effects upon the traditional

conceptions of the person of Christ. Those who applied the doctrine looked for Christ's divinity in His humanity. Christ was viewed as divine in the sense that all men are divine. The incarnation of God in Christ was considered as anticipation of what all humanity, in the course of the evolutionary process, might hope to become in the future. The liberals thus concluded that the historical Jesus had achieved in His character all that God ever intended or expected of His creation and the perfect manhood which resulted could as well be termed "divine Sonship."

The North American Christian Convention was dedicated to the defense of Christ as the pre-existent Word, the incarnation of God in the flesh, which was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, resurrected from the grave, and ascended into Heaven. In fact, the majority of the Convention addresses that discussed the person of Christ were designed to reaffirm His sonship. It is no overstatement to assert that, to the Convention speakers, there was no middle ground; Christ was wholly deity or He was nothing at all. In 1946 Ernest E. Laughlin summarized the claims of Christ:

Faithful men of the first century carried on an aggressive, high-pitched preaching program. . . . The "Paraclete" had brought to their memory all things whatsoever he had said unto them," all things He had taught them about Himself. In fact, He taught them nothing that did not relate to Himself. He made Himself central. It was not ethics, philosophy, morals, "ecumenics." Uncompromisingly He declared that He was the Son of God, the ransom for sin, and the Founder, Head, and Redeemer of His church.⁷⁹

P. H. Welshimer, minister of the First Christian Church in Canton, Ohio, measured these claims against the accusations of modernism, and concluded:

There are many ideas afloat concerning Jesus of Nazareth. Some label Him a fanatic, some call Him an egotist, others see in Him an imposter, while others call Him a good man. They behold a peerless teacher. To set the world right concerning the only begotten Son of God, the Word that tells of Him and contains His teaching must be preached. He was not a fanatic. Fanatics are men of one idea, and they are generally small ones. Jesus was a man of great ideas, and He had many of them. He was not an egotist. He was the humblest man that ever walked in the tide of times. He was not an imposter, for He never imposed upon anybody, nor did He make a single false promise to any man, nor demand of any man anything that was unreasonable.

When the Word is preached concerning the Christ, He will not be recognized as the son of Joseph, but will be received as the Son of God. He is a good man, and much more. Without being the divine Son of God He could not be good, for if He be not the Son of God He made claims which He cannot substantiate.⁸⁰

Laughlin and Welshimer selected language similar to that which William Jennings Bryan employed in his popular book, Seven Questions in Dispute. Bryan declared: "Christ's claims to divinity were either true or false; there is no middle ground. . . . Was he an imposter? If so, He was the greatest imposter of all time."⁸¹ Convention speaker E. E. Laughlin's 1946 speech, "What Christ Taught About Himself," described the liberal concept of Christ's death, a factor which caused the Convention speakers to be sympathetic toward Bryan and other prominent leaders in the national struggle.

The liberals are willing to admit that He died. "But," they question, "was it necessary?" A Chicago representative of this school of thought states: "His ignominious death may not have been what the Father planned, but that is beside the point. The point is that Jesus believed it was the Father's will and acted accordingly."

"Confidentially," says this man who "aims" to please every one, "Jesus may not have been in on the total program as God thought of it."

Over against this bold insinuation, hear the Master: "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father." Again, "therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. This commandment have I received of my Father."⁸²

Most of the Convention speakers supported their belief in the deity of Christ with rational and carefully organized evidence. Whereas the speakers who attempted to prove God's existence employed philosophical and moral arguments, the preponderance of evidence advanced to demonstrate the deity of Christ was almost exclusively based upon the teaching of the Bible.

Assuming the authority of the Bible, Russell E. Boatman argued for the deity of Christ on the basis of testimony offered by the Old Testament prophets.

Christ is described and identified when the prophet states that this Son is to wear the name of Deity and possess the very attributes of God. For He is called by the holiest names men can use when addressing their praise unto God . . . He is to possess the attributes of Deity, which makes Him co-eternal with God, self-existent! A son who can be rightly called "The Everlasting Father" is a strange child indeed. But this amazing paradox is easily understood as the God-man demonstrated His divine origin, nature and mission in His miracles, His message, and His passion. So also with the other names ascribed to Him, "Wonderful Counsellor," "Prince of Peace." These are attributes of Deity and permit no such watered-down interpretations as modernists are accustomed to make. Jesus was God in human flesh--Immanuel, God with us--this the prophets clearly taught.⁸²

The evidence advanced in favor of Christ's divinity embraced three primary aspects of his early life: His character, His teachings, and His miracles. One of the most prominent means of proof was the character of His life. In 1965 E. Ray Jones said: "He lived a life so unique that it could only have been that of God

Himself."⁸⁴ In the same year, E. Richard Crabtree commented: "He did not merely teach it, He demonstrated it! He cared! He cared for little children . . . He cared for the blind and the lame and the sick,"⁸⁵ and in 1976 David Roberts declared: ". . . it was through His deeds of ministry and service that His Messiahship could be clearly seen."⁸⁶ One year later, James G. VanBuren's address, "Grace, Truth, and Glory," named prayer, forgiveness, truthfulness, kindness, love, and compassion as the enduring virtues of Christ's character.⁸⁷

Other speakers focused attention upon the uniqueness and influence of Christ's teachings. In 1961, J. K. Rutherford said, "never a man taught like Christ. His ethical teachings establish Him permanently as the central character of human history."⁸⁸ Several addresses were primarily designed to exalt Jesus as a great teacher. In an address prepared for the 1956 Convention, P. H. Welshimer observed: "The Jews of this day do not accept Jesus as the Christ, but pay tribute to Him as having been a great teacher."⁸⁹ In the same year, John Bolten, Sr., president of the Standard Publishing Foundation, said that "the influence of His teachings went far beyond the Jewish nation, even to the uttermost parts of the earth."⁹⁰ Raphael H. Miller's 1937 address cited the words of John Stuart Mill: "Who among His disciples or their proselytes were capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus or imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospel."⁹¹

According to the Convention speakers, Jesus came not only as "a good man speaking well," but He carried with Him divine

credentials--miracles--which proved He was the Son of God. In 1960, Convention speaker George Adler explained the purpose of Christ's miracles:

In the light of the incarnation, the point of Jesus' personal miraculous works became more clear. John argues from these acts to His deity. I think it fair to conclude that Jesus performed miracles as an attestation of deity. He did not heal simply as an act of kindness, or as a demonstration of the divine beneficence, even though these things were involved; but He showed forth in the miracles that He was the Son of God with power. If His desire in the miracles was just to take care of man on earth, then He could have spent all His time in doing this. He pointed out, however, in respect to the man born blind that it was His purpose "that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (John 9:3).⁹²

In the religious controversy of the 1920's, the general question of the validity of miracles was never a point of contention. The modernist, of course, was inhospitable to all miracles while, for the fundamentalist, the question was settled in the doctrine of an inerrant Bible. Only the virgin birth and the resurrection of Christ from the dead, however, became the testing ground. At this point the so-called fundamentalist was joined by many moderate conservatives and even by some who did not share the view of Biblical inerrancy. E. C. Vandelaan wrote:

Many a Christian who finds it necessary to treat the Book of Jonah as an allegory, and who is not quite sure about the conversational power of Balaam's ass, grows frightened when it is proposed to treat these supposed events in the life of Jesus, the virgin birth and the bodily resurrection, as legendary.⁹³

The fundamentalists waged their defense for all Biblical miracles on the case for the virgin birth and the resurrection. Since they were vitally related to the very substance of Christianity,

their removal would necessitate a major modification of the orthodox doctrine about Christ. On the other hand, if these two miracles could be demonstrated to be true, all Biblical claims of supernatural intervention by Christ and the Apostles would automatically become more believable.

In his book, Seven Questions in Dispute, Bryan described the virgin birth as "the very root of the question of deity."⁹⁴ He pointed to the record in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke and appealed to the reasonableness of the unique birth as evidence in favor of the miracle. J. Gresham Machen reasoned that Christ's sinlessness and the supernatural nature of His work could not be explained apart from a distinctively supernatural birth. In a lengthy treatise on the virgin birth Machen concluded:

The New Testament presentation of Jesus is not an agglomeration, but an organism, and of that organism the virgin birth is an integral part. Remove the part, and the whole becomes harder and not easier to accept; the New Testament account of Jesus is most convincing when it is taken as a whole. Only one Jesus is presented in the Word of God; and that Jesus did not come into the world by ordinary generation, but was conceived in the womb of the virgin by the Holy Ghost.⁹⁵

John R. Straton, in his debates with the Unitarian Charles F. Potter, affirmed the possibility of the virgin birth in light of both faith and science. Going further, he asserted that Old Testament prophecy and the testimony of Matthew and Luke made the miracle probable. "Here is one doctrine," said Straton, "upon which Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Greek Catholics all stand together."⁹⁶

The modernists, meanwhile, made much of the fact that only two of the Gospels contain any reference whatsoever to the alleged miracle. Having observed the absence of the doctrine in the Pauline and Johnnine epistles, liberals concluded that since it demonstrated no influence in the teaching of most of the New Testament writers it must not be regarded as a tradition central to apostolic thinking. Some cast aspersions upon the historical accuracy of the testimony of Matthew and Luke but, above all, the liberals were unable to reconcile the scientific method with the orthodox notion that Jesus was miraculously conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, without benefit of an earthy father. In his book, The Man from Nazareth, Harry Emerson Fosdick consented that God specially influenced Christ's birth but hastened to explain: ". . . it was in the later Hellenistic era of the church that the story of the virgin birth arose, . . . this would explain why the early records of Jesus' first contemporaries reveal no slightest sign that they even thought of him as physically begotten by the special act of God."⁹⁷

The bodily resurrection of Christ from the grave was considered by orthodoxy to be the supreme sign for the truth of Christianity. Appealing to the language of Paul, "If Christ be not risen, then our preaching is vain, and your faith is also vain,"⁹⁸ millions of words were spoken and written by the fundamentalists in the 1920's in an effort to determine what actually became of the body of Jesus. E. Y. Mullens, the long-time president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, dealt at length with the

miracle of the bodily resurrection in his book, Why Is Christianity True? He pointed to the detailed records from the four Gospels, the testimony of the Apostle Paul, and the major part which the miracle played in the establishment of the Christian Church as evidence in favor of its authenticity. He also reviewed and refuted the alternative theories advanced to explain the empty tomb: that the disciples stole the body, that Jesus did not really die but was merely unconscious, that the supposed witnesses of the resurrection had a hallucination. Mullens summarized the conservative position: "Christianity stands or falls with the resurrection of Jesus. The issue may as well be squarely faced. Other miracles of Christ are easy to accept if this one took place. Our hope is built on it."⁹⁹

The modernists, on the other hand, refused to believe in or even to grant the necessity for the doctrine of bodily resurrection. "I do not believe," announced Dr. Fosdick at the Yale Lectures on Preaching, "in the resurrection of the flesh."¹⁰⁰ Ascribing to Jesus a continued spiritual existence in the lives of His followers, the liberals drew their inspiration from Paul's concept of an emergence of Christ's spirit from the region of the dead rather than the orthodox tradition of bodily resurrection in the Gospels.

In keeping with the larger national struggle, the two miracles which figured most prominently in the North American Christian Convention evidence for the divinity of Christ were also the virgin birth and the bodily resurrection. In 1940, Morris Butler described the central position occupied by the doctrine of the virgin birth:

"His name was called Jesus." He was so named by the angel before He was conceived in the womb (Luke 2:21). Paul says, "made of a woman, made under the law," and the original term in that Galatian letter, "made" implies positively and means definitely "to make" in a supernatural sense. Our Lord is of heavenly origin, a supernatural being, an eternal person. I accept the doctrine of the virgin birth! And believe me, in this melee of infidelity today, the starter's tape in the race toward all spiritual delusion is rejection of this doctrine! The virgin birth is the pivotal doctrine of the Christian faith.¹⁰¹

Mark Collis' 1929 address, "The Person of Jesus, the Christ," related the Old Testament prophecy concerning the doctrine to its New Testament fulfillment:

The prophets spoke of His coming. They said He would be the son of a virgin, and His name would be Immanuel (God with us); that He would be born in Bethlehem; that He would be despised and rejected of men; that He would be wounded for our transgression, yet called the Wonderful, Counselor, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, and that of the increase of His government and of peace there would be no end.

Then, in the fullness of time, the Holy Spirit came upon Mary, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her, and Jesus was born in Bethlehem that night when the angels appeared to the shepherds and said: "There is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."¹⁰²

In 1954, Orvel C. Crowder, president of Atlanta Christian College, challenged those denying the virgin birth to explain a sinless life on the part of a totally human person. He then explained: "Christ is more than deity. The virgin birth means that He is also man, the last Adam, our perfect human elder brother. In His humanity Christ is our sin-purging sacrifice."¹⁰³

Of much greater significance in terms of Convention attention was the miracle of the resurrection. Harry Minnick set the tone for most subsequent discussions of the resurrection when he said in

1927: "The internal evidence of Scripture plainly teaches that the body in which Jesus lived when crucified, was risen from the dead."¹⁰⁴

Minnick pointed to the testimony of Jesus before and following His resurrection, the testimony of the soldiers who guarded the tomb, the harmonious accounts of the resurrection in the four Gospels, and the many post-resurrection eye-witnesses as given veracity to the truth of the miracle.

In the same year, James Small introduced his address by pointing to the vital position of the resurrection in the Christian system:

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the keystone of Christianity. Rob Christianity of the resurrection of Jesus and you rob it of that which explains the church, the kingdom and the quickened lives of God's people. Rob us of the resurrection of Jesus, and His power to make friends, to be remembered, to make His words live and to inspire others with His spirit, cannot be explained.¹⁰⁵

"There is much that we do not understand," said Harold Scott in 1956, "but the historic fact of the resurrection of Jesus is the anchor of our hope."¹⁰⁶ Edwin G. Crouch echoed this emphasis in 1960:

If Jesus rose from the dead, then it is not difficult for us to believe the other miracles attributed to our Lord. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, then the miracles attributed to Him are of little value . . . Furthermore, if the apostles are found to be false as to the central facts of Christianity, their testimony is valueless as to the lesser details.¹⁰⁷

"The body of Jesus was removed either by human instrumentality," postulated W. A. Fite, "or He was raised by the supernatural power of God."¹⁰⁸ In answer to this question, Fite and

others discussed various hypotheses that have been suggested to explain away the resurrection. In refutation, they offered "many infallible proofs." A paragraph from W. A. Fite's 1942 address is appropriate:

A Roman may shout that an "hallucinated woman gave to the world a resurrected God;" but we have more evidence than the testimony of Mary Magdalene. Our New Testament tells us that He was seen by 520 different persons on thirteen different occasions. They saw Him, they heard Him speak, they talked with Him, they walked with Him, they ate with Him, they touched Him and handled Him and they all could not have been hallucinated.¹⁰⁹

To the conservative, the resurrection of Jesus Christ was by Biblical testimony the "first fruits" of something yet to come--the bodily resurrection of all human beings. To the liberals, however, "in an age of electric light, it was too much to expect men to believe the resurrection."¹¹⁰ Theologians such as Rudolph Bultmann contended that resurrection faith did not root in any objective event. Rather, it rested in the "preaching" of the resurrection. "The faith is in the preaching--not in some event which stood outside the preaching."¹¹¹ In other words, it was in the preaching that the risen Christ was experienced and the church was born. "Thus, Bultmann would escape history by demythologizing."¹¹²

In 1974, Robert O. Fife attempted to offer the conservative response. He reminded his audience that the resurrection of Jesus is recounted as a unique event; yet, historical reason is analogical and comparative. "Therefore," Fife asked, "how can we know historically an event which is incomparable?"¹¹³ Fife noted that it was to this question that Richard Niebuhr addressed his book,

Resurrection and Historical Reason. Niebuhr questioned man's image of the uniformity of nature. He held that the creation itself was spontaneous, and that nature has always had in it an element of spontaneity. To Niebuhr, the resurrection was as natural as the creation. It "epitomizes the original creativity that informs all history and underlies every conception of nature."¹¹⁴

Fife also noted that to Niebuhr the resurrection accounts have their own analogical elements. The unfamiliar was mingled with the familiar.

So Jesus was recognized by the two in Emmaeus through His breaking of the bread (Luke 24:31). But even in the presence of the Risen Lord, the commitment of faith was necessary. Thus, Thomas at last confessed Him, saying, "My Lord and my God!" But others, even at the ascension "doubted" (Matt. 28:17). Faith did not come cheaply. It was certainly not the product of a "wish."¹¹⁵

Niebuhr contended that it was only by faith that the disciples were "able to assimilate the startling synthesis of the known and the strange presented to them in the risen Christ and see more deeply into the reality of God's providence."¹¹⁶

Fife then concluded that Niebuhr did not advocate a special "holy-history" in which God acts--a history outside man's critical investigation, but that he rather affirmed that all historical knowledge partakes of faith. "The revelation of God in Jesus is therefore not so alien to human reason as some have supposed."¹¹⁷

Fife further supported his contention, that modern man could know and understand the resurrection of Christ as a historical event, by citing German theologian Wolfhart Pannenberg. Like

Niebuhr, Pannenberg affirmed that faith must rest on credible historical evidence, and to Pannenberg the resurrection is the ultimate event of history.

Now the history of the whole is only visible when one stands at its end. Until then, the future always remains as something beyond calculation. And, only in the sense that the perfection of history has already been inaugurated in Jesus Christ is God finally and fully revealed in the fate of Jesus. With the resurrection of Jesus, the end of history has already occurred, although it does not strike us in this way. It is through the resurrection that the God of Israel has substantiated his deity in an ultimate way and is now manifest as the God of all men. . . .¹¹⁸

Fife then, finally concluded that "the resurrection is not alien to history. Rather, it is the category whereby the whole is understood."¹¹⁹

Reverence for a resurrected Lord was the life-giving force which annually drew thousands to the North American Christian Convention.

The Holy Spirit

The third member of the Godhead received little attention in the Convention addresses. Although through the years there were numerous references to the nature and work of the Holy Spirit, not a single main address was exclusively designed to delineate that nature, and only one speaker discussed in depth the work of the Holy Spirit; and even that 1927 address by T. H. Johnson, "The Office of the Holy Spirit," was limited to a discussion of the operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion. In recent years, due to an emerging neo-pentecostalism, various related topics such as

the baptism of the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, and charismatic gifts have been treated.

T. H. Johnson sought to identify the Holy Spirit in his 1927 address:

When we speak of the Holy Spirit, we express the name of one of the eternal persons addressed when God said, "Let us make man in our image;" of the Presence that brooded over the waters when the earth was without form and void and when darkness covered the deep; of the Spirit who overshadowed Mary when God became incarnate in human flesh that He might put to death sin in the flesh; and of that Divine presence who came to lead the church onward and upward until it shall be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, when God shall dwell with men, and the lamb shall lead them into fountains of living water, and God himself shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.¹²⁰

In 1928, Donald McLean characterized the Holy Spirit by saying:

Jesus taught that the Holy Spirit is a Comforter, a Teacher and a Guide. Peter tells us "the promise is unto even as many as the Lord our God shall call," and Paul tells us "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," and and we know from the context he was writing of the Holy Spirit. Men have problems to solve and doubts to clear, they have battles to fight and burdens to bear, hence they should be taught regarding this helper. All religions tell men what they ought to do, but only the Christian religion gives the power to do it, and that power is given through the Holy Spirit when a man becomes a partaker of the divine nature.¹²¹

Although Convention information regarding the nature of the Holy Spirit was scarce, several speakers discussed the work of the Holy Spirit. In 1931, C. G. Kindred stressed that the Spirit inspired the writers of the Bible and works today through the teachings of the Bible. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. . . ." said Kindred. "The Holy Spirit guides the church today by His word, by His law contained in the New Testament.

That congregation of believers that is guided by the New Testament plus nothing, minus nothing, is as completely guided by the Holy Spirit as was the church on the day of Pentecost."¹²²

Other speakers, not content to limit the activity of the Spirit to the work of inspiring and energizing the word, suggested that the Holy Spirit dwells constantly within the heart of the believer. Paul McReynolds declared in his 1974 address: "The task of the Holy Spirit is to convince/convict the world of sin, righteousness and the judgment. . . . It is the indwelling Spirit that gives life."¹²³ W. F. Lown continued the theme in 1976 when he asserted:

The life of the body is the spirit. The life of Christ's body is the Holy Spirit. Paul says, "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" (I Cor. 3:16). And again, "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 12:3). While these statements are made concerning the individual Christian, this assures us that the Holy Spirit is the vivifying force in the church.

A body from which the spirit has departed is just that--a body--a cadaver. It is also true that a congregation which is not indwelt by the Holy Spirit is an organized religious cadaver.¹²⁴

Robert Stacy added, in 1976, that the Spirit in the heart is the ultimate source of power in prayer ". . . when we hardly know how to pray or what to pray for, the Spirit within us personally goes to God in our behalf. He prays the prayers we are unable to pray."¹²⁵ In the same year, Don DeWelt's discussion of the indwelling Spirit was prefaced with this comment:

The word Spirit or "Pneuma" is an interesting word; it has been translated "wind" in John 3:8ff; we might say "atmosphere." The Holy Spirit can and does produce an atmosphere and indeed is Himself that atmosphere. We can live in an atmosphere and at the same time breathe in it. The Christian at once dwells in the Spirit's environment and yet is indwelt by the Spirit who is his inspiration (Literally, "something breathed in").¹²⁶

With regard to the alleged phenomenon of the Holy Spirit known as "glossalia" or "speaking in tongues," the Convention speakers voiced overwhelming disapproval. While some referred to the trend toward neo-pentecostalism as "Satanic," most chose less offensive language with which to couch their thoughts. Typical of the later was Wilford F. Lown's 1975 address, "A Biblical Study of Tongues."

Glossolalists often ask whether others believe their experience not to be of God. I do not purport to judge the sincerity or genuineness of any brother's experience. God alone must do that. All of us must, however, inspect the fruits of the lives about us. Of a truth, few of us hold up well under such an inspection.¹²⁷

The chief contribution of Lown's address was the presentation of a list of eight observations which he made concerning "glossalia:" it is attended by extreme sincerity, tongue speakers have a great sense of power, they find great joy in each other's company, they have great concern for each other, they are disproportionately concerned with only this tongue-speaking aspect of their faith, they tend to disrupt the fellowship if they cannot dominate it, they can learn the behavior--whether the practice is of God or not, and tongue-speaking tends to be their criterion of the "spiritual" life of others. Lown concluded:

"Let us discern that person or doctrine which is divisive and try, in love, to minister to the need. Meanwhile, let us truly let the Holy Spirit help us to maintain the unity which He can bring. . . . This is little enough to do for Him who died for us."¹²⁸

Man's Response

The World Conference on Fundamentals at Philadelphia in 1919 declared: "We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice; and that all that believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood."¹²⁹ In the traditional orthodox interpretation, Christianity is essentially a supernatural means or method of salvation. Human history is viewed within the framework of an original divine creation, followed by the fall of man, which necessitated a special provision of divine grace for his redemption. The doctrine of substitutionary atonement was one of the several points upon which fundamentalism was hinged; and one of the sources of loudest complaint against liberalism was its neglect of emphasis "on the efficacy of the shed blood." Through the love of God the sinless Christ had offered Himself as an atonement for the sins of the world, thus becoming man's personal Saviour.

Although the individual Convention addressed yielded a wide array of ideas about the Godhead, its personalities, their work and nature, the speakers decisively named love as the dominant characteristic of God's personality; and the Convention's most frequently quoted passage of Scripture was John 3:16: "For God so loved the

world that He gave His only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."¹³⁰ Along with the theme of God's love, one of the phrases within the verse contained a key convention concept: ". . . that whosoever believeth on Him. . . ." The Convention speakers declared there to be a human, as well as a divine side to God's plan for man's salvation. The human side of salvation can be observed through an examination of two dominant themes which the Convention speakers presented: the nature of man and God's plan for redeeming man.

The Nature of Man

One of the points of clearest distinction between the addresses at the North American Christian Convention and the typical emphasis of the fundamentalist movement centered in the difference of philosophy regarding man's nature. Since the basic theology of fundamentalism was Calvinistic, the movement was saturated with Calvin's system of predestination and election. While not all of fundamentalism subscribed to the doctrine of predestination, many of the religious bodies were essentially Calvinistic and virtually all of the genuinely theological voices of the movement were predestinarian. While the Convention speakers berated the doctrine of predestination they would hasten to the defense of classical fundamentalism's insistence upon the doctrine of man's insoluble guilt and dependence upon God's grace. Each viewed man as a spiritual creature formed in the very image of God; and each conceded that man had been deceived by Satan and had voluntarily corrupted his

nature by turning his back upon God in Eden, choosing both the pleasures and consequences of sin. For the Calvinistic fundamentalist, man's nature immediately became inherently and hopelessly evil, with each succeeding generation conceived in a state of utter guilt and born into a totally depraved condition. It is from this state of hopeless condemnation that God's grace through Christ's death snatches these of the elect, who have been called according to His purpose. Man is afforded no opportunity to alter his condition for better or worse, except as God's grace should foreordain him as one of the elect. The Calvinist is particularly repelled by the suggestion that man can play any part in his escape from sin.

For the Convention speakers, man is not inherently evil, but basically virtuous. Although he is born righteous and free of sin, he is unavoidably prone to sin and eventually becomes contaminated by the evil in the world about him. Above all, his fate is not determined by an arbitrary external power; he is a moral individual with the fundamental freedom to choose between good and evil--to elect to accept God's grace or ignore it. His guilt is not inherited but brought about by his own tendency to choose the evil; his salvation is not pre-destined, but can only result from his own willingness to choose the grace offered in Christ. It is in the nature of man's acquisition of guilt and in his degree of freedom in escaping guilt and its consequences that the emphasis of typical fundamentalism differs most sharply with the addresses at the North American Christian Convention.

To the Convention speakers, man was primarily a spiritual creature constructed in the very image of his creator. "When man was created, he was created in the image of God. God shared with man His own character," said Knofel Staton. "That was God's own Spirit He shared with man, the Holy Spirit. The fruit of that Spirit is the character of God--love, joy, peace. . . ." ¹³¹ Since "God is love," and since man reflects the very nature of God, the Convention speakers concluded that man, by his very nature, must love something. Man was designed to love. In creating man, however, God granted him complete freedom in selecting the object of his love. Stressing the doctrine of the freedom of the will, Claude J. Miller declared: "There can be no right except for him who is able to do wrong if he chooses to do so. There can be no moral character at all, except where it is possible for one to choose between right and wrong, and do which ever he pleases. . . . I cannot love unless I am free also to hate. Free will is the key-stone of the arch of human nature." ¹³² Miller further supported his argument with this assertion from Fairbairn's Philosophy of the Christian Religion.

God, growing weary of the ceaseless uniform obedience of the sun and stars and planets--all nature obeying Him in mathematical precision because they could not help it--at last said: "Let us make man and give him a free will to obey or disobey, that I may have the joy of voluntary obedience." ¹³³

This freedom, argued many Convention speakers, not only gave abundant opportunity to love God, but it also provided him with unlimited opportunity to fulfill the need to love in illegitimate ways. Since Adam turned his back upon Eden, this has

been man's inescapable problem. Rejecting the love of God, he has lavished his affections on objects which are but limited and finite. Consequently, his level of satisfaction has been limited and finite.

Sin is the term which the speakers used to describe the condition which results when man places any thing or person other than God in the center of his affections. Some speakers defined sin as a condition in which the physical nature comes to have dominance over the spiritual.¹³⁴

George W. Knepper's 1928 address, "The Problem of Sin and Its Solution," specialized in the nature of man and the scheme of redemption. Knepper cited man's dependence upon his own knowledge rather than his willingness to love God, as the basic weakness of humanity. He, along with other speakers, interpreted man's failures as being caused by the destructive work of Satan. "Satan is a liar and has never subscribed to the truth-in-advertizing code," said Robert Russell in 1976, ". . . no matter how promising Satan's attractions are, they never premanently satisfy. He makes great promises but never delivers. I have everything to lose, but nothing to gain."¹³⁵

Thus, while rejecting the doctrine of inherited sin, the Convention speakers nonetheless held that man, by his very nature is an incurable sinner. "If we decide to go our own way without His character, He will let us," said Knofel Staton. "Individual independence from God--the wages of that sin is death, which is alienation from the inner presence of God."¹³⁶ Through the years

the speakers consistently emphasized the gravity and enormity of sin. Whatever Became of Sin? was more than the title of a book by the noted psychologist, Dr. Karl Menninger; it was a serious question to Bob Russell. In his 1976 address, he cited Menninger's central question: "Doesn't anyone sin anymore--doesn't anyone believe in sin?" He then declared:

It is imperative that we, as trustees of the word of God, emphasize the biblical doctrine of sin. None of us would return to the puritanical punishment; the stocks, the tongue slitting, and the cheek branding were excessive penalties which ignored God's grace and forgiveness. Yet have we not permitted the pendulum to swing too far in the opposite direction? We've emphasized love, forgiveness, and grace, but said little about sin, wrath, and punishment. As a result many view God as a doting old grandfather who would never hold man accountable for his sins. It was Heine, the German philosopher and poet, who cynically explained his lack of fear of hell, by saying, "God will forgive, it is His job." Man will never understand the tremendous cost of forgiveness unless he understands the exorbitant price of sin. He will never appreciate the freedom available in Christ unless he understands the total enslavement of sin. He will not appreciate the urgency of salvation unless he understands the dreadful consequences of sin.¹³⁷

Many conservatives feared that modern theology made no room for a real conception of sin. While for some liberals the theory of evolution had made sin merely a necessary stage in man's development toward perfection, for others the doctrine of divine immanence and the concept of the universal Fatherhood of God had eliminated the seriousness of sin and reduced man's degree of guilt. The conservatives insisted that sin, which inevitably produced enmity with God, involved deep personal guilt. The corrupting character and guilt of sin were considered such as to require more than mere social reformation and humanistic improvement as a remedy. The

ugliness and guilt of sin were only to be blotted out in a supernatural regeneration made possible by the atonement of Christ.

God's Plan for Redeeming Man

In his 1928 analysis of Current Christian Thinking, Gerald B. Smith named as an essential of fundamentalism the interpretation of Christianity in terms of a supernatural plan of salvation. The statement of leading fundamentalists served to confirm Smith's analysis.¹³⁸ "If we believe in a God," William Jennings Bryan assured his constituents, "we must believe that we are a part of His plan. . . . If one believes in a God who is all-loving, as well as all-powerful, the scheme of redemption by substitutionary suffering is not only believable but natural."¹³⁹ Particularly favoring the phrase, "the plan of salvation," Bryan held that no Bible truth had been more clearly stated and yet none was more hotly contested than the doctrine of the blood atonement. The hot contest emanated directly from the liberals' lack of reverence for the hallowed doctrine of orthodoxy. Many modernists announced deep suspicions as to the necessity and nature of the blood atonement in the Christian system. For instance, Walter Rauschenbusch calmly stated that orthodoxy had committed a colossal blunder by treating the atonement as something supernaturally distinct, rather than as a natural part of the life of Christ. Both the life and the death of Christ were seen to have value only as an example for Christians of all ages. "His death," said Rauschenbusch, "is a matter almost negligible in the work of salvation."¹⁴⁰

The North American Christian Convention was clearly a contribution to that phase of religious thought which interpreted the Christian message in terms of a supernatural scheme of redemption. The speakers suggested that the two basic requirements which had to be fulfilled in God's atonement for man's sin were justice and mercy. "The priestly ministrations of the temple of Israel make clear the fact that, in the justice of God, sin cannot be lightly passed over and condoned," declared Burris Butler in 1940. "His death was for our sins. Isaiah says: 'But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with his stripes we are healed.' Thank God for His abundant mercy."¹⁴¹

Similarly, Ernest E. Laughlin in 1946 emphasized the twin chords of justice and mercy in the scheme of redemption:

From the beginning, man has offended God. The penalty was death. God had two alternatives--either He could impose the penalty, or exercise mercy and say, "I forgive you." Before He can do that, however, He must satisfy the law--there is a debt to be paid for some one. Since man could not satisfy the debt, God decided to assume it Himself. But He could not die, so He sent His only begotten Son. Consequently, He can be just, while at the same time exercise mercy and forgiveness. In Christ the debt is paid, God accepts the death of Jesus in lieu of yours and mine.¹⁴²

Bob Russell illustrated how perfectly the death of Christ fulfilled the requirements of justice and mercy by recounting an incident in his personal life:

Several months ago I started home at the end of the day, when suddenly I realized I was to be home at 5:00 p.m. to take my son to baseball practice and it was already 5:05. I started to hurry because I know how he paces the floor, nervous about being late. As I darted for home I came upon a radar unit and instinctively hit my brakes, then "innocently" cruised

by at 25 miles per hour. As I watched in the rearview mirror one of the motorcycles came after me with lights flashing. I was so disgusted with myself. I had just applied for special insurance rates available to non-drinking drivers who haven't had a ticket in two years. That was gone, plus a \$29 fine for sure. I pulled over, the policeman approached the car and asked to see my license. He took a look at it and said, "Bob Russell!" I looked up and saw a young policeman with helmet, sunglasses and gear but did not recognize him. "You don't recognize me do you?" He said, "I'm Steve Mobley, you used to have me in Christian service camp!" "Oh, yeah, Steve! Good to see you," I said. "Tell you what," he responded, "I'm going to let you go. I hate to give a ticket to a preacher. Try to hold it down to 25 miles per hour through here though." That's mercy! But it's not justice. I told that to a group of people shortly afterward and one lady snapped, "I got stopped by the same policeman but he didn't let me go!" If that policeman wanted to be both just and merciful he would have to say, "Bob Russell, I like you. I hate to give you a ticket but it's the law. It would not be fair to others to show favoritism to you. Here's your ticket, and here's \$30 of my money to pay it." That's unthinkable on a human level, but that's how God became both just and the one who justifies. He demonstrated both His love and His righteousness on the cross.¹⁴³

Thus the Convention speakers would shout agreement with Marshall J. Leggett's statement: "Here is the perfect picture of "agape" love: the omnipotent God letting His Son die for unlovely, unlovable, sinful man. This is why the apostle John could point to the cross and say, 'Herein is love: not that we loved God (of course not!) but that He loved us and gave His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.'"¹⁴⁴ Man can only fulfill his purpose for existing when he satisfies his need to love by loving Him whom he was created to love. "Something happened on the cross which can save me from my sins," Leggett reasoned, "God's love let it happen." He continued:

This is the reason that you young people seek to live righteous, Christian lives. It is not primarily because you are afraid of getting caught; it is not because you just do not want to break the commandment; it is because God loves you with a perfect love and you can do nothing less than love Him and live with yourself in good conscience. John says, "We love him, because he first loved us."¹⁴⁵

Just as the two basic requirements of justice and mercy were fulfilled in Christ's death, so man's response to that death involved the two fundamentals of grace and faith. "We desire to follow in His way," explained Leonard Wymore in 1976, "not for the merit system of law, but out of gratitude for His unmerited love and grace."¹⁴⁶ Other speakers agreed that the doctrine of God's free grace is inconsistent with the idea of human merit. Man does not deserve salvation as a reward for accomplishment, and God does not provide salvation as though He were paying a debt for righteous deeds.

Owen L. Crouch, correcting what he felt was an improper emphasis, summarized the concept of the efficacy of grace:

Man in his eternal longing to be right with God and in his ageless quests to seek the favor of the divine has brought all kinds of gifts and sacrifices. All the regulations of religious laws, all rules and rituals, all orders, all penances have sprung from man's search for an acceptable righteousness which will make him agreeable to the Deity. . . . By making our salvation dependent upon good deeds we make void both the grace of God and the death of Christ.¹⁴⁷

As grace is God's love in action, so faith is man's love in action; as love is expressed in God's grace; so love must be expressed in man's faith.

In 1962, Henry E. Hill made the point that God's grace is conditioned in its application. "Grace is given to us on the

condition of faith or committed trust. Doesn't Paul say that it is by His grace you are saved through faith." He continued:

On the human level we walk a few steps to the fountain where God's grace is flowing. We stoop to drink and grace is appropriated to us. The gift is free, but we still must come to the water and drink freely. Our coming to the water is our committed trust--our giving of ourselves for His grace.¹⁴⁸

Orval Morgan spoke about "The Victorious Faith" in 1965 and concluded: "All this simply means that a sinner is justified by faith. In other words, he is made anew, just as if he had never sinned. His faith included obedience to the Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation."¹⁴⁹ Therefore, faith includes the acts of obedience which man performs and serves as the mainspring which prompts all spiritual activity. In this context, the Convention speakers often referred to the "five steps" in the "plan of salvation." They were occasionally listed as hearing the Gospel, believing it, repentance for sins, confession in the name of Christ, and baptism for the remission of sins. These were interpreted as being expressions of and inclusive in the concept of faith.

The speakers made it abundantly clear that the preaching of the Gospel was essential if men were to be saved. Alger Fitch said:

The Word of God is for man's deliverance, both in the sense that it is the instrument used to bring deliverance about, and in the sense that it is for man to deliver. Indeed, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered" (Joel 2:32), but there will be no calling upon one in whom we do not believe or believing on one of whom we have not heard. There must be the preaching of the Word--the delivering of the message by the church--before there can be the deliverance of the world from its sin.¹⁵⁰

In 1964, Leon Apple also emphasized man's need of hearing the Gospel. He cited the great evangelist Dwight L. Moody who once said,

I prayed for faith and thought that someday faith would come down and stike me like lightning. But faith did not seem to come. One day I read in the tenth chapter of Romans, "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." I had closed my Bible and prayed for faith. I now opened my Bible and began to study, and faith has been growing ever since.¹⁵¹

Other speakers stressed the importance of repentance and confession in the scheme of redemption. In 1940, Dean Walker spoke on "Scriptural Conversion." He said that "conversion is a change of will: repentance is not sorrow, but the will to reform one's life. It is not life, but unto life. . . . It is the fruit of faith. It is the turning of the always present will, the ever continuing will, to the service of God."¹⁵²

A few years earlier, R. C. Snodgrass emphasized that true repentance "will bear the fruit of a changed life."

Paul, in his defense before King Agrippa, stated that he had urged his hearers that they should "repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance," With Paul, a man who had sincerely repented evidenced it in the wholesomeness of his work. Thus, New Testament repentance is motor. It is expansive. It can't be tethered within the limited domain of the mind, it breaks loose into the unfenced pastures of all of human experience. In the light of the New Testament, sincere repentance carries the essential elements of a sincere reformation.¹⁵³

Although most strongly stressed in the early programs, baptism for the remission of sins was consistently a featured Convention theme. Knofel Staton stated in 1975: "The way we 'make disciples' is to call men to repentance. There is no discipling

without repentance. And without repentance, there is no spiritual significance to baptism--not one." Staton supported his argument with this assertion from Alexander Campbell's The Christian System:

Characters, not person, as such, are the subjects of baptism, and without previous faith in the blood of Christ, and a deep and unfeigned repentance before God, neither immersion in water, nor any other action, can secure to us the blessing of peace and pardon. It can merit nothing . . . to such only as are truly penitent, dare we say, arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling upon the name of the Lord, and to such only can we say with assurance, you are washed, you are justified, you are sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus; and by the Spirit of God.¹⁵⁴

Sydney E. Ahlstrom, professor of American history and modern church history at Yale University provided a valuable summation of Campbell's position on baptism, in his masterful book, A Religious History of the American People:

For Campbell baptism was neither a gift of grace--a "sacrament" as with the Roman Catholics or Lutherans--nor merely a symbol signifying God's redemptive act, as with the Baptists. It was the decisive formal compliance of the believer with the command of Jesus, a washing away of sins, not a "mysterious" supernatural transaction.¹⁵⁵

Several lecturers supported the premise that legitimate baptism could only be in the form of immersion, not sprinkling or pouring. James Van Buren explained: "In baptism we identify ourselves with Christ, so Paul affirms, in that we experience a burial and resurrection in water which unites us in inner commitment and outer action with Jesus' death for our sins, His burial and His resurrection."¹⁵⁶ Van Buren then cited the Book, Present and Future: Modern Aspects of New Testament Theology, written by the eminent Roman Catholic theologian, Rudolf Schnackenburg:

Schnackenburg has some significant comments on Paul's view of baptism, as expressed in Romans 6: "His [Paul's] readers know that they have been baptized into Christ and now belong entirely to him. Paul, however, remarks even more clearly that in baptism they have been baptized into the death of Christ. . . . The apostle probably refers to the symbolism of baptism as it was then administered: a person was totally submerged in water so that he disappeared in it. . . . Hence when we disappear under the water's surface in baptism, it symbolizes a mystical union with the death and burial of Christ. Along with the external event occurs an interior event with consequences for our salvation: we are crucified with Christ so that our 'old man' who was a slave to sin is destroyed."¹⁵⁷

P. H. Welshimer, the only man to serve three times as president of the North American Christian Convention, summarized the Plan of salvation;"

It is not sufficient that men shall give intellectual assent to the fact of Christ; they must be led to accept Him, be baptized into Him, and obey His marching orders. In the Great Commission, Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." I find nowhere in His teaching and in the teaching of the apostles that that declaration has been changed. What is written is written. If disciples were made in the first century by belief in Christ, repentance of their sins, confessing Christ and being baptized into Christ, then disciples should be made in that same way in this century. That is the unchanging law of redemption on man's side of the proposition.¹⁵⁸

Summary

The Convention speakers found it difficult to improve upon the historic Trinitarian concept which had been advanced by the lawyer Tertullian: "God is one substance and three persons."¹⁵⁹ In other words, God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit share equally the possession of divinity or "God-ness;" yet they are three personalities; three separate functioning beings.

Reacting against the abstract god of religious liberalism, the speakers defended the dignity of the God as revealed in the Bible on two major battlefronts. First, they sought to demonstrate that God existed. Secondly, they attempted to delineate His personal character as a Heavenly Father.

Admitting that the Bible did not prove, but rather assumed the existence of God, several speakers appealed to extra-Biblical lines of reasoning to establish His reality. In giving their assessments of the divine nature, the speakers named love, light, life, and spirit as being major concepts descriptive of God's character and personality.

While rejecting the extreme implications of modern theology's immanent and transcendent gods, the speakers nonetheless agreed that God was both very near, and yet completely separated from man.

The theme of God's love logically led the Convention speakers to discuss the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The difficult questions and mysteries posed by the christological controversies did not deter the speakers from featuring Christ as the ideal atonement for man's sins. While some speakers stressed his perfect human life, others emphasized his absolute divinity; all concurred that Christ was both completely human and completely divine. He was, therefore, presented as the perfect fulfillment of mercy and justice--the only avenue of perfect reconciliation between man and God.

The speakers said comparatively little about the Holy Spirit. A few speakers suggested that the chief work of the God-head's third personality was to comfort and dwell within the heart of the believer. With regard to the current alleged phenomenon of the Holy Spirit known as "glossalia" or speaking in tongues, the Convention speakers voiced overwhelming disapproval.

Love was presented as the common lifeline which provided a basis for the human-divine relationship. God's love was expressed in grace, the gift of Christ. Man's love must be expressed in faith, an absolute surrender to the will of the Father. Placing heavy stress upon the enormity and universality of man's sin, the speakers suggested that the only atonement for sin was the blood of Christ. The redemptive blood, however, is conditional in its application--conditioned upon the possession of a faith which is active and obedient. Obedient faith and genuine repentance were often described as essential steps in the "plan of salvation," which culminated in baptism by immersion for the remission of sins.

CHAPTER V

FOOTNOTES

¹Paul K. Conkin and David Burner, A History of Recent America (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1974), pp. 36-40.

²Norman F. Furniss, The Fundamentalist Controversy, 1918-1931 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), pp. 17, 122.

³Paul Goodman and Frank Gatell, America in the Twenties (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1972), p. 2.

⁴Lewis F. Stearns, Present Day Theology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898), p. 195.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Arthur Holmes, "The Personality of God," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Lexington, Kentucky 18 June 1931 (manuscript).

⁷Ibid.

⁸Anton T. Boisen, Religion in Crisis and Custom (New York: Harper and Brothers Co., 1955), p. 197.

⁹Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of Christianity (New York: Harper and Row, 1953), p. 1226ff.

¹⁰Ralph H. Gabriel, ed., Christianity and Modern Thought (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1924), p. x.

¹¹Paul K. McAlister, "Inspiration, Written Word and Truth," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977. McAlister was quoting from Anthony Flew, "Theology and Falsification," in New Essays in Philosophical Theology, ed. Anthony Flew and Alasdair MacIntyre (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1955), p. 96.

¹²Gerald B. Smith, Current Christian Thinking (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1928), p. 146.

¹³F. Ernest Johnson, ed., Patterns of Faith in America (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 19.

¹⁴A. N. Hinrichsen, "The Fact of God," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Long Beach, California, 25 June 1954 (manuscript).

¹⁵Anselm, Proslogion, trans. by M. J. Charlesworth, as quoted in Justo L. Gonzalez, A History of Christian Thought, II (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971), pp. 158, 159.

¹⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁷Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), p. 239.

¹⁸P. H. Welshimer, "Jesus the Christ, Son of God," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Lexington, Kentucky, 21 June 1931 (manuscript).

¹⁹G. H. Cachiaras, "New Testament Preaching: The Message to the Greeks (Mars Hill)," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 17 October 1942 (manuscript).

²⁰D. Elton Trueblood, Philosophy in Religion (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 92.

²¹Lewis Sperry Chafer, Systematic Theology, I (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947), p. 144.

²²A. N. Hinrichsen, "The Fact of God," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Long Beach, California, 25 June 1954 (manuscript).

²³Burris Butler, "The Church Speaks of the God of Space," Christian Standard (August 19, 1963), p. 3.

²⁴Floyd E. Hamilton, The Basis of Christian Faith (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), pp. 42, 43.

²⁵D. Elton Trueblood, Philosophy in Religion (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 93.

²⁶Lewis Sperry Chafer, Systematic Theology, I (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947), p. 150.

²⁷*Ibid.*

²⁸Alexander Campbell, The Christian System, 2nd ed. (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Co., 1839), p. 13.

²⁹Ibid., p. 15.

³⁰George Schweitzer, "Jesus Christ is Lord of Creation," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Columbus, Ohio, 13 July 1960 (manuscript).

³¹Reggie Thomas, "The Church Speaks to Youth in the Space Age," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Long Beach, California, 29 June 1963 (manuscript).

³²P. H. Welshimer, "Jesus the Christ, the Son of God," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Lexington, Kentucky, 21 June 1931 (manuscript).

³³John Ralls, "Creation versus Evolution," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, St. Louis, Missouri, 9 July 1964 (manuscript).

³⁴Geddes MacGregor, Introduction to Religious Philosophy (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1959), p. 113.

³⁵A. N. Hinrichsen, "The Fact of God," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Long Beach, California, 25 June 1954 (manuscript).

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷G. H. Cachiaras, "New Testament Preaching: The Message to the Greeks," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 17 October 1942 (manuscript).

³⁸Geddes MacGregor, Introduction to Religious Philosophy (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1959), p. 113.

³⁹James Oliver Buswell, Jr., A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), p. 72.

⁴⁰Edwin A. Burt, Types of Religious Philosophy (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951, rev. ed.), p. 150.

⁴¹G. H. Cachiaras, "New Testament Preaching: The Message to the Greeks," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 17 October, 1942 (manuscript).

⁴²Christian Century, March 20, 1924, p. 359.

⁴³Edwin A. Burt, Types of Religious Philosophy (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951, rev. ed.), p. 150.

⁴⁴A significant analysis of the contribution of the Princeton theology of fundamentalism is offered by Ernest R. Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970).

⁴⁵J. Gresham Machen, What Is Faith? (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927).

⁴⁶Horace J. Bridges, The God of Fundamentalism and Other Studies (Chicago: Pascal Covici, 1925), p. 30.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸James M. Gray, Modernism: A Revolt Against Christianity; A Revolt Against Good Government (Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1924), pp. 5-10; as quoted in Willard G. Gatewood, Jr., ed., Controversy in the Twenties (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1969), p. 78.

⁴⁹Carl F. H. Henry, ed., Christian Faith and Modern Theology (New York: Channel Press, 1964), p. 71.

⁵⁰Gerald B. Smith, Current Christian Thinking (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1928), p. 153.

⁵¹Paul K. McAlister, "Inspiration, Written Word and Truth," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.

⁵²Mark Collis, "God," Christian Standard (December 8, 1928): 7.

⁵³Arthur Holmes, "The Personality of God," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Lexington, Kentucky, 18 June 1931 (manuscript).

⁵⁴Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1959), pp. 544-545.

⁵⁵Paul K. McAlister, "Inspiration, Written Word and Truth," Theological Forum, North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.

⁵⁶Burris Butler, "The Church Speaks of the God of Space," Christian Standard (August 10, 1963), p. 4.

⁵⁷Evariste Hebert, "Finding the Word," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Springfield, Illinois, 22 June 1933 (manuscript).

⁵⁸Morris Butler Book, "Exalting the Name," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana 12 October, 1940 (manuscript).

⁵⁹Basil Holt, "The Hope of Immortality," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 12 October 1942 (manuscript).

⁶⁰J. H. Dampier, "The Victory of the Ascension," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 16 October 1942 (manuscript).

⁶¹A. N. Hinricksen, "The Fact of God," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Long Beach, California, 25 June 1954 (manuscript).

⁶²Benjamin B. Warfield, The Person and Work of Christ (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1950), p. vi.

⁶³Frank Stagg, New Testament Theology (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1962), p. 35.

⁶⁴Louis Gasper, The Fundamentalist Movement (Paris: Mouton and Co., 1963), pp. 28-29.

⁶⁵Ernest E. Laughlin, "What Christ Taught About Himself," Christian Standard (June 1, 1946): 5.

⁶⁶Russell E. Boatman, "What the Prophets Taught About Christ," Christian Standard (May 25, 1946): 3.

⁶⁷P. H. Welshimer, "Preach the Word," Christian Standard (October 4, 1940): 1.

⁶⁸John E. Greenlee, "The Lordship of Jesus," Christian Standard (September 26, 1959): 3.

⁶⁹Robert O. Fife, "The Church Speaks From God's Revelation," Christian Standard (August 17, 1963): 3.

⁷⁰Henry E. Webb, "The Power of the Word of God," Christian Standard (May 26, 1956): 3.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴C. C. Taylor, "The Menace of Modernism," Christian Standard (November 19, 1927): 4.

⁷⁵Ernest R. Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. xiv.

⁷⁶Quoted in William Jennings Bryan, Seven Questions in Dispute (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1924), p. 33.

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Norman F. Furniss, The Fundamentalist Controversy, 1918-1931 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), p. 16.

⁷⁹Ernest E. Laughlin, "What Christ Taught About Himself," Christian Standard (June 1, 1946): 5.

⁸⁰P. H. Welshimer, "Preach the Word," Christian Standard (October 12, 1940): 2.

⁸¹William Jennings Bryan, Seven Questions in Dispute (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1924), p. 40.

⁸²Ernest E. Laughlin, "What Christ Taught About Himself," Christian Standard (June 1, 1946): 6.

⁸³Russell E. Boatman, "What the Prophets Taught About Christ," Christian Standard (May 25, 1946): 3.

⁸⁴E. Ray Jones, "Components of Faith," Christian Standard (July 24, 1965): 7.

⁸⁵E. Richard Crabtree, "Incentives to Belief," Christian Standard (August 28, 1965): 3.

⁸⁶R. David Roberts, "Biblical Message on the Message and the Means of Evangelism," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Denver, Colorado, 8 July 1976 (manuscript).

⁸⁷James G. VanBuren, "Grace, Truth and Glory," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, 7 July 1977 (manuscript).

⁸⁸J. K. Rutherford, "If Christ Had His Way in Our Patriotism," Christian Standard (July 1, 1961): 5.

⁸⁹P. H. Welshimer, "Building the Church Through the Bible School," Christian Standard (September 8, 1956): 5.

⁹⁰John Bolten, Sr., "The Bible is the Word of God--Let's Teach It and Live It," Christian Standard (September 8, 1956): 7.

⁹¹Raphael H. Miller, "The Faith that Overcomes the World," Christian Standard (July 12, 1937): 22.

⁹²George Adler, "The Miracles of Christ," Christian Standard (September 3, 1960): 4.

⁹³E. C. Vanderlaan, Fundamentalism Versus Modernism (New York: The H. W. Wilson, Co., 1925), pp. 9-10.

⁹⁴William Jennings Bryan, Seven Questions in Dispute (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1924), p. 62.

⁹⁵J. Gresham Machen, The Virgin Birth of Christ (New York: Harper and Row, 1930, reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1965), p. 397.

⁹⁶John Roach Straton, The Famous New York Fundamentalist-Modernist Debates (New York: George H. Doran, Co., 1924), p. 169.

⁹⁷Harry Emerson Fosdick, The Man From Nazareth (New York: Harper and Row, 1949), p. 159.

⁹⁸I Corinthians 15:14, King James Version.

⁹⁹E. G. Mullens, Why Is Christianity True? (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publishing Co., 1921), p. 312.

¹⁰⁰Harry Emerson Fosdick, The Modern Use of the Bible (New York: Macmillan Co., 1924), p. 98.

¹⁰¹Morris Butler Book, "Exalting the Name of Christ," Christian Standard (December 21, 1940): 15.

¹⁰²Mark Collis, "The Person of Jesus, the Christ," Christian Standard (January 12, 1929): 6.

¹⁰³Orvel C. Crowder, "Christ, Our Living Priest," Christian Standard (August 7, 1954): 3.

¹⁰⁴Harry Minnick, "The Resurrection of Jesus," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1927 (manuscript).

¹⁰⁵James Small, "The Authority of Jesus," Christian Standard (December 24, 1927): 5.

¹⁰⁶Harold Scott, "Christ the Power for the Present Hour," Christian Standard (June 2, 1956): 5.

¹⁰⁷Edwin G. Crouch, "Jesus Christ is Lord of All," Christian Standard (August 27, 1960): 3.

¹⁰⁸W. A. Fife, "The Victory of the Resurrection," Christian Standard (February 6, 1943): 6.

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

¹¹⁰Robert O. Fife, "Revelation and Restoration," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention: 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.

¹¹¹Ibid.

¹¹²Ibid.

¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴Richard Niebuhr, Resurrection and Historical Reason (New York: Scribners Sons, 1957), p. 177.

¹¹⁵Fife, "Revelation and Restoration."

¹¹⁶Niebuhr, Resurrection and Historical Reason, p. 162.

¹¹⁷Fife, "Revelation and Restoration."

¹¹⁸As cited in Wolfhart Pannenberg, et al., Revelation as History (New York: Macmillan Co., 1968), p. 142.

¹¹⁹Fife, "Revelation and Restoration."

¹²⁰T. H. Johnson, "The Office of the Holy Spirit," Christian Standard (December 3, 1927): 3.

¹²¹Donald McLean, "Indoctrination--the Why and the How," Christian Standard (December 29, 1928): 6.

¹²²C. G. Kindred, "Personality and Work of the Holy Spirit," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Lexington, Kentucky, 12 June 1931.

¹²³Paul R. McReynolds, "Biblical Nature of Inspiration," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.

¹²⁴W. F. Lown, "A Biblical Study of Tongues," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.

¹²⁵Robert Stacy, "By the Spirit, Victorious," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Denver, Colorado, 8 July 1976 (manuscript).

¹²⁶Don DeWalt, "By the Holy Spirit, Victorious," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, 8 July 1976 (manuscript).

¹²⁷W. F. Lown, "A Biblical Study of Tongues," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.

¹²⁸Ibid.

¹²⁹Gerald B. Smith, Current Christian Thinking (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1928), p. 73.

¹³⁰John 3:16, King James Version.

¹³¹Knofel Staton, "The Kingdom of God Requires Conversion," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Detroit, Michigan, 9 July 1975 (manuscript).

¹³²Claude J. Miller, "The Problem of Sin and Its Solution," Christian Standard (December 1, 1928): 6.

¹³³Ibid.

¹³⁴Ben Carroll, "By Sin Enslaved," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Denver, Colorado, 7 July 1976 (manuscript).

¹³⁵Robert L. Russell, "By Sin Enslaved," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Denver, Colorado, 7 July 1976 (manuscript).

¹³⁶Knofel Staton, "The Kingdom Requires Conversion," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Detroit, Michigan, 9 July 1975 (manuscript).

¹³⁷Robert L. Russell, "By Sin Enslaved," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Denver, Colorado, 7 July 1976 (manuscript).

¹³⁸Clifton E. Olmstead, History of Religion in the United States (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960), pp. 474, 544-553.

¹³⁹William Jennings Bryan, Seven Questions in Dispute (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1924), pp. 78-79.

¹⁴⁰Walter Rauschenbusch, A Theology for the Social Gospel (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1919), p. 260.

¹⁴¹Burris Butler, "What is the Gospel?" Christian Standard (October 26, 1940): 5-6.

¹⁴²Ernest E. Laughlin, "What Christ Taught About Himself," Christian Standard (June 1, 1946): 6.

¹⁴³Robert L. Russell, "By Sin Enslaved," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Denver, Colorado, 7 July 1976 (manuscript).

¹⁴⁴Marshall J. Leggett, "True Love is of God," Christian Standard (September 19, 1964): 6.

¹⁴⁵Ibid.

¹⁴⁶Leonard G. Wymore, "By Grace Transformed," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Denver, Colorado, 9 July 1976 (manuscript).

¹⁴⁷Owen L. Crouch, "The Constraining Power of the Love of Christ," Christian Standard (July 14, 1951): 11.

¹⁴⁸Henry E. Hill, "The Glory of Redemption," Christian Standard (August 25, 1962): 8.

¹⁴⁹Orval M. Morgan, "The Victorious Faith," Christian Standard (July 31, 1965): 4.

¹⁵⁰Alger Fitch, "The Word of God for Man's Deliverance," Christian Standard (August 29, 1964): 4.

¹⁵¹L. H. Apple, "Preaching the Word of God," Christian Standard (September 5, 1964): 3.

¹⁵²Dean E. Walker, "Scriptural Conversion," Christian Standard (November 2, 1940): 6.

¹⁵³R. C. Snodgrass, "New Testament Repentance and Its Modern Application," Christian Standard (September 4, 1937), p. 7.

¹⁵⁴Knofel Staton, "The Kingdom of God Requires Conversion," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Detroit, Michigan 9 July 1975 (manuscript).

¹⁵⁵Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 449.

¹⁵⁶James Van Buren, "The Meaning and Place of Baptism," Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977 (mimeographed, NACC), 1977.

¹⁵⁷Ibid.

¹⁵⁸P. H. Welshimer, "Preach the Word," Christian Standard
(October 12, 1940): 2.

¹⁵⁹Justo L. Gonzalez, A History of Christian Thought,
Vol. I (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), p. 183.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHURCH

Introduction

The importance of the church in a study of the North American Christian Convention cannot be overemphasized. Although characterized by a well planned informality, the Convention was fundamentally a church meeting. The spirit of church brotherhood was the common denominator which provided the basis for the annual fellowship. The speakers were church men; the audience came as members of the church. It is not surprising that more than one-fifth of the Convention addresses concerned the doctrine of the church--its nature, its organization, its mission, its worship.

The Nature of the Church

From the report of the second World Conference on Faith and Order held at Edinburgh in 1937, "it seemed to many that probably the most divisive features in the theological controversies of modern Christendom were rooted in differences about the nature of the church."¹ Fifteen years later, as over 250 delegates from various communions met at Lund for the Third World Conference, sharp disagreement over the nature of the church still occupied a prominent position.²

The task of comprehending the Convention's concept of the nature of the church is enhanced by its rigid stance of respect for and submission to the absolute authority of the New Testament. The speakers addressed themselves, from first to last, to the "New Testament Church." From their Restoration forebearers they inherited the hope of converting the world to Christ. The material principle for achieving this goal was the union and unity of all believers, and the formal principle for attaining this unity was the restoration of the primitive church as set forth in the New Testament.

In the Greek New Testament, the term most often used to describe the church is "ecclesia." John Bolten, Sr., speaking on "The Ecclesia of God," said in 1956 that the term literally means "called out." Bolten went on to explain that the church consists of "God's redeemed ones. It is a colony of heaven and its members are registered in heaven." He concluded: "It is a universal gathering of all true believers to which all true born-again Christians who were saved by the blood of Christ belong. That and that alone is the Church."³

Although many speakers equated the term "ecclesia" with the whole number of regenerate believers on earth, contemporary theologians did not agree that etymology itself justified such a limited use of the word. Brunner's The Misunderstanding of the Church, criticizes even the use of the term "institution" to describe the church.⁴ Greek scholar, Fenton J. A. Hort, adds that the word, "ecclesia," does not exclusively mean a people "called out of the world by God."⁵ George Johnson points out in his

important study of the New Testament doctrine that the notion that "as ecclesia, the church is a community called out of the world by God" is one that "may legitimately be deduced from passages in the New Testament, according as the 'word' is defined, but it is not present in the word itself."⁶ The word was, therefore, not etymologically restricted to a religious meaning and might refer to any assembly of citizens summoned by a herald to gather for specific business at an appointed place.

Many speakers specifically stressed that those who were "called out" by the Gospel were those who had rendered obedience to the plan of salvation; hence, they concluded that the action of salvation from sin and the process of incorporation into the church occurred simultaneously. "The Day of Pentecost was one of the greatest occasions in the history of man," said T. K. Smith in 1959.

On this day the church of Christ was born. Under the complete guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Lord's eternal and unchanging plan of salvation was given. All who committed themselves to Christ as repentant, faithful, baptized believers were immediately members of His church, added by the Lord.⁷

In 1974, Gerald A. Gibson added the inevitable corollary, that, since the church equals the saved, membership in the church is essential to eternal salvation:

The unchurched are lost. There is absolutely no salvation outside the Church of Jesus Christ. If one soul can be saved outside, then the whole world can. The Church is the Body of Christ, with Jesus the Head. The Head controls the Body. When one becomes a Christian, he automatically becomes part of the Body, the Church. People say to me, "I want to be saved, but don't want to be part of the Church." That's impossible! You can no more be saved without being

part of the Church than you can be married without getting married. For when you are saved, God adds you unto His Church. Acts. 2:47.⁸

By the term "ecclesia," therefore, the Convention speakers referred to the corporate body of baptized believers. They contended that the New Testament was very clear in its definition of the nature of the church. Geddes MacGregor, in his volume on the nature of the church, implicitly agrees that if the New Testament were the sole court of appeal, much of the ecclesiological controversy would disappear. MacGregor explains:

The New Israel consists of those who have been incorporated into Christ by baptism. It would not have occurred to any New Testament writer to suppose that a man might be "in Christ" yet not "in the church;" it would have seemed a logical impossibility, somewhat like saying of a man that he has parents, yet is not a member of a family.⁹

The Kingdom

In addition to "ecclesia," the "Kingdom," was another scriptural expression which the speakers used to designate the nature of the church. Most of those who discussed the "Kingdom of Heaven" or the "Kingdom of God" employed the terms as synonyms for the church. In 1915, A. C. McGiffert's book, The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas, noted the "extraordinary prominence, in present-day Christian thought and speech, of the Kingdom of God."¹⁰ Although traditionally identified with the church as an institution, the Kingdom of God, according to McGiffert's 1915 vantage point, was more widely interpreted as the reign of the Christian spirit on earth. He attributed this broader interpretation of the Kingdom to the influence of the Social Gospel.

The majority of the Convention speakers were quite decisive in identifying the kingdom with the church. "The Kingdom is the reign or rule of God in the lives of His people," said Russell Blowers in 1975. "The great movement of which we are a part has pretty much equated Kingdom and Church."¹¹ Blowers cited Alexander Campbell's conviction that the Kingdom came on the first Pentecost after the resurrection. In 1861, Campbell wrote in the Millennial Harbinger:

No intelligent Christian man would now in all earnestness say to the Lord Jesus or to His Father, 'Thy kingdom come.' . . . on the first Pentecost after Christ's glorious ascension into Heaven, and His coronation there, His reign or Kingdom positively commenced.¹²

The doctrine of premillennialism, an eschatological theory characteristic of fundamentalism,¹³ contended that the true Kingdom of God had not yet been established. "The radical separation of the present 'age of the church' from the coming 'Kingdom,'" said Sydney Ahlstrom, "had its effective origin in the teachings of John Nelson Darby."¹⁴ According to Darby, Jesus came to establish the kingdom; but when the Jews rejected Him, He established the church instead. Thus, the church is an unexpected parenthesis, totally unknown to the prophets. All the Old Testament kingdom prophecies must, therefore, be applied to the yet unfulfilled millennial kingdom which dispensationalists believe will be ushered in by Jesus at his second coming.

The doctrine of premillennialism frequently occupied the attention of Convention speakers. A direct affront against Darbyism by Henry Webb in 1973, was typical of the Convention response:

Darby's postponement theory is besieged with problems not the least of which is its affront to the power of God, and reflection upon His integrity. Jesus stated that He had accomplished all that the Father had sent Him to do (John 17:4-11). Did God send Jesus to establish a kingdom? If so, then Jesus either established it, or affirmed a falsehood. If God did not send Jesus to establish a kingdom, why did Jesus preach: "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand?" Why was He constantly talking about the kingdom, comparing it to a power, to a treasure, etc? If the Jews were able to stop Jesus from establishing the kingdom at His first coming, what assurance have we that they will not foil His plans at His second coming?¹⁵

Generally, those religious groups that were keenly conscious of a social obligation characteristically opposed premillennialism. By the same token, most postmillennarian bodies were ordinarily intensely interested in social improvement. It is significant that, while the churches of the Restoration Movement were affected very little by the doctrines of the Social Gospel, they were, nevertheless, vigorously opposed to premillennialism.

Accepting the terms kingdom and church as Biblically synonymous, the Convention speakers rejected the theory that Christ will return to the earth at some future date to establish a kingdom and reign for a literal thousand years. In his 1975 presidential address, Russell Blowers expressed the unanimous sentiment of the Convention speakers and audience when he declared:

We are not in Detroit to fit together eschatological puzzles, or to set dates for the Second Coming, or passively to shift into neutral and wait for some cosmic, cataclysmic curtain to fall. We are here to exalt the King, the Lord Jesus Christ, and to discover what the Kingdom is, what it is doing, how we get in and stay in, and how it expands in the world. . . . The second Coming of Jesus Christ is a blessed and certain hope for which we are to yearn and for which we are to stand in readiness, but to argue about the chronology of final events can so preoccupy believers that they have no time nor inclination to get on with the assigned task of discipling the nations.¹⁶

The Body of Christ

The "Body of Christ" was another descriptive term which appeared regularly in the pulpit addresses on the church. The Convention messages employed the figure to feature the unity of the apostolic church. The Restoration Movement had been motivated by the hope of unifying all believers in Christ, and the modern ecumenical discussion revived general interest in the study of the unity of the early church. Although they accused the modern ecumenical theories and inter-church federations of fostering union without unity, the speakers believed unity to be one of the chief and essential characteristics of the first century church.

Interwoven with the theme of unity was a heavy stress upon the nonsectarian nature of the "Body of Christ." "To talk about 'the body of Christ' as limited to a certain party, movement, or segment, is to sectarianize the expression and to reveal our ignorance," said Carl Ketcherside in 1972. "The Lord's church embraces everyone of the Lord's people and it is true that these are not all in the same partisan corral. The flock of God is still scattered over the sectarian hills."¹⁷

Addresses on the origin and historical development of the church were frequently used to demonstrate its unity and undenominational character. An important series of such addresses was delivered in 1931, on the theme, "The Church Through History." Through the years, numerous speakers pointed to the record in the second chapter of the Acts of Apostles, maintaining that the church

was born in Jerusalem on the first Jewish Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ.¹⁸ Others, charting the historical progression of the church, concluded that it remained free from the "evils of human apostacy" throughout the first century, despite intense internal problems and overt persecutions.¹⁹

Within this historical perspective the speakers interpreted Roman Catholicism as the apostate result of a series of human innovations that eventually robbed the New Testament church of its purity and simplicity. It is interesting to observe that some students of church history have asserted that such groups as those in the Restoration Movement hold several points in common with the Catholic church. The book, Religious Thought in the Last Quarter Century, published in 1927, detected a strange attitudinal alliance between Roman Catholicism and Protestant fundamentalism in its fight against modernism. Editor Gerald B. Smith contended that the Catholics and fundamentalists in protestantism "have precisely the same feeling concerning authority." Both, he insisted, are concerned with retaining the "older conception of authority in order to maintain the older religious experience of absolute assurance."²⁰ In a second volume published the following year, Smith continued: "The program of fundamentalism is in many respects precisely parallel to the program of the Catholic Church in relation to modernism."²¹

If the Convention speakers could be justly linked with the Catholic position in their fierce opposition to a common foe, this was the only congenial point of agreement in an otherwise totally

antagonistic relationship. For instance, Robert E. Elmore, introducing his 1931 address, "The Rise and Decline of the Church," declared:

Tolstoi said: "There is no room in the world for such an institution as the church." If he meant the state church of the czars, or the religio-political institution with headquarters in Vatican City, or, indeed, so-called Protestantism, with its warring sects styling themselves churches, we have no difficulty in agreeing with him. But the institution Christ built and named the church is the salt of the earth and the light of the world.²²

Speaking on the same series, Bruce L. Kershner was equally as disapproving of the Catholic concept of papal authority. He concurred with this statement from the pen of Martin Luther:

In 1521 he wrote: "Whatever is ordered without the word of God is not ordered by the true church, but by the synagogue of Satan under the title and name of the true church--therefore the mad sophists and papists must do one of two things: let them prove their priesthood by the Scriptures, or they must confess that these things are nothing but the dissimulations of Satan and condemned idols. For whatever is not founded on the Scriptures is certainly from the devil himself. I shall here again state by fundamental principle which shall be accepted by all Christians: that everything that is done without Scripture, especially in religious matters, is of the devil." From this quotation taken from his works it is unmistakably clear that he began his reformation at the proper starting point--the Scripture foundationhead--and that he did not at that time regard tradition or the authority of the church as an adequate authority for Christian teaching or practice. The word of God was rightful authority, and everything not founded upon it was to be abandoned. The period of time during which he stood on this principle was the greatest and most fruitful in his career.²³

The speakers admitted that the Catholic controlled Middle Ages yield little historical data relating to the existence of an institution resembling that of the primitive church of the first century. While a few speakers surmised that individual believers

might have continued to follow the New Testament blueprint in remote, unknown quarters, others maintained that a carefully documented knowledge of the church's history was not germane to the question of authenticity. In 1931, Basil Holt described various efforts to restore primitive Christianity. He admitted that it was "a futile effort to find something resembling the early church through much of history. There is no unbroken line of succession. The only true succession is the 'seed,' the Word of God." Holt continued:

Jesus Christ said, "The seed is the word," and through His apostle He sowed this seed, which blossomed forth in the primitive church. Then Roman Catholicism built its building over it, and the Reformation with its succeeding sects added more and ever more buildings, till in the providence of God the Restoration Movement arose with its plea that all these superstructures be removed in order that the seed of the Word might once more, under the rain of God's grace and the sunshine of His approving smile, burst forth in the beautiful flower of New Testament Christianity.²⁴

Moving to the sixteenth century, the Convention speakers discussed the Protestant Reformation with mixed feelings of appreciation and regret. "A thousand years rolled by," declared P. H. Welshimer, "at the end of which time men began to get their eyes opened . . . and there was a welling up in the hearts of many the desire to go back to purer doctrine."²⁵ Although the reformers were eulogized as brave souls who salvaged the freedom to study the Bible and worship according to conscience, they were interpreted as an imperfect transition between the "ebony blackness of Romanism, and the purer light of the nineteenth century Restoration Movement." Though there are no apparent historical ties between the two groups,

some interesting doctrinal similarities coupled with the common charge that the Reformation was only half successful, is strongly reminiscent of the position of the virile Anabaptist Movement of the sixteenth century.²⁶

In 1937, speaker P. H. Welshimer both commended and criticized the work of the early reformers:

Upon the shoulders of Martin Luther stood other reformers, notably John Calvin, whose plea was the divine sovereignty of God; and John Wesley, who pleaded for spirituality within the church. . . . All of these men were looking back toward that which had been, but no one of them went the full distance . . . back beyond Augsburg, Westminster, Nicaea and Rome to Jerusalem.²⁷

In his 1931 address, Bruce Kershner traced the factors which, in his judgment, contributed to the failure of the Reformation in achieving the restoration of primitive Christianity. With reference to Martin Luther, Kershner asserted:

He could not brave the consequences of the movement he had started. When he declared for the Scriptures alone as the rule of faith and practice, he was brought face to face with the tragic possibility of being delivered by his own people into the hands of the pope, with none to help, and of ending his life at the stake. When he declared against infant baptism, he faced the necessity of prosecuting his work single-handed, without the necessary support of the stalwart German princes, apart from whom, as far as human reason could see, he was certain to come to ruin; or of withdrawing from his position and securing the coveted civil support; and he yielded. When he proclaimed the liberty of the Christian man and saw the consequent outbreak of the Peasants' War, he retracted his position, threw himself into the opposite scale and exhorted the nobles to slay the helpless serfs without mercy. No man would regard Luther as a coward; he was among the bravest of men; but when the consequences attendant upon his reformation became evident he shrank back, and with his own hands began to forge the shackles to bind again the liberty he had released from prison. Thus, when Melancthon announced his points of theology, though they were in direct contradiction to Luther's position on the authority of the

Scriptures, he said, "They were not only worthy of immortality, but of a place in the sacred canon." As he shrank back more and more, he bound more tightly the creedal fetters. While asserting that the Bible is the highest authority in matters of faith, he and his followers kept effectually interpreting it in accordance with ecclesiastical symbols they could not discard. The passion for dogmatism thus brought into his church became so insatiable that nothing was too difficult for it to force upon the human conscience, or too sacred for it to pervert. Very soon orderly interpretation of Scripture disappeared from the universities of Germany, and his followers were issuing Lutheran theology in twenty-volume sets. The Lutheran Reformation thus went back to its beginning, and from that time to this its most progressive leaders have had to march with shackles on their limbs.²⁸

At the very first North American Christian Convention in 1927, Jesse R. Kellems noted the difference between the concepts of reformation and restoration.

Martin Luther sought to reform the Catholic Church and the result was the Lutheran Church. John Wesley set out to reform the English Church and the result was the Methodist Church. Thomas and Alexander Campbell and their co-laborers did not attempt to reform any denomination but their efforts were to restore the church as it was in the beginning.²⁹

The speakers contended that denominationalism, by its very nature, fostered and condoned division in the "Body of Christ." They regarded the organized divisions of modern denominationalism as incompatible with the plan of unity in the apostolic church. In the attack upon denominationalism, some speakers focused special attention on "the Scriptural conception of unity":

The unity of the New Testament is not oneness in organizations, but just the reverse--unity without organization, or in spite of organization. All who, through a spirit of absolute loyalty to ordinances, love their fellow-Christians as brethren banish sectarianism from their hearts, refuse to be members of, or aid, sectarian movements or organizations, are already one in Christ. No other bond than that is needed to constitute them one. How simple the Scriptural conception of unity.³⁰

Sectarianism Within the Brotherhood

Although the early speakers on church unity largely aimed at the evils of organized denominationalism, in recent years an interesting shift began to appear. Several speakers warned that the brotherhood was not providentially immune to the human weaknesses which manufactured denominationalism and destroyed the unity of the apostolic church. They asserted that there were certain contentions which only lacked sufficient time to develop into full-fledged denominations.

In the chapter on "The Restoration Movement," Cole's History of Fundamentalism chronicles the church's inclination to divide into bitter factions. As early as 1931, Cole wrote: "At the present time the Disciples denomination is more seriously divided than is any other evangelical people in America."³¹ Although his remarks were aimed particularly at the liberal Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), his comments were also relevant to the development of the Restoration Movement's conservative wing. Cole credited a "controversial psychology," "the debating spirit," and "a disputational attitude" with permitting the movement's preachers to "go to such extremes in personal attack and divisive action, such as has not been experienced in other denominations."³² In 1940, W. R. Walker stated the issues which tended to separate brethren and stifle the unity which at one time had been the focus of the movement.

Often no question of faith or loyalty to Christ was involved, but personal opinion or prejudiced view was exalted to the

plane of creedal belief. Such matters as: The number of cups that should be used in the observance of the Lord's Supper; when, how and by whom the loaf should be broken; whether a worship period should close with a prayer or a hymn; whether Bibles only or whether lesson sheets should be used in the Bible schools; whether Bible schools for training preachers are permissible; whether an elder is a life term, or whether he may be released after a period of service; whether a choir or a solo singer shall lead the congregation in song; whether "singing in the heart" shall be accompanied only by the vocal organs of the singer, or whether musical instruments may also voice the melody! What a shame that we have brought our plea for Christian unity into disrepute by such un-Christian conduct! Those responsible for dividing congregations and disrupting fraternal fellowship over the petty trivialities enumerated above are "heretics," in the New Testament sense of the word.³³

W. Carl Ketcherside, whose wisdom, wit, and communicative skills made him a Convention favorite, was most sensitive to the divisive element of sectarianism within the brotherhood. His numerous speeches at the North American Christian Convention were interrupted by applause too frequently to tabulate, however, he was at the same time considered by many--controversial. In 1963, Ketcherside described the prevalence of sectarianism in the Restoration Movement:

We are the heirs of a noble movement, inaugurated by brilliant but humble men, to "unite the Christians in all of the sects." Their effort was launched at a time when sectarianism was rife and warring partisans called down heaven's blessing upon their respective divisive establishments. We have lived to see a complete reversal of that attitude. Schism is now regarded as the scandal of modern Christendom. The sectarian spirit is decried by the children of those who once defended it. It is the tragedy of our own history that, having begun so auspiciously, we have "fallen out by the way" and instead of being a catalyst to bring together divergent elements, we constitute one of the most divided movements in the contemporary American picture. We have contributed to the number of factions and fragments in the past; it remains to be seen whether we can contribute anything vital to the unity of the future. I do not hold with those who would abandon the ideal of restoration,

but I am not so much concerned for "restoring the Restoration movement" as I am in recapturing that spirit which gave it incentive and impetus.³⁴

In the same address, Ketcherside warned his audience to distinguish between the Restoration Movement and the church:

I regard every sincere baptized believer in our Lord Jesus Christ as a child of God. Wherever my Father has a child I have a brother. I am convinced that He has many children and I have many brethren who have never even heard of the Restoration movement. That movement is not the church and should never be confused with it. There is only one church now, there never was but one, and there will never be another. The church is a divine creation and a divine organism. It is not a human organization. A man might as well try to create another God as to create another church. The church is the body of my blessed Lord and is composed of all the saved of all the earth. The church of God was on earth before Thomas Campbell read his "Declaration and Address" and before Alexander Campbell was born. Jesus has never been a head without a body, a king without a subject or a shepherd without a sheep since the Pentecostal birthday of the church. Whether we would recognize and welcome some of the sheep if they came back among us makes little difference, seeing that "the Lord knoweth them that are his!" I am determined to receive all whom God receives, and on the same basis that He received me. He received me, not because of my perfection in knowledge, but in spite of my imperfections. I am no longer so much concerned that others believe all the things I think I know, as I am that they know Him in whom I know I have believed.³⁵

A manifestation of sectarianism was the tendency of some brethren to bind opinion into rigid law. This type of controversy was not, however, limited to the churches of the Restoration Movement. In the decades following World War I, the tensions over the modernistic theories created a climate conducive to scrutiny, censorship and law making. Investigating commissions, appropriately dubbed "witch-hunters," and attempts to invoke doctrinal tests of fellowship upon "suspected" ministers, were common to every major denomination.

The tendency to investigate and officially censor was particularly apparent in the Baptist fellowship. Prior to the 1920 annual meeting of the Northern Baptist Convention, 150 leaders in the church issued a call to a pre-convention "Conference on the Fundamentals." This unofficial gathering was keynoted by an address on "The Menace of Modernism in Our Schools," and when the convention itself came formally into session, a motion was presented for an official investigation of the religious opinions taught in all Baptist schools. After bitter debate, a commission was set up to investigate the loyalty of teachers in all Baptist institutions.³⁶

Elsewhere the situation was equally as tense. In 1922, Harry Emerson Fosdick attacked heresy hunters in his famous sermon, "Shall the Fundamentalist Win?" In response, such rebuttals as John R. Straton's "Shall the Funnymonkeyists Win?" cropped up around the nation. The Presbyterian General Assembly in 1910, 1916, and 1923 attempted to make all of their ministers swear allegiance to an "essential," five-point doctrinal statement.³⁷

The issue was also present in the Convention addresses. In 1963, Ketcherside expressed concern over the haste with which some individuals questioned the soundness of their brothers in the movement. He concluded:

One can be wrong about many things if he is right about Jesus and still be saved; he can be right about everything else but if he is wrong about Jesus he will still be lost. I am determined to make nothing a test of fellowship which God has not made a condition of salvation. Those who are good enough to be in fellowship with Him are not too bad for me to be in fellowship with them.³⁸

Similarly, Robert Moorehead analyzed the problem in 1975:

"The prevailing attitude of some brethren is this: Unless you use the right Brand X of Bible school literature, mouth the same cliches, support the right college, attend the right camp, and finance the right mission cause, you're not one of us." The speaker, however, raised the eyebrows of some in his Convention audience when he declared, "It is time that we begin to join hands with our brethren in other denominations." Moorehead's address concluded in controversy as he asserted:

Our church in Kirkland is made up mostly of people who have come out of other denominations. We have those who believe that tongues are possible, pre and post millennialists, those who believe in eternal security, others who are for and against laws legalizing abortion. We even have some ex-Baptists who still believe in tithing. But one thing unites all of us there . . . we are a part of God's forever family. Like children of the same family, we're radically different in many ways. But, we're one in His Spirit.³⁹

In conclusion, it may be said that the Convention speakers resolutely held that the nature of the church inhered in a fixed apostolic pattern. They denied that the church was an accidental ideology arising out of the unique environmental dynamics of the first century. They believed that Jesus Christ conceived of Himself as the founder of the church, an institution which fulfilled in detail the expectations of the Old Testament prophets. Constituted of baptized believers in whom the Spirit dwells the church was, to the Convention speakers, the saved body of Christ. In spite of acknowledged difficulties in living up to the pattern, they considered themselves to be living proof that undenominational Christianity

is possible in the midst of sectarian chaos. While conceding that human limitations frequently marred the ideal, Sam W. Price's 1948 address, "The Challenge of the Restoration Movement," admirably phrased the plea for an undenominational church:

We recognize and respect the Christian character of all religious people--whether Protestant or Catholic. We ask them to lay aside the errors of doctrine and practice and embrace only the plain teachings of Christ and the apostles. We are really not divided on anything that is plainly taught in the Scriptures. The line of cleavage is on things not taught in the sacred Scriptures. It is not necessary for me to go to you or for you to come to me. If we will voluntarily drop and discard all of our un-Scriptural names, doctrines, and practices right where we are and speak only where the Bible speaks, and in its language, the thing is done. Immediately Christian unity has become an accomplished fact. If all of us go to Christ, we shall meet each other at the cross and be together. If I could assemble in one religious body and rightly compound the abiding faith of the Catholic, the consecrated wealth of the Episcopalian, the learning of the Presbyterian, the loyalty and zeal of the Baptist, the lovingkindness of the Methodist, and the sound doctrine of our people, I should have restored the primitive apostolic Christian church in every item--a church that would evangelize and convert the whole world in one generation, a triumphant, glorious church, against which the very "gates of hell" itself could not prevail!⁴⁰

The Organization of the Church

In his 1956 address, P. H. Welshimer expressed a fundamental tenet of the Convention discussion on church organization: "The church is not a democracy in which people elect representatives and men counsel together in the making and enforcing of laws. But, it is rather, a kingdom in which Christ is the reigning monarch. He never changes His laws."⁴¹

The speakers contended that the unit of ultimate organization in the apostolic church was the local congregation.

Consequently, they categorically rejected any concept of churchwide ecclesiasticism and sought to preserve the right of self-rule for the local congregation. Several speakers emphasized the principle of autonomy as a safeguard against general church-wide apostasy. When answering the charges of inefficiency and immobility because of the absence of ecclesiastical organization, the speakers responded: "The greatest growth of the church occurred during the earliest period, when there was no hierarchy--no organization other than the simple local organization of church officers, and local autonomy was really practiced."⁴² "It should be recalled," said T. K. Smith, "that the church reached its lowest spiritual and moral ebb when it had entered into its mostly highly organized period."⁴³

The speakers maintained that each apostolic congregation was governed by a body of elders who, upon meeting specific scriptural qualifications, were delegated power of executive oversight by Christ, the head of the church. Therefore, on a scale of descending authority, the speakers approved the following structure of church government: Christ as the supreme head of the church, the apostles as its founding fathers, the elders as administrators within the local congregation, deacons as servants of the local church, and evangelists as permanent teachers in the church.⁴⁴ In his 1931 speech, Robert E. Elmore summarized this chain of church authority:

Christ is the head of the church, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. The government is upon His shoulder. Christ's word, the apostles' teaching, all things whatsoever

He commanded, is the law of the church, the perfect law from the one and only Lawgiver and Judge. Christ made the church free. Subject to Him the one Lord and to His word the one law, the church is free from all other lords and all other laws, the local congregation managing its own affairs under the supervision of elders and the service of deacons chosen by the congregation itself from its own ranks.⁴⁵

Contrasting rather sharply with a basic tenet of Roman Catholicism, the speakers contended that the office of apostle was permanently vacated at the conclusion of the service of the original twelve. The speakers were in basic agreement with most of the Protestant world in opposing the Catholic position of apostolic succession. In the traditional Protestant opinion the apostolic office was inseparably attached to persons. The death of the person implied the termination of the office.⁴⁶ In 1937 P. H. Welshimer stated the position of the Convention platform: "The historic episcopacy is claimed to be a source of authority by some who teach that the bishops are the legitimate successors of the apostles. Be it remembered that the apostles were eyewitnesses, and eyewitnesses have no successors."⁴⁷

When responding to the Catholic claim that Peter was the first in a successive line of Roman pontiffs, Gilbert O. Nations declared:

Peter could never have been bishop of Rome. The first century was silent on bishops of cities. In that century there was a plurality of bishops in every congregation. But early in the second century a bishop in each important city was exercising authority, over the city and in some instances over adjacent rural congregations.⁴⁸

The nature of the office in which the executive leadership was vested following the apostolic period is revealed in the Biblical terms used to designate it. Presbuteros, presbyter or elder; episkopos, bishop or overseer; and poimenn, pastor or shepherd, are the three Greek words which name and describe the office. Gilbert Nations described the nature of the elder's responsibility and duty, to which the Convention speakers subscribed:

The elders or bishops were the pastors of the New Testament church. The word rendered "bishops" means pastors or overseers. Paul directed Timothy to prefer as elders those who were gifted in teaching. There were no other pastors in the first century. Scarcity of books in the primitive church, fourteen centuries before the invention of printing, necessitated the choice of those for service as elders whose Christian experience extended back, if possible, to contact with the inspired evangelists of the apostolic age. Only such could teach with accuracy and confidence. From the greater age of their membership in the church, they were called elders. But with reference to their duty to care for the flock, they were designated as bishops.⁴⁹

In addition to the above, John R. Pierce said that elders were to:

- A. Pray for their preacher.
- B. Defend their preacher to the congregation when necessary.
- C. Tell the preacher exactly how they feel.
- D. Feed-back from sermons occasionally.
- E. A desire to grow spiritually and specifically in the area of being an elder.
- F. Be a good example to the congregation.
 1. no bad habits
 2. tithers at least
 3. faithfulness at all services
 - a. Bible School
 - b. Worship
 - c. Sunday night
 - d. Wednesday night
- G. Shepherd the congregation
- H. Hospital calling and sick and shut-in.
- I. Encouragement to preacher
- J. Encouragement to deacons

- K. See to it that the committee they are on operates.
- L. Assume responsibility of special area of concern for each elder.
- M. Have a positive attitude.
- N. Take a strong doctrinal stand-in love.⁵⁰

Several speakers listed the qualifications for the office of elder as recorded in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9: blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, patient, not a brawler, not covetous, one that ruleth well his own house, not a novice, a good report of them that are without, having faithful children, not soon angry, a lover of good men, just, holy, temperate, holding fast the faithful word.

Some speakers addressed the need for more truly qualified elders, others highlighted specific problems or challenges which the office must embrace. In 1928, C. C. Crawford emphasized the importance of leadership by example: "If an elder teaches his people to be truthful, he must not be false; if he teaches them to forgive, there must be no malice in his heart. He must do these things first, and then his teaching will tell."⁵¹

The Convention addresses yielded very little information relating to the office of deacon. A few speakers suggested that the nature of the office is characterized by the Greek term diakonos, translated deacon and meaning: a servant, a waiting man, a menial, or a messenger. Others mentioned that the deacons general area of responsibility pertained to the physical matters of the church.

In his 1977 address, John Pierce described the office of deacon:

The New Testament church was overseen and guided by the ELDERS. Deacons were selected, not to help in the decision-making areas of the church life, but to special tasks of service as instructed by the elders and/or apostles and/or evangelists. Deacons are assistants to the elders, taking care of areas the elders and evangelists need to be freed from so they can give more time to the preaching of the Word, shepherding of the body, and prayer.⁵²

More Convention addresses were devoted to the office of evangelist or preacher than any other position in the government of the church. "Primary importance, both in time and importance, must be given to evangelists," said W. R. Walker in 1942. "They are the pioneers in church extension. They preceed pastors and teachers."⁵³

Some of the most interesting and drastic shifts of brotherhood custom within the Conventions fifty year history, are to be observed in the speakers' changing attitudes toward the preacher and his work. These attitudinal transitions effected both the preacher's place in the organization of the church and his work in the church.

What is the place of the preacher in the government of the church? During the early years of the Convention, most speakers named the elder's office as the position of ultimate derived authority. W. R. Walker described the relationship between elders and evangelists:

Now, permit some special attention to be centered on the work and personality of the men who have been definitely called or ordained to the ministry of the gospel as preachers, teachers, evangelists, of local churches. These men do, or should, serve under the supervision of the local congregational bishops. Not all elders are "apt to teach." Many godly men, who are otherwise well qualified to shepherd a flock, either through lack of training or because of business demands, have but limited preaching or teaching ability. Such men need a "pulpit voice." This they supply

in the person of ministers who devote all their time and energy to the work of an exclusive ministry. A recognition and acceptance of this relationship between elders and ministers would solve some vexing problems in church management.⁵⁴

Walker said that the preachers "obligation to the congregation is just what his title expresses--that of 'minister.' He is not a 'boss.'"⁵⁵ This position is in sharp contrast with that expressed by Robert G. Murphy in 1973. Addressing the preachers in his audience, Murphy declared:

Everything rises or falls on the leadership you provide, don't apologize for being the boss. I believe that this was Jethro's concept of management--you be the boss and then delegate the work to others and develop them in it. It is not, as some would tend to believe, the manipulation of things and people for ulterior motives. You may find some board members who will say, "Why don't you stick to preaching and let us worry about the business and money?" To these you can say that the ministry is business and money and you cannot divorce them from God's program. This is not to say that you take the position of a dictator with complete autocratic control, but you have got to be the boss.⁵⁶

Murphy's conceptualization of the role of the preacher must, at this writing, be considered extreme. His position is modeled after the Southern Baptist "pastor" concept in which the preacher is the chief bishop and only elder in the congregation. Murphy recommended Dr. W. A. Criswell and Dr. Jack Hyles as examples of effective ministers. Both are "pastors" in the Southern Baptist denomination.⁵⁷

In recent years, the overwhelming majority of Convention speakers subscribed to a more moderate stance regarding the position of the local evangelist or preacher. "A preacher, as an evangelist-teacher works side-by-side with the elders, under their

oversight," said John Pierce, "and at the same time as one who admonishes and instructs them."⁵⁸

Edwin V. Hayden summarized the distinctive roles of the elders, deacons, and evangelist in the government of the local congregation:

Each congregation is an independent unit, working in its own way with like units elsewhere. Each congregation has its elders, overseers, presbyters, or bishops--all names for the same office--who are to be the shepherds of the flock. Each congregation also has its deacons, ministers, or servants--again various names for the same Scriptural office--to attend to its business and welfare. There are also evangelists, pastors, and teachers. These features are common to all New Testament congregations, and essential to them.⁵⁹

After discussing the preacher's relationship to the total organization of the church, the speakers turned their attention to his special sphere of work. Although expressing a variety of opinions, they discovered grounds for agreement in Robert C. Shannon's statement: "My plea is, let your minister preach! Let him preach the Word!"⁶⁰ In his 1963 address, Shannon reminded his hearers that "congregations have piled upon the minister's shoulders a thousand duties unknown to ministers of a generation ago." He continued:

Bible preaching demands that we not become so burdened with other duties that preaching becomes our sideline . . . that we not allow ourselves to become "sanctified mimeograph operators" . . . that we refuse to see ourselves as salesmen-promoters and office managers who quite incidentally deliver a sermon or two each week.⁶¹

Agreeing that the distinctive work of the preacher was preaching, the speakers offered several suggestions in the realm of homiletics--the science of preparing and delivering sermons.

Robert Shannon's address, "A Plea for Bible Preaching," featured the indispensable importance of proper and adequate preparation of sermons:

The minister must be allowed time to become a real person. He must not become so busy with God's business that he has no time for God. The developing of his own soul is a part of his preparation. Give him time to read, time to pray; for "no man preaches taller than he is." This does not mean that he will neglect his calling ministry. He knows that preparing to preach means studying people as certainly as studying books. As Lhamon put it, "The ringing of doorbells is quite as essential as the announcing of texts." The minister knows this. He understands that if he does not call, his preaching will merit George Beto's description and become "magnificent irrelevancy." But you must know that without time to study and think, his preaching can never know what James Stewart called "the commanding relevance of Jesus."⁶²

More specifically, Paul K. McAlister stressed that in sermon preparation the preacher commit himself to serious hermeneutics and Biblical exegesis. "The 'nice sermon in search of a good text' method belies the profession of the truth of the scripture. Sermons must arise from careful exegesis of the text."⁶³ In 1975, Erskine Scates emphasized the importance of scheduling time for reading and writing:

Whatever time you are able to use, it must be scheduled or you will be excusing yourself for having pre-empted it by all kinds of other "serious" matters. No amount of counseling, calling, administrating and planning can ever be sufficient excuse for unnecessarily robbing you of your time to study and to think. This is what the church needs most from you and when they find you in any of these other important duties, they get a fizzled fire-cracker if you have not given absolute priority to books and writing.⁶⁴

Young preachers were repeatedly urged to rely upon the Bible as the chief source of sermon materials. To the Convention

speakers, the Bible was the preacher's message--his only message. He had not earned the right to preach until he believed it completely and unequivocally.⁶⁵

As the Convention platform was reasserting a need for doctrinal preaching, Wyatt Aiken Smart reported a conspicuous decline in doctrinal preaching from 1920 to 1940 in the typical American pulpit. "Forsaking great doctrinal truths," said Smart, "sermons had a tendency to become essays. Clever homiletics and professional skill were more conspicuous than a sense of commission from God."⁶⁶ Meanwhile at the North American Christian Convention, the call went forth for preachers with a message inspired by man's need of salvation and charged with the confident preface, "God has spoken."⁶⁷

The Worship of the Church

Between 1926 and 1952, the major Protestant denominations, enjoying an apparent victory over fundamentalism, showed an average membership increase of 60 percent, but newly formed fundamentalist sects--Pentecostals, Churches of God, Holiness Churches--gained between 400 and 900 percent.⁶⁸ Much of what these groups were striving to find--perhaps the very reason for their growth--was reflected in a statement written in 1923 by fundamentalism's "most perceptive and intellectual leader," J. Gresham Machen:

There are congregations, even in the present age of conflict, that are really gathered around the table of the crucified Lord; there are pastors that are pastors indeed. But such congregations, in many cities, are difficult to find. Weary with the conflicts of the world, one goes into the Church to

seek refreshment for the soul. And what does one find? Alas, too often, one finds only the turmoil of the world. Is there no refuge from strife? Is there no place of refreshing where a man can prepare for the battle of life? Is there no place where two or three can gather in Jesus' name, to forget for the moment all those things that divide nation from nation and race from race, to forget human pride, to forget the passions of war, to forget the puzzling problems of industrial strife, and to unite in overflowing gratitude at the foot of the Cross? If there be such a place, then that is the house of God.⁶⁹

The Nature of Worship

Corporate worship was a traditional Convention experience which the audience greatly anticipated. At the same time, more than two dozen addresses were concerned with the public worship of the church, or one of its special acts. Worship was thus an important facet of the platform which the speakers both experienced and explained. Several speakers attempted to define worship. In 1965, W. F. Lown stated:

In our English Bible some form of the word worship occurs 198 times. The term comes from the Anglo-Saxon "worth-ship" and means the ascribing of worth. Hence, worship implies the art of seeing the worth of God, and by contrast, evaluating other things in the light of His supreme worth. The Hebrew word which we translate worship literally means to bow down. Five words in our Greek New Testament may be translated worship, and suggest the following ideas: to do reverence, to make obeisance, to do homage, to express awe or devotion, to honor, to render service, and to act piously toward. When we worship, then, we are paying reverent devotion and rendering service to God because we recognize His eternal worth.⁷⁰

At the 1972 Convention, W. Carl Ketcherside cited a definition of worship offered by William Barclay:

The true, the genuine worship is when man, through his spirit, attains to friendship and intimacy with God. True and genuine worship is not to come to a certain place; it is not to go through a certain ritual or liturgy; it is not even to bring

certain gifts. True worship is when the spirit, the immortal and invisible part of man, speaks to and meets with God, who is immortal and invisible.⁷¹

To worship and adore God the Father through the mediatorship of Christ was, according to the Convention speakers, the supreme and sacred privilege of the church and the only homage worthy of believers. The alternations between self-abasement and holy exaltation invoked the assistance of the emotions as well as a profound and reasoned faith. They contended that whatever external activities are necessary for the exercise of worship, its reality and meaning depend upon the reign of the Spirit of God in the hearts of men.

The Acts of Worship

The churches of the conservative Restoration Movement are a nonliturgical body in which public worship centers around praise and thanksgiving to God. The consensus of Convention opinion named five channels or acts through which such public service may be offered to God. Ketcherside summarized these traditional components of worship in his 1972 address: "The five acts of corporate worship are singing, praying, preaching, giving, and the Lord's Supper."⁷²

As in all things, the authority for the form of public worship was based on an appeal to the divine pattern revealed in Scripture. The speakers concluded, however, that the early disciples had no procedural form for their meetings, neither was there any such directive offered in Scripture.⁷³

The summit of Christian worship has traditionally been reached in the observance of the Lord's Supper, in which believers

partake of the visible symbols of Christ's redeeming love and commemorate his agonizing death. "The Lord's Supper should be the crowning service in the church," wrote Andrew Blackwood, "and thus be earth's nearest approach to heaven."⁷⁴ Agreeing that the Lord's Supper should have a place of special primacy in the worship period, the Convention speakers frequently referred to it as the "focal-point" of Christian worship. "His death and resurrection are definitive of His Messianic and redemptive nature," explained Mont Smith in 1977. "All worship must point to that central fact."⁷⁵

Similarly, A. G. Smith reminded his audience fifty years earlier, that the death and resurrection of Christ were inseparably linked in the memorial observance called "Communion" or the Lord's Supper:

It is worthy of note in passing that the communion is unique in that it celebrates the only death men ever celebrate. We celebrate the birth of great men, and of our friends and of our children, but Jesus' death is the only one men ever celebrate. And the only reason we celebrate it is because of the empty tomb of that first glad resurrection morning that forever banished the fear of death, and forever removed its sting. The Lord's Supper is a prophecy as well as a memorial; it looks forward as well as backward. In it we remember His death till He comes again.⁷⁶

In 1975, John Mills address, "The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper," also emphasized that the observance of the Lord's Supper should involve more than a remembrance of Christ's death:

We would do well to incorporate into our observances of the Lord's Supper a greater emphasis on the resurrected Christ. We are much closer to the Roman Catholic Church in doctrine when we emphasize Jesus' death more than His resurrection. Cullman has done us a great service in showing that those resurrection appearances occurring during the breaking of

bread left an indelible note on the character of the Supper for the early church. Little wonder why the early church called the supper "Eucharist" (Thanksgiving)! Our people need to experience the joy, hope, and peace which this doctrine will add to our worship services and our lives!⁷⁷

The Convention speakers unanimously affirmed that the practice of the early church was to observe and/or participate in the Lord's Supper on every first day of the week. They concluded that such should be the practice of the church today. Mills stressed the value of a weekly observance of the Lord's Supper:

We need to remember that the Lord's Supper was not just given for our weekly obedience. Certainly, if our Lord says, "This do," then we ought to obey because of our love for Him. But Jesus' purpose in the Supper was to continue a mutual ministry to us week by week toward the goal of our maturity. Certainly our personal self-examination in His presence, our "discerning the body" (I Cor. 11:29), and our renewal of loyalty as He ministers to us, should produce spiritual maturity. When we see the Lord's Supper as a means to an end, we can begin to give it its intended place in our worship. Man was not made for the Lord's Supper, but the Lord's Supper for man!⁷⁸

The significance and primacy of the Lord's Supper, to the Convention speakers, is further indicated by their almost total silence with reference to other acts of worship, namely: prayer, singing, and financial contribution.

W. Carl Ketcherside expressed the prevailing attitude of the Convention platform:

With no intention of shocking our audience we suggest that if a community of saints fully grasped the significance of the Supper they might gather in solemnity and bless the cup and break the bread, and having remembered the Lord, retire to their own homes, or remain to eat together at a common table in mutual love for one another, and be wholly pleasing unto God. This in no sense argues that it would be wrong to sing, pray, exhort or teach, but it does point out that to make of all of these combined a ritual is without scriptural foundation.⁷⁹

The system of worship is one of the major factors in determining the character and in shaping the form of a religious movement. It is one of the main media for inculcating and one of the principle instruments for transmitting the essence of a faith. It is at once one of the most blessed yet challenging opportunities to confront the believer. The Convention speakers announced that only the most diligent quest by the truly pure in heart would be rewarded by true communion with God.

The Mission of the Church

Sharp disagreement over the nature and mission of the church provided much of the ammunition for the fundamentalist-modernist wars of the 1920's. The conservative leadership conceived of the church as an organization founded for the express purpose of propagating a message of salvation to a lost world. This evangelistic mission gave the church its very grounds for existence.⁸⁰ The modernists, on the other hand, refused to agree that Christianity could be equated with the church. Harry Emerson Fosdick's 1922 volume, Christianity and Progress, stated the liberal view of the church's mission in the world. Fosdick mentioned the tension which existed between the evangelistic and rationalistic points of view: "Two conceptions of the church are in conflict today in modern protestantism, and one of the most crucial problems of America's religious life in this next generation is the decision as to which of these two ideas of the church shall triumph."⁸¹ Denying that the church should be based upon a fixed doctrinal system to which the

prospective member must conform, Fosdick maintained that the church can exist without theological uniformity "wherever people have that spiritual devotion, who possess that love. . . ."83

A year later fundamentalist champion J. Gresham Machen gave rebuttal:

Two mutually exclusive religions are being propagated within the Presbyterian church, as within other "evangelical" churches. One is the great redemptive religion known as Christianity; the other is the naturalistic or agnostic modernism represented by Dr. Fosdick and by many Presbyterian ministers. If one of these is true, the other is false.⁸³

As unrest prevailed within the main stream of religious thought, the North American Christian Convention left little doubt as to the direction of its influence: "Soul-winning is the church's greatest business. God cared so much for the lost that He sent His only begotten Son. Jesus cared so much that He became a curse for us. The Apostles cared so much that they died the martyrs death."⁸⁴ This passage from Gerald Gibson's 1974 address expressed the speaker's understanding of the primary purpose for the existence of the church--to save the spiritually lost. This mission was often divided into three areas of practical activity: benevolence, education, and evangelism.

The Church and Social Concern

The different points of view as to the mission of the church came into sharp focus under the keen microscope which was used to examine the extent of its social responsibility. In 1917, ten years before the first North American Christian Convention assembled,

Walter Rauschenbusch circulated his definitive formulation, A Theology for the Social Gospel, in which he announced: "The social gospel . . . is no longer a prophetic and occasional note. It is a novelty only in backward social or religious communities. The social gospel has become orthodox."⁸⁵ Rauschenbusch, in becoming the Social Gospel's theological voice, also brought to full fruition the dedicated labors of Washington Gladden, often called "the Father of the Social Gospel," Josiah Strong, Richard T. Ely, Edward Bellamy, George D. Herron, Shailer Matthews, Francis G. Peabody, and a host of lesser known advocates of social Christianity.⁸⁶ Their cooperative efforts, actually beginning in the decade following the Civil War, not only quickened Christendom's social consciousness, but also compelled a re-examination of the very nature of the religious experience itself. Rauschenbusch postulated: "When we submit to God we submit to the supremacy of the common good." "Salvation," he boldly asserted, "is the voluntary socializing of the soul."⁸⁷

Under Rauschenbusch's leadership, the Social Gospel matured as a moulder of opinion and greatly influenced the nature of American protestantism. In 1908, the Federal Council of Churches gave formal recognition to the social doctrine. The organization adopted a "Social Creed of the Churches," which served for many years as protestantism's official position regarding various social questions.⁸⁸ By 1915, there were few religious bodies that had not established social service commissions. Religious publishing

houses released annually an avalanche of pamphlets and books in the interest of social Christianity. In 1927, Shailer Matthews wrote that when "one compares this situation with that of the decade following 1895, one is convinced that the old individualism of evangelicalism is being supplemented by the social evangelicalism."⁸⁹

Was the gospel social, or was it individual? Although it would be misleading to label all of the friends of the Social Gospel "modernists," and classify all of its opponents "fundamentalists,"⁹⁰ a sizable part of the sharp reply of fundamentalism to modernism was in condemnation of their socially saturated interpretation of man's spiritual predicament. As the Social Gospellers attempted to make protestantism relevant to the pungent wrongs of the new industrial age and its accompanying congestion in the city, conservatives responded with a chorus of anathemas. They were convinced that the social practitioners were submerging the will of God beneath the welfare of man. One disturbed critic wrote:

The social gospel lays enormous stress upon a man's physical and material well-being. Religion is held to be nothing more than a plan of social well-being. Christianity is considered a scheme of social improvement. It is reduced to unitarianism Education and sanitation take the place of personal regeneration and the Holy Spirit.⁹¹

The Baptists were also alarmed. Their weekly journal, the Watchman-Examiner, asked:

What, then, is the social ideal in its final analysis? It is briefly this: surround the individual or community with a good environment and salvation will result. No greater or more insidious heresy ever issued from hell than this.⁹²

In 1911, a Commission on Evangelism was established in the Federal Council of Churches to counterbalance the work of the Social

Service Commission. "If anywhere social service has become only a matter of humanitarian interest," declared the Commission in 1928, "it is time to repeat the words of Bushnell, 'the soul of reform is the reform of the soul.'"⁹³ In February of 1914, two thousand men and women from nearly every state in the union assembled at Moody Bible Institute to investigate so-called neglected truths of Christianity. They concluded that most Christians were "as harlots flirting with the world, and substituting pitiful social service for the power of blood."⁹⁴ Although the roots of the Social Gospel were religiously and politically complex, the movement was closely interrelated with theological liberalism and grew as "a submovement within religious liberalism."⁹⁵ The liberals' optimism regarding the virtue of human personality and the evolutionary progress of history, theories that were greatly shaken by the advent of World War I, were primarily assumptions of the new social emphasis.

The Social Gospel's determined opposition, which cannot be easily equated with fundamentalism, was also many-sided. On this subject, however, the opposing voice of the North American Christian Convention was singularly simple. While not a dozen specific references to the Social Gospel can be found in the hundreds of printed addresses, their very essence served to lodge one basic objection: that the social liberals were neglecting the primary mission of the church, namely, the winning of individual souls. Any interest which the speakers manifested in labor reform, prohibition, capitalistic control, mass unemployment, or bread lines was in some way inextricably tied to spiritual rebirth and individual salvation.

The following passage, quoted at length, from W. R. Walker's 1937 address, was typical of the predominant attitude among the Convention speakers:

In part, our trouble today grows out of our impatience to see ideal (or kingdom) conditions established immediately. Such concern is commendable. But before we abandon the program which the apostles inaugurated, for its realization, we should be certain that their orders have been canceled and a new set issued by the King to us. This impatience has led to attempted enlargement of the gospel content. We hear of "social gospel;" "economic gospel;" "labor gospel;" "international gospel;" gospel of plenty;" and even of "the abundant life!" But the apostles preached none of these, nor any other adjectival gospel. They preached "the gospel of Christ Jesus," and that, given time and opportunity, would more than meet all special needs. They went steadily forward, establishing and culturing churches, in the belief that Jesus had planned for His church to be the divinely appointed and led agency for the establishment of His kingdom. If Jesus' kingdom could have been realized earlier or more perfectly by the procedures championed by advocates of the "social gospel," why did not the apostles advocate and employ them? With the exception of the problems raised by machine production, the times in which the church was established were strikingly like our own. The government was regulating industry, setting prices and fixing wages. There were eighty-seven labor unions in Rome when Paul was there. Riots and unrest disturbed every social stratum. Why, then, did the apostles ignore all these conditions, as such, and consistently go on preaching the gospel, baptizing believers strengthening church, etc." The only answer possible is that by so doing they were executing Jesus' will. It is safe to affirm that no better way has been discovered. Jesus and His apostles refused, in every instance, to become partisan. When a man asked Jesus to intervene in the settlement of an estate, He refused, but gave a lecture on covetousness. The same courage that led Him to do that, if used today, would lead every thoughtful citizen to rebuke the covetousness of the greedy, whether exhibited by employer or employee, government official or relief worker. The church can not, must not, become partisan. Another word should be said about the social gospel. If amelioration of living conditions had been Jesus' goal, why did He not establish preventive clinics, instead of healing disease? Why did He not advise draining swamps instead of curing fever victims? Why did He not build a hospital for the care of lepers instead of healing a few? Why did He not instruct mothers how to wash their babies' eyes, and keep flies off their pitiful

faces, instead of opening the eyes after the sight had been lost? If men could be saved by education, why did He not establish colleges? The adoption of such a program would have insured the co-operation of practically all who became His enemies; He would have been feted by the very Sanhedrin that murdered Him. Had He but used the program so intemperately advised by some of His followers today, He could easily have escaped Calvary, ridden an Arabian horse instead of a donkey and named His own price for His services! A Nobel prize would have been His. It can not be said that the times did not permit that course. They were as propitious for it as our own. Times have always been favorable for "social service," if it is content to limit itself to earthly life alone. Jesus desired fruitful branches. Only those who abide in Him can bear His fruit. How futile, then, much present-day effort to produce kingdom fruit. In a recent issue of one of our church papers appeared a cartoon in which Protestant, Jew and Catholic were all pushing the world uphill to a beautiful lighted summit, graced by a house named "the kingdom of God!" How can two walk together unless they agree? At least, they must agree on their destination. But my query is, How can a Jew help in establishing the kingdom of God when he refuses all allegiance to its King? Even the exploitation of little children in business is not more serious than the rejection of Jesus Christ as the Son of the living God.

My closing exhortation to minister and layman both is to continue kingdom building by establishing churches and evangelizing sinners. In no other way will the kingdoms of this earth become the kingdoms of our God. The minister is not a chauffeur driving a church bus to a social depot, but a conductor on a gospel train which will deliver every passenger to the terminus, "eternal life," where Jesus awaits them. Let others think in mass terms, if they must; but citizens of the "kingdom of God" dare not so think, because the King Himself does not so think. It may thrill certain types of mind to visualize a "Christian state," "Christian society," "Christian industrialism," "Christian culture," in which the whole order is governed by Christian ideals. But Christ Himself did not so plan. It is vain to hope for a "Christian order" in any group, in which any of its members are not personally Christian. Ministers and laymen have just one great order from the King: To evangelize sinners and culture saints, as individuals; not by racial, national or other organizational procedure. Had we all been as busy at our Christ-assigned task as we have been in trying to do the impossible, bring in the "kingdom" by compromising with those who reject our King, the church would have been leagues ahead of its present achievement in introducing Christ's kingdom among men. At the risk

of being tiresome, I repeat, Christian fruit can be borne only by a Christian. A Christian is "in Christ." He can be fruitful so long as that vital relationship obtains. When he severs himself from his divine Lord, he can no longer bear fruit, and his fate is not reassuring to consider. Christian fruit-bearing must always, everywhere, be personal.⁹⁶

While the Convention addresses placed great emphasis on individual salvation, the speakers demonstrated in their personal ministries a keen awareness of social responsibility. P. H. Welshimer, who served three times as president of the North American Christian Convention made many speeches on behalf of the 18th Amendment to ban the sale and manufacture of alcoholic beverages. Francis Arant, Welshimer's biographer, said: "He would be heard on the radio in later years, urging voters to get out and be counted, and vote for certain candidates or social issues."⁹⁷ During the depression years of the 1930's, Welshimer established a benevolent program that became well-known.

The word was passed around among the unemployed, 'Go to the First Christian Church--that's the church that helps people.' Of course there was a limit to what the church or P. H. could do, but they acquired a reputation for caring about the privation of a large section of the population.⁹⁸

In 1971 Ira North asserted that "the key word in church growth is benevolence." He was, however, critical of the churches of the Restoration Movement for their lack of benevolent programs.

The average church in America has no benevolent programs. I know we have great teaching programs. We believe in mission work. Where ever I find a Church of Christ, I find a group that believes in sharing the gospel of Christ, but the average congregation of my acquaintance really has very little benevolent programs. If you don't believe I'm telling the truth, you pick up a financial report and read of thousands of dollars for their mission program, thousands of dollars for their

teaching program, thousands of dollars for their beautiful buildings and wall-to-wall carpeting which is all right, but see what it says for the poor and the lowly and the down-trodden and the homeless.⁹⁹

John Allen Chalk's 1974 address, "God Still Cares for the Brokenhearted," cited two "reasons why the contemporary church has failed and is failing to care for the brokenhearted:"

The failure to serve the needs of the brokenhearted, our insensitivity to the brokenhearted, results from our Biblical ignorance and lack of vital personal relationship with God through Christ. The ministries to needy humanity among modern Christians will erupt in the lives of those whose hearts are controlled by Jesus Christ and by God's Word.¹⁰⁰

Many speakers, while agreeing that the primary purpose of the church was spiritual in nature, maintained that a prudent social consciousness would serve eternal ends. The addresses of these men made no clear reference to the classical writings of the social cause, and their remarks were characteristically more moderate than the proposals of the movement's leaders. They did, however, concur with the stated position of Dietrich Bonhoeffer that the ministry of "helpfulness" as an activity of the Christian community is the ministry of "forbearing and sustaining."¹⁰¹ "If the Christian does not bear the burden of his brother, how is he different from the pagan?"¹⁰²

Although there is ample evidence that the Convention urged a broader conception of the church's benevolent mission, it can in no wise be construed as a sounding board of the Social Gospel. Although the speakers stressed the brotherhood of man, social responsibility was always cast against the broader backdrop of

substitutionary atonement and rebirth at the individual level. Accepting the social nature of personal existence, they tenaciously clung to the belief that the individual was the truly important unit in religion. Most important of all, they denied that men were united in sin merely through their common involvement in social evils and injustices. They insisted that individual redemption occurs separate and apart from service to society. They rejected the theory that men may find escape from their collective sins through social solidarity. They regarded the active discharge of benevolent responsibility not to be man's redeemer, but the natural fruit of his personal redemption.

The Church and Education

No battleground more decisively portrays the blow-by-blow account of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy than does the conflict which occurred in the realm of educational activities. It was in courteous regard to scholastic excellence that the liberals made their appeal for a new theology; and it was partially against scholastic rationalism that the conservatives reacted in alarm. In an effort to purge the educational systems of the nation, the conservatives introduced anti-evolution bills into many state legislatures; and it was just such an attempt at educational reform which triggered the Darrow-Bryan duel at Dayton, Tennessee. Such was the general inclination during the 1920's, as concerned citizens pressed for state and national legislation in an effort to halt seditious instruction in the public schools.

Christian Higher Education.--The conflict, however, was by no means limited to public institutions. In the private schools and denominational seminaries the issue was equally as heated. Between 1890 and 1930, the colleges and seminaries of virtually every major denomination in America experienced shocking concussions. Early in 1919, the Watchman-Examiner, an independent Baptist paper published in New York, unleashed a series of abusive and bitter editorials questioning the soundness of the denomination's seminaries. For five consecutive years following World War I, the annual assembly of the Northern Baptist Convention was preoccupied with inquisitions regarding reports of liberalism in its seminaries.¹⁰³ Even the tradition-honored seminary at Princeton, Union Theological Seminary in New York, and the divinity school in Chicago suffered similar periods of controversy and convulsion.

A favorite means of formal reaction to the innovations of liberalism was the practice of establishing Bible colleges dedicated to the presentation of a changeless gospel in a changing world. As the conservatives at once grew increasingly suspicious of public education and lost faith in the remodeled theological tenets of their own seminaries, they expressed a need for new and safer training schools for their prespective clergy.¹⁰⁴ The Moody Bible Institute, established in Chicago in 1886, typified the intent of this educational movement. By 1919, Dean James M. Gray had guided the institution into position as one of the most vociferous proponents of conservative theology. If the printed word could have

protected the country from liberal theological tendencies, the multitude of magazines, pamphlets, and books which came from the Institutes' press would surely have contributed more than their share to the cause. The west coast sister of the Chicago school, the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, also championed the course of religious conservatism. Reuben A. Torrey, its German-trained superintendent, said the school was needed because of the advancing apostacy predicted in the Bible.¹⁰⁵ Scores of similar schools sprang up among the denominations in defense of the faith. By 1913 the University of Chicago had become such a "hotbed of heresy" that the Northern Baptist Seminary was founded in Chicago as an antidote. In 1914, C. I. Scofield dedicated the Philadelphia School of the Bible to the advancement of scriptural, dispensational, and pre-millennial truth, and the Northwest Bible and Missionary Training School was established in Minneapolis for similar purposes. At the nation's capitol, the Patomac Bible College was born and the Evangelical Theological College, an important nondenominational seminary, was founded in Dallas. In his 1931 book, History of Fundamentalism, Steward Cole estimated that "two score of these schools have been founded in the last two decades."¹⁰⁶ S. A. Witmer, executive director of the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges, estimated that by 1963 the number of Bible Colleges had increased to 250.¹⁰⁷

The churches of the Restoration Movement contributed substantially to the conservative cause in the field of education. The pioneers of the Movement had been well educated men who were keenly aware of the value of formal education. The respected Disciple's

historian, James Harvey Garrison, reported that "the prime movers in the nineteenth century effort in behalf of Christian unity and union . . . were educated men."¹⁰⁸ Alexander Campbell, the Movement's early leader, phrased the attitude of the restorers toward education.

We need, as a people devoted to the Bible cause, and to the Bible alone, for Christian faith and manners, and discipline, have derived much advantage from literature and science, from schools and colleges. . . . Of all people in the world, we ought then to be, according to our means, the greatest patrons of schools and colleges.¹⁰⁹

According to Campbell's educational philosophy, the college was in no way to be an institution in isolation. He believed that the home, the primary school, the college, and the church should comprise "one great system of education." He intended his dream child, Bethany College, to be part and parcel of such a system.

Accordingly, in 1840, Campbell announced in the Millennial Harbinger:

I shall confidently calculate on raising such a school as is not in this land; and receiving not the prayers only, but with them large and numerous bequests and offerings equal to the grandeur and benevolence of the undertaking. We shall first want many thousands of dollars, and next many hundreds of students.¹¹⁰

Both Alexander Campbell, and his father, Thomas, had studied at the University of Glasgow. Barton W. Stone, whose merger with the Campbell movement in 1832 resulted in the largest religious group indigenous to America, was a graduate of Guilford Academy, and had taught in a Methodist school in Georgia and a private college in Lexington, Kentucky. In 1840, Campbell established Bethany College

in Virginia (now West Virginia), which he described not as a theological school, but as "a literary and scientific institution, founded upon the Bible as the basis of all true science and true learning."¹¹¹ Consistent with his plea for religious unity, Campbell prescribed that the College Hall would be used every Sunday for worship services and instruction "to be performed by respectable ministers of various denominations."¹¹² Not only were they educated men, but the nature of their plea for unity required a basic respect for academic excellence wherever it existed.¹¹³

The interest which the leaders of churches in the Restoration Movement had historically displayed in educational affairs was significantly heightened by the theological tensions accompanying the modernist-fundamentalist convulsion. An educational controversy which indirectly effected the North American Christian Convention, occurred at the Transylvania College of the Bible in Lexington, Kentucky.¹¹⁴ Mark Collis, who was a member of the "Committee on Future Action" which called the first Convention into existence, and a frequent speaker at the annual gathering, was named chairman of the Board of Trustees at the Lexington college shortly before World War I. During his tenure of office, the religious questions disturbing the peace of the nation crept onto the Transylvania campus. In 1917, the Christian Standard, a chief publication of the Restoration Movement, complained that the school had sold out to modernism under the leadership of its president, R. H. Crossfield. Hall L. Calhoun, Dean of the College, reported to readers of the weekly

magazine: "For more than a year I have been fully convinced that destructive criticism was being taught in the College of the Bible."¹¹⁵ In the same issue of the Christian Standard there was an editorial asking that a committee outside the college and without "representatives of any of our colleges" investigate the charges. In later issues, the Standard published several pages of protest letters in favor of a "heresy" investigation.¹¹⁶

At the center of the controversy were three primary issues: academic freedom in teaching, the manner of instruction with regard to "Higher Criticism" and the evolutionary hypothesis, and the competency of the Board of Trustees of the college. Mark Collis, Chairman of the Board, reported that early in 1917, a meeting of the Trustees "was called to investigate these accusations. Unfortunately, that meeting, as far as making a complete investigation is concerned, was a failure."¹¹⁷ The annual meeting of the Board of Trustees convened on May 24, 1918, and listened as Collis read a statement reviewing the controversy and calling for a complete investigation and solution to the problems that vexed the college. "I hoped that some kind of action would be taken on my statement," recalled Collis, "that it would be referred to a committee or would provoke discussion. It was received without a word. It laid upon the secretary's table, untouched."¹¹⁸ Surrounded by a faculty and many trustees who were not in agreement with his stubborn conservatism, Collis was defeated in his bid for re-election to the Board on which, for the past twenty-five years, he had served as chairman. He lamented to the readers of the Christian Standard:

It was a sad day for me, not because of chagrin at being dropped from a board of which I had been a member for thirty-three years, but because it was an expression of determination to eliminate from its governing body those who will not advocate or will not quietly acquiesce in the subversion of our once beloved College of the Bible to this new order, which is entirely at variance with the purposes of the founders of the college and of the men and women who gave their money to endow it.¹¹⁹

The liberal invasion of the College of the Bible struck at the very heart of higher education in the Restoration Movement. It affected one of the oldest and most popular training schools for the ministry. The outcome turned the tide toward liberalism! The conservatives, on the other hand, were determined that the time had come for a "crash program" of new schools for the training of a sound ministry.¹²⁰

The subject of Christian education is, therefore, exceedingly relevant to an understanding of the impact of the North American Christian Convention. Both the Convention and the new colleges emerged at the hands of concerned conservatives who were compelled to answer the ascending charge that apostolic Christianity and scholastic respectability were inherently at war.

Nearly three-fourths of the addresses delivered at the North American Christian Convention were presented by college faculty, administrators, and trustees. These educators conceived of the Convention as an ideal opportunity to acquaint their constituents with the nature of and need for private colleges supported and controlled by members of the church.

In 1928, Frank H. Marshall, Dean of the College of the Bible at Phillips University, reminded his Convention audience of the pressing need for Christian education on the college level:

With great effort and at great expense we are conducting our Christian propaganda in the churches and Bible schools. Is the faith we teach worth perserving? Can it be preserved and propagated in the secular institutions? Are their instructors, as a rule, shining examples of Christian faith and life? Are the science and philosophy taught there materialistic? The answers to these questions have serious bearings on our great objectives. The tax-supported institutions are not teaching Christianity. They are not allowed to do so. They are frankly not in this business. Dr. William Thompson, ex-president of the Ohio State University, said: "Our nation gets its Christian ideals, not from the State universities, but from the church institutions. Save for them we would lose those ideals, and that would be a calamity to the nation." This truth is often demonstrated by the way students returning from college react upon the church. We could call a long roll of our eminent business and professional men, pillars of the faith, towers of strength in the church, made so because of the influence of Christian education. On the other hand, we think of numerous cases where a glowing, youthful interest in Christian service has been partially, if not totally, eclipsed, and can but wonder what the outcome would have been if these youths had received Christian education.¹²¹

Marshall named the desire "to conserve the faith taught by the churches" and "the need to train the leadership of the church" as the two primary reasons for supporting Christian higher education. He further reasoned that "the Christian institution should have as its highest ambition service to the church to which it owes its very existence."¹²²

In 1937, Frederick D. Kershner, Dean of the College of Religion at Butler University, affirmed the need for Christian colleges that will service the churches with men who can lead both spiritually and intellectually:

The fact is that the preacher needs a better education than the lawyer, the doctor or the member of any other profession. He must lead his people intellectually as well as spiritually; he must make them think no less than feel and act. The ignorant preacher libels his cause and perverts the truth. I remember hearing one of our prominent men, as he was accounted in his day, say, when I was a boy: "All we need in order to make a preacher is to take a young man, give him six months of instruction in the Bible and turn him loose." We have turned a good many preachers of that kind loose and most of them remain loose throughout their professional career. It is the glory of the institution which I represent on this program that it has always striven for an education that is Christian and a Christianity that is educated. Its central purpose has been to make Christ so real to the minister that he may, in turn, make Christ real to his people.¹²³

The distinctive feature of Christian higher education is its Bible centered curriculum. The revealed truth of the Bible is regarded as the integrating principle of all knowledge. All disciplines, all fields of study, all knowledge find their ultimate meaning in the Incarnate Word whom the written Word discloses. Thus the quest for an integrating principle is not ended by scientific discovery nor by philosophic reflection, but by "revelation." It follows, therefore, that Biblical truth has implications for psychology, for history, for sociology, for physics and all the other sciences. For example, it takes Biblical truth to disclose the real nature of man, even though psychology and anthropology add much to this sphere of knowledge.

In an article written for School and Society magazine, Dr. Frank E. Gaebelein made this observation of Bible college education:

The central feature of the Bible college is well worth looking at, because it carries implications far beyond this one kind of institution. This is the kind of education that has solved for itself the perennial problem of educational

philosophy--the identification of an integrating principle for the entire curriculum. For if the Bible is, to use Lewis Mumford's brilliant figure, "a magnetic field at the center which will continually polarize each fragment that enters the field."¹²⁴

From the earliest to the most recent, every Convention speaker who addressed the theme of Christian higher education agreed that the Bible must be at the center of the curriculum. Marshall's 1928 address established firmly the prevailing pattern of thought to which the speaker's subscribed:

The Christian institution of learning should make the Bible the fundamental basis of its curriculum. We are, at least in theory, pre-eminently a Bible people. This is traditional. From the days of Thomas Campbell to the present time, the Bible has been the rock of our foundation. Remove it, and we have not even shifting sand upon which to build. Methods are important in college education, and collateral studies are a necessity. The man who knows only one book, knows no book. Nevertheless, though we teach all science and literature and philosophy and relegate the Bible to a secondary place, we find ourselves shorn of the power that gave our people victory, and we will lack the dynamic to make even brass resound or cymbals clang. And how thankful we ought to be that we are permitted to teach it, without the interference of either civil or religious potentate, a boasted privilege withheld even from the great State universities of the land. Ours is the book to use, as an important text, the "greatest book in the world." For real culture nothing can equal the Bible. For philosophy it is better than the sages. For history it is matchless. For poetry it rivals the classics. Even for philology, one will find in the New Testament "greater books than Plato ever penned." Its Greek is as musical, its cadence as rhythmical, as when Sappho sang of love, when Pindar plead for truth, when Plato taught immortality, when Euripides penned the tragedy of retribution, and Aeschylus thundered his deep notes of destiny. The Bible is light and truth, but, more than these, it is life.¹²⁵

In recent years, however, some speakers have expressed concern that in many of the church's colleges biblically related areas of study such as preaching, hermenutics and exegesis, and the study

of the biblically based Restoration Movement have been losing ground. In 1977, Wayne Smith's presidential address, "Preach the Word" sounded a warning that the emphasis on music and athletic programs in the colleges was relegating the preaching of the Word to a secondary position. "I love the Impact Brass [a popular music group from Ozark Bible College, Joplin, Missouri]," Smith declared, "but they did not die for me! (Applause.)"¹²⁶ In the same series, Paul K. McAlister voiced alarm at the current trend toward subjectivism and mystical experience among college students. "Our colleges and seminaries must insist first of all upon serious exegesis and then upon the implementation of that exegesis in the church;" such was McAlister's remedy for the problem. He added: "Too often we take up the church practice presented to us by the culture, without noting that which made us unique--commitment to serious exegesis."¹²⁷

In the same year, Henry Webb, professor of church history at The Emmanuel School of Religion, said that both the history and the ideals of the Restoration Movement are "shrouded in mystery for the average church member." He laid a major portion of the blame for this ignorance on the colleges:

I learned many years ago, and to my dismay, that some of our Bible Colleges offer nothing in the history of our Movement, some of the others offer very little, and only a few require such study as a condition for graduation. For 25 years I have been evaluating transcripts and have consistently found this to be the case. Many of our problems stem from this unhappy neglect.¹²⁸

In the final analysis, the Convention speakers would wholeheartedly endorse the sentiment expressed by S. A. Witmer, that

Christian institutions of higher education "must never forget their origin and their heritage. They must never yield to the rationalistic and cultural forces of declension that have withered many movements born of revival."¹²⁹

Christian Education and Evangelism in the Local Church.--

Another aspect of Christian education which the speakers discussed involved the teaching program of the local congregation. In 1786, just three years after Great Britain had declared the thirteen colonies to be a free and independent nation, the first Sunday School was started on this side of the Atlantic. It was organized in the Virginia home of William Elliot, who arranged to have "white boys and girls instructed in the Bible every sabbath afternoon."¹³⁰ Since that time, the Sunday School movement has helped to shape the growth and development of protestantism in America. On October 3, 1832, the First National Sunday School Convention was held in New York, with 220 delegates representing fourteen of the twenty-four states. Through the years these official assemblies have brought together thousands engaged in a common task and has been one of the strongest factors for the remarkable advance of the Sunday School movement. "The Bible and the Bible Alone" was the slogan of these early meetings and it is significant that through the years the conservatives have provided the movement with its basic thrust.

In 1860, Dr. John H. Vincent, who just beginning this career of recognized leadership in Sunday School circles, issued this challenge: "Why cannot we have a teachers' institute, similar to

that of the public schools, in every district." In answer to this need, Vincent and Lewis Miller instituted in 1874 a summer school for teachers on the shores of Lake Chautauqua, New York.¹³¹ Soon "Little Chautauquas" sprang up all over the country, as church leaders became aware of the need for better methods of teacher training in their church schools. In 1872, the International Uniform Lesson system was introduced, and by 1875 nearly seven million students in the United States and Canada were committed to these lessons.¹³² By the time the modernist-fundamentalist controversy claimed the attention of the nation, the Sunday School had become firmly established as an American institution. Originally designed to fill the vacuum created by the removal of religion from the public school curriculum, the Sunday School had been founded and fed largely by conservatives during the controversy with the liberals.

The Sunday School movement had a belated start among churches of the Restoration Movement. These congregations had been nurtured almost exclusively by evangelistic revival preaching in their early years. No need for a Sunday School was felt. As the movement developed, the doctrinal position of the churches forbade the concept of conference assemblies, hence the churches were denied many of the ideas and stimulation which benefited the religious groups which attended the National Sunday School Conventions. Because of the close ties between the Sunday School movement and denomination-ism, Restoration minded churches assumed an attitude of almost beligerent opposition. "I have for some time," wrote Alexander Campbell in 1824, "viewed both 'Bible Societies' and 'Sunday School,'

as sort of recruiting establishments to fill up the ranks of those sects which take the lead in them."¹³³ Although Campbell held this position for some years, in time he began to change his mind. In 1847 a representative of the American Sunday School Union wrote to Campbell at Bethany College and received this reply:

I never had but one objection to the administration of the system--never one to the system itself. That objection was simply to the sectarian abuse. . . . Our brethren, as the burned child dreads the fire, dread sectarianism. But this is, I doubt not, carried too far--especially when it prevents them from co-operating in teaching, or in sending their children to teach, or to be taught, in Sunday Schools. I doubt not that our brethren in all places will see it a duty they owe to themselves, to the church, and to the world, either to have in every church a Sunday School of their own, or to unite with the Sunday School Union in their truly benevolent and catholic institution.¹³⁴

In Kentucky, Baron W. Stone also opposed, then approved, the Sunday School movement. It was his judgment that the school was a legitimate work of the church and should not be considered as an "outside institution." By 1850 the Sunday Schools had gained a strong foothold among progressive congregations. By 1900, practically every congregation had made provisions for at least a crude system of Sunday morning Bible study.¹³⁵

A significant chapter in the history of Christian education in America was written by P. H. Welshimer, the first president of the North American Christian Convention. Welshimer achieved his wide reputation through preaching, but was also known as "the world's foremost authority" on Bible schools.¹³⁶ The Sunday School which he established at the First Christian Church in Canton, Ohio, grew from seven students in 1902 to 7,716 in 1914. For many years the Canton school was the largest in the world.

In 1909, Welshimer published a significant book, A Bible School Vision.¹³⁷ This book was not only the product of successful experience, but also represented the very first comprehensive statement of the educational program in the Restoration Movement. Welshimer's interest and work in the Sunday School movement spread around the world through his numerous lectures, speeches, and Sunday School Clinics. He was also known to a wide readership through his weekly Bible School lessons in the Lookout, an inter-denominational magazine of Christian education. The "P. H. Welshimer Bible Class," as his column was called, was a standard feature of the periodical for forty-six years.¹³⁸

To P. H. Welshimer and his colleagues at the North American Christian Convention, the necessity of promoting the teaching function of the church was almost an obsession. They were deeply impressed with, and frequently mentioned the fact that, Christ had given teaching major emphasis in the Great Commission. In Matthew 28: 18-20, Jesus said: "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them . . .," and with renewed emphasis He said, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Christ was a Master Teacher and His ministry was largely a teaching ministry. Hence, the speakers at the North American Christian Convention interpreted the purpose of the Sunday School to be to "win souls to Christ, teaching them the Word of God and training them in Christian character and service."¹³⁹

In his 1956 address, Roy C. Blackmore, noted the inseparable link between Christian education and evangelism in the local church:

Evangelism and Christian education stand together. Some have taught that you can separate these. Not so! Evangelism is the very heart of Christian education. They were so linked by our Lord in the great commission. Education without evangelism may produce theological scholars but it will not commit men to Jesus Christ. And there cannot be intelligent and permanent decision for Christ without teaching. Evangelism divorced from Scriptural indoctrination is not New Testament evangelism. Thus, the Bible school is an excellent springboard for an evangelistic program that will reach our communities for Christ.¹⁴⁰

At the very first North American Christian Convention in 1927,

J. Quincy Biggs similarly asserted:

When the church school gained an important place in the program of the church, naturally it became at once a great evangelistic agency. Every wide-awake school has a program which seeks to enlist the entire membership in the task of winning disciples, instructing them in the teaching of Christ, and training them in the application of these teachings.¹⁴¹

Sunday School expert, P. H. Welshimer, declared in his final Convention address, that the church school had become "the greatest and most productive force in the church's program for evangelism. . . . eighty-five percent of the people uniting with our churches by primary obedience come from the Bible school."¹⁴²

Arthur W. Merkle's 1975 address described how the Sunday School functioned at as an evangelistic arm of the church. "The converts will tell others about the friendships and teaching that they have had," Merkle explained, "and they will, by their enthusiasm, begin the recruiting of others. Thus a pattern of evangelism has been established."¹⁴³ In addition, he recommended that the practice of creating special classes for prospective members be continued in the churches. Merkle explained how the class worked:

Do not confuse this approach with the "catechism" approach of the denominations. The class does not all "join the church" on a given Sunday as in a catechism program. Instead, each individual makes his own decision and accepts Christ into his heart as he feels the desire within his heart.¹⁴⁴

Another function of Christian education stressed by the Convention speakers was the conservation and nurturing of new Christians. Guy P. Leavitt asked: "Why do people come into the church and then drift away? The answer is simply this: they are neglected. They are not conserved for Christ." He then reminded his audience of the crucial role played by the Sunday School in conserving new members:

The second part of our Lord's commission to His people, His church, is this: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." This is the teaching of conservation . . . , we are to teach the recruit to observe, to do, whatsoever Jesus has commanded. He did not say "Teaching them to know." He said, "Teaching them to observe." It is not enough, therefore, merely to teach pupils to know what the Bible says. We must translate these lessons into daily living. Your Sunday school is the church at work conserving the recruits by teaching them to live as Christians.¹⁴⁵

Leavitt also noted that if Sunday Schools were to effectively evangelize and train people to do Christian service, they must have effective teachers. He viewed the Convention itself as an opportunity for teachers to both improve their skills and increase their awareness of valuable resource materials.

This convention, during the next three days, will offer information, instruction, and inspiration for better teaching in every department. Your publishing house has for you an unsurpassed collection of training texts. Get these books; read them; mark them; study, work, pray, and grow as a teacher of the Word of God! For, without you, the teachers, and without better teaching, we cannot have better Sunday Schools; and without better Sunday schools, we cannot hope for a better America and a better world.¹⁴⁶

Several speakers agreed with Leavitt that the Sunday School movement was a vital factor in the shaping of American morality. Murl M. Jones said: "I believe the only way to restore our nation, our world to moral sanity, is to bring about a return of sound Bible teaching in our Bible Schools."¹⁴⁷

"If you want to have better homes and an outstanding citizenship, see to it that your sons and daughters are in Bible school." declared Welshimer. "It is far better for parents to join these children and go with them on the Lord's Day to Bible school than to follow them to juvenile court."¹⁴⁸

Summary

The Convention speakers could not conceive of Christianity as being possible apart from Christ's church. They revered Christ's church as a divine institution, "which He purchased with his own blood," the very means by which God is saving the world. They resolutely maintained that the nature of the church inhered in a fixed apostolic pattern. From the first to the last they addressed themselves to the "New Testament Church." Their ultimate goal was to unite all redeemed believers in Christ through the restoration of the apostolic church in its nature, organization, worship, and mission. To be in Christ was to be in the church. Although the church was itself not a saving institution, it was the corporate body of the saved.

The speakers decisively identified the "Kingdom of God" with the church. The premillennial theories of the kingdom, which as

basic tenets of many conservative bodies absorbed a major share of the fundamentalist controversy, were categorically rejected at the Convention.

The speakers contended that the "ecclesia" which was established on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ was gradually corrupted by the human innovations which ultimately crystallized into the Roman Catholic Church. Because of their disdain for Catholicism, the speakers were sympathetic with the motives and principles which sparked the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. The shortcomings of the reformers were usually reduced to the differing concepts of reformation and restoration. The speakers insisted that denominationalism, by its very nature, fostered and approved division in the body of Christ. They contended that the New Testament church was a nonsectarian/nondenominational institution.

Some of the most interesting and drastic shifts of brotherhood custom were observed in the speakers changing attitudes toward the preacher and his work. While the early addresses stipulated that the preacher should be subordinate to the elders, some recent speakers have maintained that the preacher is "boss." Most speakers in recent years, however, have subscribed to a more moderate position; one in which the preacher works side-by-side with the elders of the church. While directing social activities, conducting visitation campaigns, delivering civic addresses, and handling public relations affairs were often necessary and significant items

on the preacher's agenda, the speakers maintained that nothing should ever shadow his primary work--preaching the Word.

The speakers were obviously uncertain, particularly in the early days, as to the nature of the church's responsibility in providing for man's physical and social needs. This uncertainty was no doubt due, at least in part, to their overwhelmingly negative reaction to the Social Gospel and the liberal advocates of social Christianity. As the years passed, however, they agreed that the spiritual purpose of the church might be served by providing physical relief for the homeless, the hungry, and the lonely.

During the years of most bitter conflict between the fundamentalists and the liberals, churches of the Restoration Movement established numerous colleges. Although several of these institutions soon perished from economic starvation, the surviving ones appear to fit rather neatly into the familiar pattern of private, Bible-centered education which emerged from the fundamentalist controversy. The speakers contended that complete education could never be the product of a system of state-sponsored instruction which virtually ignored the significance of spiritual values. The local congregation was also viewed as an agency which should share in the responsibility to educate the brotherhood. The speakers maintained that the primary evangelistic thrust of the church came through its Sunday School program.

CHAPTER VI

FOOTNOTES

¹Geddes MacGregor, Corpus Christi (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1958), p. 4.

²R. Newton Flew, ed., The Nature of the Church (London: SCM Press, 1951).

³John Bolten, Sr., "The Ecclesia of God," Christian Standard (May 19, 1956): 1-2.

⁴Emil Brunner, The Misunderstanding of the Church, trans. H. Knight (London: Lutterworth Press, 1952), pp. 10ff.

⁵Fenton J. A. Hort, The Christian Ecclesia (London: Macmillan and Co., 1898), p. 5.

⁶George Johnson, The Doctrine of the Church in the New Testament (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943), p. 35.

⁷T. K. Smith, "The Glorious Church," Christian Standard (September 12, 1959): 3.

⁸Gerald A. Gibson, "God Still Cares For the Lost," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Anaheim, California, 24 July 1974 (manuscript).

⁹Geddes MacGregor, Corpus Christi (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1958), p. 4.

¹⁰A. C. McGiffert, The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1915), p. 275.

¹¹Russell Blowers, "Thy Kingdom Come!" address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Detroit, Michigan, 8 July 1975 (manuscript).

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ernest R. Sanden, The Roots of Fundamentalism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. xix. Sandeen contends that "Fundamentalism ought to be understood partly if not largely as one aspect of the history of millenarianism," and particularly "the type of millenarianism known as futurism and especially the form of futurism taught by John Welson Darby," viz. dispensational pre-millennialism.

¹⁴Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 808.

¹⁵Henry Webb, "Is Fundamentalism Compatible with the Plea?" address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana 11 July 1973 (tape recording).

¹⁶Russell Blowers, "Thy Kingdom Come!" address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Detroit, Michigan 8 July 1975 (manuscript).

¹⁷Carl Ketcherside, "The Priesthood of All Believers," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, 14 July 1972 (tape recording).

¹⁸William E. Sweeney, "The Challenge of Pentecost," Christian Standard (October 19, 1929): 3.

¹⁹Robert E. Elmore, "The Rise and Decline of the Church," Christian Standard (July 4, 1931): 3.

²⁰Gerald B. Smith, ed., Religious Thought in the Last Quarter Century (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927), pp. 100-101.

²¹Gerald B. Smith, Current Christian Thinking (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928), p. 64.

²²Robert E. Elmore, "The Rise and Decline of the Church," Christian Standard (July 4, 1931), p. 3.

²³Bruce L. Kershner, "Reformation Movements," Christian Standard (August 1, 1931): 4-5.

²⁴Basil Holt, "Efforts to Restore the Primitive Church," Christian Standard (August 15, 1931), p. 4.

²⁵P. H. Welshimer, "The Divine Basis for Christian Unity," Christian Standard (June 5, 1937): 8.

²⁶For outstanding discussions of the Anabaptist Movement, see the following: Donald F. Durnbaugh, The Believers' Church (New York: Macmillan Co., 1968); Franklin Littell, The Anabaptist View of the Church (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1958); Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), pp. 326-332.

²⁷P. H. Wilshimer, "The Divine Basis for Christian Unity," Christian Standard (June 5, 1937): 8.

²⁸Bruce L. Kershner, "Reformation Movements," Christian Standard (August 8, 1931): 8.

²⁹Jesse R. Kellems, "Growth of the Restoration Movement," Christian Standard (October 29, 1927): 8.

³⁰W. R. Walker, "When All of God's People Are One," Christian Standard (October 27, 1928): 4.

³¹Stewart G. Cole, History of Fundamentalism (New York: Harper and Row, 1931), p. 160.

³²*Ibid.*

³³W. R. Walker, "When All of God's People Are One," Christian Standard (October 27, 1928): 4.

³⁴W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Church Speaks of Discovering and Unleashing Hidden Powers," Christian Standard (August 3, 1963): 7-8.

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶Watchman-Examiner, VIII (July 1, 1920): 854.

³⁷Ernest R. Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. xiv.

³⁸W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Church Speaks of Discovering and Unleashing Hidden Powers," Christian Standard (August 3, 1968): 8.

³⁹Robert Moorehead, "The Kingdom Unites Men," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Detroit, Michigan, 10 July 1975 (tape recording).

⁴⁰Sam W. Price, "The Challenge of the Restoration Movement," Christian Standard (May 1, 1948): 13.

⁴¹P. H. Welshimer, "The Glory of the Church," Christian Standard (June 30, 1956): 3.

⁴²T. K. Smith, "The Glorious Church," Christian Standard (September 12, 1959): 4-5.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Edwin V. Hayden, "Restoring the New Testament Church," Christian Standard (June 15, 1946): 7.

⁴⁵Robert E. Elmore, "The Rise and Decline of the Church," Christian Standard (July 4, 1931): 3.

⁴⁶T. O. Wedel, The Coming Great Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1945), p. 144.

⁴⁷P. H. Welshimer, "The Divine Basis for Christian Unity," Christian Standard (June 5, 1937): 8.

⁴⁸Gilbert O. Nations, "The Church of the Dark Ages," Christian Standard (November 26, 1927): 3.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰John R. Pierce, "Developing Leadership in the Local Church," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, July 1977 (Manuscript).

⁵¹C. C. Crawford, "The Church and Missions," Christian Standard (November 17, 1928): 4.

⁵²John R. Pierce, "Developing Leadership in the Local Church," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, July 1977 (Manuscript).

⁵³W. R. Walker, "The Ministry Christ Ordained," Christian Standard (October 31, 1942): 6.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Robert G. Murphy, "Doing God's Work . . . On Purpose," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 12 July 1973 (manuscript).

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸John R. Pierce, "Developing Leadership in the Local Church," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, July 1977 (manuscript).

⁵⁹Edwin V. Hayden, "Restoring the New Testament Church," Christian Standard (June 15, 1946): 8.

⁶⁰Robert C. Shannon, "A Plea for Bible Preaching," Christian Standard (December 14, 1963): 9.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Paul K. McAlister, "Inspiration, Written Word and Truth," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio 6 July 1977 (manuscript).

⁶⁴Erskine E. Scates, Jr., "Devoted and Discriminating Reading," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Detroit, Michigan 10 July 1975 (manuscript).

⁶⁵P. H. Welshimer, "Preach the Word," Christian Standard (October 12, 1942): 3.

⁶⁶Luther A. Weigle, ed., Preaching in These Times (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), pp. 130-135.

⁶⁷This ideal has been constantly restated by the Convention speakers and the 1978 meeting of the North American Christian Convention treated the theme "God Has Spoken."

⁶⁸Herbert W. Schneider, Religion in Twentieth Century America (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), p. 212.

⁶⁹J. Gresham Machen, Christianity and Liberalism (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1923), 179-180.

⁷⁰W. F. Lown, "Our Oneness in Worship and Hope in the Lord," Christian Standard (April 30, 1966): 5.

⁷¹W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Priesthood of All Believers," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, 14 July 1972 (tape recording).

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Andrew Blackwood, The Fine Art of Public Worship (Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1934), p. 204.

⁷⁵Mont W. Smith, "Ethno-Theology: Restoration Theology Translated," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio 7 July 1977 (manuscript).

⁷⁶A. G. Smith, "The Lord's Ordinances," Christian Standard (December 15, 1928): 4.

⁷⁷John Mills, "The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Detroit, Michigan, 11 July 1975 (manuscript).

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Priesthood of All Believers," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio 14 July 1972 (tape recording).

⁸⁰J. Gresham Machen, Christianity and Liberalism (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1923), pp. 168-170.

⁸¹Harry Emerson Fosdick, Christianity and Progress (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1922), pp. 232-233.

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³J. Gresham Machen, "The Battle Within the Churches," Homiletic Review (September, 1923): 186.

⁸⁴Gerald A. Gibson, "God Still Cares for the Lost," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Anaheim, California, 23 July 1974 (manuscript).

⁸⁵Walter Rauschenbusch, A Theology for the Social Gospel (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1919), p. 2.

⁸⁶Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), pp. 785-804.

⁸⁷Walter Rauschenbusch, A Theology of the Social Gospel (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1917), p. 96. From the vast literature which tells the story of the Social Gospel, a penetrating and definitive study is C. H. Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940).

⁸⁸Gerald B. Smith, ed., Religious Thought in the Last Quarter Century (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927), p. 235. According to Robert T. Handy the "Creed" urged the churches to "stand for such things as equal rights and complete justice for all, for the principles of arbitration in industrial dissensions, for the abolition of child labor, for the regulation of the conditions of toil for women so that the physical and moral health of the community be safeguarded." A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 306.

⁸⁹Ibid. The American Baptist Publishing Society and the Methodist Book Concern were named as the chief publishing houses.

⁹⁰Paul A. Carter, The Decline and Revival of the Social Gospel (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1954), p. 60. Carter describes several sources of Social Gospel opposition which were "by no means Fundamentalist in temper."

⁹¹John Horsch, Modern Religious Liberalism (Scottsdale, Pa.: Fundamental Truth Depot, 1921), p. 134.

⁹²Stewart G. Cole, The History of Fundamentalism (New York: Harper and Row, 1931), p. 83.

⁹³Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, Annual Report, 1928, p. 60.

⁹⁴James W. Gray, The Coming Kingdom of God (Chicago: Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1914), p. 10.

⁹⁵Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 786.

⁹⁶W. R. Walker, "Fruit-bearing Branches," Christian Standard (May 8, 1937): 10.

⁹⁷Francis M. Arant, "P. H."--the Welshimer Story (Cincinnati: The Standard Publishing Foundation, 1958), p. 71.

⁹⁸Ibid., 74-75.

⁹⁹Ira North, "The Minister: Key Man in Church Growth," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Dallas, Texas, 7 July 1971 (manuscript).

¹⁰⁰John Allen Chalk, "God Still Cares for the Brokenhearted," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Anaheim, California, 24 July 1974 (manuscript).

¹⁰¹Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Life Together, trans. John W. Doberstein (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. 100.

¹⁰²Dallas M. Roark, Dietrich Bonhoeffer (Waco, Texas: Word Books Inc., 1972), p. 70.

¹⁰³Paul A. Carter, The Decline and Revival of the Social Gospel (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1954), p. 50.

¹⁰⁴Gerald B. Smith, Current Christian Thinking (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1928), p. 69.

¹⁰⁵Norman F. Furniss, The Fundamentalist Controversy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), pp. 72-73.

¹⁰⁶Stewart G. Cole, The History of Fundamentalism (New York: Harper and Row, 1931), p. 246.

¹⁰⁷J. Edward Hakes, ed., An Introduction to Evangelical Christian Education (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), p. 379.

¹⁰⁸James Harvey Garrison, The Reformation of the Nineteenth Century (St. Louis: Christian Publishing Company, 1901), p. 153.

¹⁰⁹Alexander Campbell, "Literacy Institutions," Millennial Harbinger (August, 1836), p. 377.

¹¹⁰As quoted in W. F. Lown, "Private Colleges in Crisis," Christian Standard (June 18, 1978), p. 9.

¹¹¹Alexander Campbell, "Bethany College," Millennial Harbinger (May 1850): 291.

¹¹²Rollo James Bennett, "History of the Founding of Educational Institutions by the Disciples of Christ in Virginia and West Virginia" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1932), p. 212.

¹¹³Churches associated with the Restoration Movement established sixteen colleges before the Civil War. From the war to 1900, higher education continued to be an urgent concern, but unfortunately many colleges died soon after their inception. In 1946, Claude Spencer, curator of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, compiled what he termed an incomplete list of "colleges, seminaries, academies and institutes" founded as privately or congregationally supported institutions. It contained 256 names! See, Winfred E. Garrison and Alfred T. DeGroot, The Disciples of Christ: A History (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1948), pp. 371-375.

¹¹⁴The Transylvania school rivaled Bethany College for honors as the oldest institution of higher education within the Restoration Movement. It had descended from Bacon College, an institution which was founded at Georgetown, Kentucky, in 1836, and which had also influenced Campbell's establishment of Bethany College. Ibid., pp. 248-253. See also, James DeForst Murch, Christians Only: A History of the Restoration Movement (Cincinnati: The Standard Publishing Co., 1962), p. 281.

¹¹⁵Editorial, "Dean Calhoun Speaks," Christian Standard (March 31, 1917), p. 9.

¹¹⁶"In Favor of the Impartial Investigation of the College of the Bible," Christian Standard (April 14, 1917), p. 10.

¹¹⁷Mark Collis, "Mark Collis Proves Courage of His Convictions," Christian Standard (June 22, 1918), p. 3. The article consisted of a statement read by Collis at the Annual Meeting of the Trustees of the College of the Bible, May 24, 1918. Its significance is enhanced by the vivid description which he portrays of the encroachment of liberalism in a conservative institution of higher education. The complete document is, therefore, included as an appendix.

¹¹⁸Mark Collis, "Mr. Collis Makes Report of His Stewardship to Brethren at Large," Christian Standard (June 22, 1918), p. 5.

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰James Deforest Murch, Christian Only: A History of the Restoration Movement (Cincinnati: The Standard Publishing Co., 1962), pp. 243-244.

¹²¹Frank H. Marshall, "The Ministry of Christian Education," Christian Standard (October 20, 1928), p. 4.

¹²²Ibid., p. 5.

¹²³Frederick D. Kershner, "The Problem of Ministerial Training," Christian Standard (June 12, 1937), p. 23.

¹²⁴Frank E. Gaebelein, "The Bible College in American Education," School and Society (May 9, 1959), p. 223.

¹²⁵Frank H. Marshall, "The Ministry of Christian Education," Christian Standard (October 29, 1928), p. 5.

¹²⁶Wayne B. Smith, "Preach the Word," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, 5 July 1977 (tape recording).

¹²⁷Paul K. McAlister, "Inspiration, Written Word and Truth," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio 6 July 1977 (manuscript).

¹²⁸Harry E. Webb, "Emphasizing the Restoration Ideal in the College and the Local Church," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, 6 July 1977 (manuscript).

¹²⁹S. A. Witmer, The Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges Looks Forward (Fort Wayne: Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges, 1960), p. 13.

¹³⁰James DeForest Murch, Christian Education and the Local Church (Cincinnati: The Standard Publishing Co., 1943), p. 75.

¹³¹Clarence H. Benson; A Popular History of Christian Education (Chicago: Moody Press, 1943), p. 199. See also: Marianna C. Brown, Sunday-School Movements in America (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1901), pp. 91-112.

¹³²C. B. Eavey, History of Christian Education (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), pp. 257-258. See also: J. M. Price, et al., A Survey of Religious Education (New York: The Ronald Press, 1940), pp. 159-160.

¹³³Alexander Campbell, "Prefatory Remarks," Christian Baptist (August 2, 1824), p. 5.

¹³⁴Alexander Campbell, "Reply to Elder A. W. Corey," Millennial Harbinger (April, 1847), pp. 200-291.

¹³⁵William C. Bower and Roy G. Ross, The Disciples and Religious Education (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1936), p. 35.

¹³⁶Canton Repository, August 16, 1957.

¹³⁷P. H. Welshimer, A Bible School Vision (Cincinnati: The Standard Publishing Co., 1909).

¹³⁸Keith P. Keeran, "A Critical Evaluation of Rhetorical Processes in the Preaching of Pearl Howard Welshimer Through an Analysis of Representative Sermons" (M.A. thesis, Abilene Christian University, 1976), pp. 57-63.

¹³⁹James DeForest Murch, Adventuring For Christ in Changing Times (Louisville, Kentucky: The Restoration Press, 1973), p. 171.

¹⁴⁰Roy C. Blackmore, "How to Reach Your Community for Christ," Christian Standard (September 15, 1956): 7.

¹⁴¹J. Quincy Biggs, "Evangelism in the Bible School," Christian Standard (October 22, 1927): 5.

¹⁴²P. H. Welshimer, "Building the Church Through the Bible School," Christian Standard (September 8, 1956): 5.

¹⁴³Arthur W. Merkle, "Conservation and Nurturing of New Christians," address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Detroit, Michigan, 10 July 1975 (manuscript).

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

¹⁴⁵Guy P. Leavitt, "Better Sunday Schools for a Better America," Christian Standard (September 1, 1956): 4.

¹⁴⁶Ibid.

¹⁴⁷Murl M. Jones, "God's Answer to Juvenile Delinquency," Christian Standard (September 15, 1956): 5.

¹⁴⁸P. H. Welshimer, "Building the Church Through the Bible School," Christian Standard (September 8, 1956): 5.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

For fifty years the North American Christian Convention has attracted able men to grapple with the questions confronting the church. This study has proposed to isolate and define the ideas and issues with which the speakers were crucially concerned. It has also sought to interpret these ideas and issues against the bolder backdrop of the historical context of which they were a part. It was in the service of historical and theological interpretation that this study of the North American Christian Convention best fulfilled itself. The following general conclusions help to establish the Convention as a significant religious assembly and forum for conservative Christian expression.

1. The addresses at the North American Christian Convention provide an informative index into the beliefs and attitudes of the religious body known as the American Restoration Movement. Since this body claims to have no creed but the Bible, is opposed to legislative assemblies, is composed of exceedingly autonomous congregations, and has made little effort to synthesize its beliefs or record its historical development, a profile of its distinguishing features is much needed. The principle ideas woven through the addresses of the Convention platform comprise an adequate expression

of the heart of this loosely organized religious movement. In this sense, the analysis of the ideas which have persisted through half a century of discussion has sought to make a substantial contribution as an essay in understanding.

2. The themes and issues of the Convention were inherently fundamentalistic in nature. It has been said that the story of Christianity can be marked by its transition from crisis to crisis. One cannot estimate the historical relevancy of the Convention platform without confronting on every hand the American phenomenon known as the fundamentalist controversy. In the first three decades of the twentieth century this was Christianity's crisis. A dearth of reliable information has been produced, however, regarding the role and development of the Restoration Movement during this momentous crisis. The presence of such a vacuum becomes even more perplexing in the light of the conservative views of this movement--views which would logically place it in the midst of such a controversy. This unusual situation can be largely explained by the shortage of educated preachers and trained leaders in the church during the second and third decades of the century. The shortage itself was a by-product of the Disciples split in 1926. As has been true with most religious schisms, the division among the Disciples saw the most progressive and educated minds lean toward the left. Hence, when the split occurred most of the intellectual leadership was siphoned off into The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The conservatives were virtually drained of an educated upper echelon. In one

generation the nature of the church's leadership changed from the hands of men like J. W. McGarvey--brilliant, Princeton trained language scholar--to the hands of men like P. H. Welshimer--though godly and able, no academic counterpart of the former. As a result, the history of the Restoration Movement prior to the early decades of the twentieth century, when the two groups were one, has been accurately chronicled. But for the history of the movement since that time, the conservatives have relied chiefly upon historians of The Christian Church who, perhaps compelled to reminisce in writing their own denomination's story, have devoted a chapter or so to those who have consistently insisted upon maintaining the original principles and plea of the Restoration Movement. The value of this study, therefore, is enhanced by the fact that the twentieth century record of what has become the largest religious group indigenous to America is hazy. An analysis of the North American Christian Convention serves to fill in the gaps and relate the Restoration Movement to the larger controversy on the American scene.

The manuscripts of the Convention platform were punctuated with assertions and positions synonymous with the leading fundamentalist utterances. The various "points" or "fundamentals" which became the creedal statement of the national reaction were almost totally endorsed by the speakers. On such questions as the inspiration of the Scriptures, the deity of Christ, the virgin birth, the doctrine of the substitutionary atonement, and the bodily resurrection and second coming of Christ the Convention speakers were as

fundamental as any American body. In addition to these cardinal doctrines they voiced thorough if indirect agreement with the fundamentalists on other crucial issues of the era. For instance, they held an identical attitude toward the theory of evolution. The speakers were also united with the fundamentalist leaders in a stance of opposition to religious modernism and the conclusions of the higher critics. To further establish the position of the Restoration Movement, it can be concluded that the Convention speakers were never critical of the fundamentalists for being overly orthodox on the crucial points of Christian doctrine. Curiously, however, several prominent fundamentalist denominations were obviously regarded by the Convention assembly as doctrinally liberal.

3. Almost paradoxically, it must be concluded that in spite of the many points which the two movements held in common, the North American Christian Convention and the Restoration Movement of which it was an expression, were never organically a part of the fundamentalist controversy. A historical analysis of the Convention addresses urges the unavoidable judgement that the churches of the Restoration Movement are an exceedingly conservative religious group whose past is apparently unrelated to an American phenomenon with which it logically should be thoroughly entangled. The principle histories of fundamentalism by Cole, Furniss, and Gasper, attempt to demonstrate close connection between the schism in the Restoration Movement and the national controversy. Ernest Sandeen, however, concluded that there was no evidence to support the theory that

Restorationists had anything in common with fundamentalism with regard to theological origins. Both, fundamentalists and Restorationists, responded vociferously to the encroachments of the evolutionary hypothesis and the higher criticism. Although they often touched and shared some basic points in common, the Restoration Movement and the Fundamentalist Movement never really merged.

4. In spite of a general doctrinal affinity between the two movements, the Restorationists, and hence the North American Christian Convention's, entry into the national controversy was further precluded by the Convention speaker's disagreement with the fundamentalist denominations at specific points of doctrine. The two tenets which most aroused Restorationists were the doctrines of predestination and premillennialism. Since most of the fundamentalist denominations were Calvinistic, the theology of the movement was essentially predestinarian. The Restoration Movement's defiance of Calvinism was manifested in the Convention addresses. The idea of the premillennial coming of Christ was also a main root of fundamentalism which alienated the Restorationists. The hand of the Church was heavily set against a pre-millennial view which held that the Church and Kingdom were identical realities.

5. While the Convention served as a stimulus to church growth in the areas of benevolence, education, and evangelism, the fifty years of pulpit addresses revealed no significant shifts in the theological posture of the Christian Churches and/or Churches of Christ. Strangely, the Convention assembly was more faithful to the

destiny of conservatism than the fundamentalist movement itself. This was partially due to the controversy over open-membership which helped to mold a sensitive system of hermeneutics. Wide-spread theological shifts in the last quarter century have removed several of fundamentalism's most influential denominations and consequently its strength is greatly diminished. Today, many of the old-line churches which once bore the brunt of the controversy have for all practical purposes forsaken allegiance to the doctrines of fundamentalism.

During the last thirty years of convulsion in which a large measure of conservatives have abandoned the fight, or at least have relaxed their defenses, the North American Christian Convention has steered a consistently conservative course. Because of the refusal to modify any cardinal doctrine of orthodoxy the autonomous churches of the Restoration Movement remain today one of the truly fundamental communions of the nation's major religious bodies. Even the modifications which Convention speakers occasionally recommended to the Church were more attributable to alterations in custom and opinion than to any significant shift in doctrine. That several hundred speakers were able to preserve for five decades a stance of virtual unanimity on major tenets of the Christian faith is somewhat irregular in view of the drastic developments in contemporary thought. The following theological ideas which several denominations once held as fundamentalists but have now essentially altered, the North American Christian Convention, never an organic part of the

fundamentalist movement, has consistently maintained: (1) The Bible as the inerrant Word of God; (2) the deity and virgin birth of Christ; (3) a literal belief in Christ's miracles; (4) the death of Jesus as the retributive price which God required by virtue of human sin; (5) the bodily resurrection of Christ; (6) the second coming of Christ to claim the faithful and sentence the unrighteous.

Finally, it should be noted that while the assembly served to solidify and reassert existing beliefs, it also, at least in the realm of Christian doctrine, served the Church as a reflection rather than a conscience. The Conventions' reverence for the Bible remained in 1977 as it was in 1927. Maintaining that tradition, the 1978 edition of the North American Christ Convention carried as its theme: "God Has Spoken."

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

"THE FOLLY OF OPEN MEMBERSHIP"

THE FOLLY OF OPEN MEMBERSHIP

By

P. H. Welshimer

Mr. Chairman and Friends: This is not a subject of my choosing. I am not at all interested in this question of open membership, but it has become the disturbing question within our own ranks. I am speaking this morning on a subject that is both unscriptural and antiscritptural, one that can not have any place whatsoever in the program of the church of Christ.

Brother Lappin has given a fine statement as to the meaning of open membership. All this argument about what it might mean is a mere smoke screen. It is the reception into churches of Christ of unimmersed persons.

I am wondering this morning what our fathers would have thought one hundred years ago had they known that a company of disciples of Christ ever would need to come together to give five minutes' attention to this subject.

One of the very things from which they pulled away has become one of the things which some of our folk are reaching forth to accept. And yet, I think the happy situation is this, while there are some who believe in or pretend to believe in the open-membership practice it has found no lodgment in the great heart of the brotherhood. Nor will it ever find such lodgment, but it is

one of those things that are insidious, and, so long as here and there one can be found who will countenance or advocate it, it is indeed expedient that voices everywhere cry out against it.

When I was a student in Hiram College, thirty-one years ago, one of our Cleveland churches was having considerable difficulty over this question. It created some excitement on Hiram hill when the word came that the Cedar Avenue Church in Cleveland (Harris R. Cooley, minister) was advocating the reception into full fellowship of unimmersed persons. Our Cleveland preachers called Professor B. S. Dean, of the college, to a meeting one Monday morning to discuss this subject. And he read an excellent paper on "Shall We Let Down the Bars?" Harris R. Cooley was the only preacher in Cleveland, and, for all that we knew, the only one in Ohio, who favored this unscriptural practice. But the times have changed. In a little less than a third of a century that question has come to be foremost in our discussions. It finds a place in the public press. It comes to the front in the classrooms of some of our colleges. It is an outstanding question on the mission field of the Orient. Here and there the pulpit brings it forth, and here it is on exhibition in a great International Convention. It has come to be about the most divisive thing in many local congregations. Preachers and other pronounced leaders in some of the churches are making gestures toward this unholy thing. It has in many instances prevented "the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace."

The few churches in our brotherhood who publicly announce the reception into fellowship of the unimmersed do us harm and give

a wrong impression to all the people living in the community, for they announce themselves as the "forward-looking brethren," who are the leaders in thought in the great Restoration movement. These few churches convey the impression that all the rest of the brotherhood is going with them. It's the case of one bullfrog in the pond that sounds like a million.

The danger of this thing lies not in the fact that a few churches have swung away from the "old paths," but the greater danger is to be found among a goodly company who at heart favor this practice and quietly talk it and argue for it, thus deceiving the very elect. I am not afraid of the fellow who meets me out on the highway and points a gun if he gives me a chance also to have a gun. But I am afraid of him who hides behind the bushes in the dark and there, unnoticed, draws his gun as I pass by. The out-and-out, in-the-open open-membership churches fly their own flag and toot their own horn. You know where to find them. But the preacher who talks it on the side, and the college professor who teaches this on the quiet, thus sowing the seed of discord, are to be feared. At an Ohio State convention, held in Canton fourteen years ago, I heard four preachers discussing this subject one night in front of the McKinley Hotel. They were preachers of good churches. Two of them were outstanding men in the Ohio brotherhood, pastors of strong churches, and one, now deceased, came from a family of preachers. They said: "The day is coming when, as a people, we will be compelled to accept the open-membership position." Two of

them said: "We believe in it now, and the only reason we do not practice it is that our churches are not ready for it, and to suggest the practice would cause discord." One of those men is present at this Convention. I said to them: "You men are contemptible cowards; you announce here your belief in a certain thing, but you are too cowardly to practice it. If the day ever comes when I believe a thing, and the religious body or the congregation with which I am identified does not believe it, I'll either teach them to believe, or I will go to a crowd that does believe it." Some folk stay because they are too cowardly to move out.

I think our brotherhood is in no immediate danger of departing from New Testament teaching on the subject of church membership. Great changes in religious thought and action are not the result of the thinking of a day. The papacy did not spring up over-night. It is a long road from the departure from the church of the New Testament until you land at the door of the papacy. That took years to develop, but it had a beginning. Go back to the beginning and compare the conditions then with those to be found when the papacy became full-orbed. If the end could have been seen from the beginning, there would have been no apostasy, and the long weary flight of evil years of departure from the truth would certainly have been avoided.

Refusal to resist the rising tide of this unholy practice puts us in a fair way to be dashed to pieces against the rock which stands yonder in the road of great success.

Open membership has to do altogether with Christian baptism. We are not believers in baptism, but we are believers in Jesus Christ, and we baptize because Christ commanded it. And if we love him, we will keep His commandments. Men are playing overtime on two strings today--love for, and loyalty to, Christ. I know of no other way to prove my loyalty to Him than by being loyal to His teaching. I may talk a great deal about my affection for, and loyalty to, Jesus Christ, and about the world how I love Him, but that avails me nothing if I turn from Him, trampling His word under my feet and flinging His authority to the winds.

I said the open-membership question brings forth again the discussion of the baptismal question. Baptism depends upon the authority of Christ and the inspiration and all-sufficiency of the Scriptures. If you remove the authority of Jesus, you destroy the meaning of baptism. If you eliminate the inspiration and all-sufficiency of the Scriptures, you take away the meaning and sacredness of baptism, and hence it would be of no importance to practice anything and call it baptism.

This is a fight for more than an ordinance. It is a fight for loyalty to Jesus Christ and for an appreciation of His authority, the inspiration of His word, and the compliance with stipulated conditions that remission of sins may be granted.

The advocates of the open-membership plan are attempting to adjust themselves to the fallacy of their religious neighbors. Others have made the mistake of teaching that sprinkling is baptism, while some argue that only immersion is New Testament baptism, but

the church has a right to change the ordinance. Then, to be broad, and to appear to be Christian, the open-membership clan recognizes the errors of others, and departs from the beaten path of the New Testament Scriptures, endorsing those errors, simply to fly the flag of unity. Because others are misled, why should we be? When the blind lead the blind all go into the ditch.

Many of our denominational friends believe that sprinkling is New Testament baptism, because they have never been taught the truth about the matter, nor have they investigated it. A dozen years ago a denominational preacher in Canton, Ohio, said to me: "The baptismal question does not disturb us Methodists. I have not preached a sermon on baptism for twenty years, and I think I never shall speak on it again. With us it is a settled question." Now, suppose you belonged to his church, and your children come to the age when they are ready for church membership. He has nothing to say on the baptismal question. It is not considered vital. And without any teaching he sprinkles babies, the young people and the adults, and calls it baptism. The preacher, being a proclaimer of the will of God, and using as his text-book the New Testament Scriptures, naturally leads the people to believe that what he has just practiced is in accordance with the New Testament teaching. Whoever heard a Methodist preacher announce to his audience, when ready to practice affusion, something like this: "This which I am about to do finds no sanction in the Scriptures; it was not authorized by Christ, nor practiced by His apostles. But this

church has a right to set aside the Scriptures and to change the ordinance, hence this substitution, a sprinkling of water upon the individual, is quite as effective as the burial of the individual in water, which comports with New Testament teaching." And yet that is what every affusionist preacher ought to say. Those who claim to possess any scholarship argue no longer that sprinkling is the New Testament action. The scholarship of the world knows better.

When I was a boy the church of Christ in my home village was led in a very successful evangelistic meeting when the preaching was done by W. J. Lhamon. Many came in from the denominations and were Scripturally baptized. The Methodist church in the village brought Professor Williams, of Delaware College, a teacher of Greek, to discuss the baptismal question one Sunday evening. He was honest in his statements and scholarly in his presentation of facts. He said: "I have come tonight, not to try to prove that sprinkling is the baptism authorized in the New Testament. I am a teacher of Greek, and know the language. Baptizo in the Greek, the word from which we get our word 'baptize,' carries with it the thought of a burial, an immersion in water, and not a sprinkling. When Christ gave the great commission, He authorized His disciples to immerse the believers in water. The apostles so understood Him, and practiced only immersion. This is the only baptism recognized in the New Testament Scriptures. We Methodists, and many other religious bodies, practice sprinkling, not because it is in accordance with New Testament teaching, but because we believe the church has a right to change the ordinance." There you have it in a

nutshell. I admire the man who stands out in the open and takes an honest and honorable position. What Professor Williams meant was this: That in matters of religion the authority is vested in the church, and not in the Christ. But pray, when did Christ delegate His authority to any beyond that apostolic group? Here, again, we find denominationalism is aping Romanism, so here are two roads on which men may travel. He is wise who takes the road on which Christ stands at its head. Christ said: "All authority hath been given unto me; go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world." The New Testament Scriptures show us how they understood that commission. These Scriptures contain the record of their teaching, and record the results of that teaching. What the apostles taught is as binding on us today as are the words that fell from the lips of the Son of God Himself, for they were Spirit-filled men, who, through inspiration, made known to men His will.

One argues that the baptismal question is one of small importance. That is to state that Jesus Christ authorized unnecessary things. He never set forth an ordinance, enacted a law or made a command just for the fun of doing it. With Him everything was to a purpose. He made no experiments, and He made no mistakes. The great commission contains the marching orders to the church. The men who had received their training in His school, and who were

endued with power from on high, left baptism exactly where the great Teacher put it. With them it had some importance. It is associated with the most important things of life. Note a few of them: The preaching of the Word, belief, repentance, remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit, the new birth, the putting on of Christ, the getting into Christ, entrance into the body of Christ--the church. These are all important, and with them baptism finds a place.

On the day the church was instituted, Peter, guided by the Holy Spirit, and ever mindful of the conditions previously announced when he received his commission, said to the believers who inquired the way: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Here was the man to whom the keys of the kingdom had been given, proclaiming the way to life. Can any one say that baptism is unimportant?

Out from Jerusalem went the disciples, everywhere preaching the Word, and to all who confessed their faith in Christ was the command given to be baptized. In the eighth chapter of the Acts, Philip baptized the Samaritans, and later, on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza, he baptized the Ethiopian. In the ninth chapter of the Act, and again in the twenty-second chapter, is the narrative of the believing, penitent Saul of Tarsus being baptized. In Acts, tenth chapter, Peter baptized Cornelius and his household. In the sixteenth chapter, Paul baptized the households of Lydia and the

jailer. In the eighteenth chapter is another household baptism. In writing of the church at Rome, Paul said: "We were buried with Christ by baptism into death."

What mean all these baptismal occasions if baptism has no meaning, and finds no place in the divine economy? And how do you account for the fact that all the preachers--Peter, Paul, Ananias and Philip--saw fit to stress this ordinance? There can be but one answer: They were guided by the Holy Spirit, they recognized Christ's authority, they were loyal to His word. They were not doctors of divinity--they doctored nothing, but delivered His word and made known His will to men. They were the messenger boys who left the Western Union station, delivering the message unopened, unchanged. That's the task of every preacher and teacher today.

Faith doesn't put you into Christ; it leads up to Him. Repentance doesn't put you into Christ; it brings you to Him. Confession doesn't put you into Christ, for "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." But "as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." I put on my coat this morning by getting into my coat, and Paul says we put on Christ by getting into Christ. And we get into Him through Baptism.

"Well," somebody says, "what has this to do with open membership?" Just this: Open membership changes the ordinance of Jesus Christ, it ignores His authority and gives promise of a conditional blessing, while at the same time it ignores the conditions. From

the above it can clearly be seen that the New Testament Scriptures teach that baptism is one of the steps by which sins are to be forgiven, blotted out, remembered no more against one forever. An institution that promises all this is too sacred to be tampered with or changed. The consequences are too great. I have no right to say unto a man, "Your sins are forgiven because you have followed the teaching which you think to be right," when, in the light of New Testament Scripture, I know it is not right. It is not our business to pacify, but to teach. And when we do what Jesus commanded us to do, we know He will do what He has promised to do.

One says: "What's the difference, anyway? Baptism is only a form, so why be concerned about the action?" For the sake of argument, let us admit that it is only a form. Then, a form of what? In Romans, sixth chapter, Paul teaches that baptism--immersion --is a form of death, burial and resurrection. Now changed from an immersion to sprinkling, and you have not even a form left. It is like a cipher with the rim knocked off. If it were only a form, it behooves one to practice immersion to retain that form.

To practice open membership and thus recognize one's sprinkling to be baptism is to walk again under the torch-light of Rome and to carry with you some of Rome's excess baggage. This action of sprinkling, instead of immersion, has come full-orbed from the throne of the hierarchy. It was first heard of in the third century, when Novatian, a Roman presbyter, was too ill to be immersed, and they poured water around him in the bed. Again, in the

eighth century, Pope Stephen sanctioned sprinkling as a substitute for immersion in cases of sickness only, and it was called clinic (or sickly) baptism. Then in 1311 the Council at Ravenna made sprinkling equal with immersion, and permitted the candidate to exercise the power of choice. Protestantism, in practicing sprinkling today, or in giving recognition to it, simply accepts that which roots itself in the teaching of the apostate church.

One can have but little sympathy for him today who puts on a sheet, and, in the busy marts of trade or from the pulpit, denounces the Roman hierarchy, and then humbly stoops to practice an ordinance which that hierarchy has imposed upon man.

Open membership destroys the possible ground for unity, for there can be no unity except it be on the basis laid down in the New Testament. We shall never stand together if we attempt to stand on opinions or on a platform about which there is controversy. Our opinions must never become tests of fellowship. When Christ speaks, all should listen. "Thus saith the Lord" takes precedence over all opinions. The fact that a group of folk come together, sit in the same pews, sing the same songs, listen to the same preacher, and put their money in the same collection basket, doesn't make unity any more than a group of five men and five women riding on a street-car makes marriage. Christian unity will come when we are agreed upon the essentials, and not until then. Upon this matter of open membership there is disagreement because it is unscriptural. I can have my arms and my limbs amputated and still

live. The surgeon may remove my eyes and stop my ears, pluck out my hair, and I will still live. But when he touches my heart, lungs, or removes my stomach, or kidneys, or liver, I die. These are vital, they are essential to life. So, likewise, some things are essential to the church. Men may be in disagreement concerning the style of architecture, the music and a hundred other things that are mere expediences, but you remove the deity of our Lord, His authority, the inspiration and all-sufficiency of the Scriptures, change the Christ-given plan of salvation, change the ordinance, and you have struck at the vitals of the body of Christ--the church. Open membership does this very thing with respect to forgiveness of sins, and the condition of one's being added to the church.

The strange thing about open membership is this: Our brethren who practice it desire to be broad, to exercise Christian charity, and to recognize the character of others who have been wrongly taught and are misled. I fully recognize the Christian character of the unimmersed, penitent believer, I can fellowship with him clear down the road, so far as we have gone together. Then it becomes my duty to point out his mistakes and "show him the way of the Lord more perfectly." At Ephesus, when Paul learned that twelve men who had been immersed had in the act followed only John's baptism, he said, "have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?" They answered, "We have not so much as heard that there be any Holy Spirit." Paul reimmersed them, giving them Christian baptism. This was better than converging up their mistake and permitting error to pass as a substitute for truth.

When Aquila and Priscilla heard the eloquent Apollos, and knew that he was in error, although conscientious, having a zeal which was not according to knowledge, they sat up with him and "taught him the way of the Lord more perfectly." That's the only way out. It's better than compromise.

Those who practice open membership today are inconsistent, for they accept a deed performed by another which they themselves refuse to perform. These preachers will not sprinkle, but they will accept the sprinkling done at the hands of another preacher. They will not sprinkle a baby, but they will receive a man into full membership who was sprinkled when he was a baby. And if that man so received brings his baby to an open-membership preacher and requests that he sprinkle the baby, he is compelled to say: "No, I don't believe in it, hence I will not do it, but you go across the road and let the Presbyterian preacher sprinkle the baby, and, when he is old enough to confess his faith in Christ, I will endorse this Presbyterian preacher's action." What's the difference whether the open-membership preacher does the thing himself or employs another man to do it? Is he not equally responsible?

In Canton at the present time three men are incarcerated, each charged with having pulled the trigger of the gun that took the life of Don Mellett, editor of the Canton Daily News. If proven guilty of the deed, these men will pay the penalty in the electric chair. But the prosecutor believes there are others who inspired the plot and hired at least one of these men to do the shooting.

The authorities are just as desirous of ascertaining the names of the men who were back of this murder as they are in apprehending the man who fired the gun, for they who sanctioned and planned the murder are as guilty in the eyes of the law as he who sent the bullet into Don Mellet's heart. So, he who sanctions a departure from the Scripture and pronounces it satisfactory unto the Lord is as guilty of trespassing on forbidden ground as he who walks across.

Open membership, in conclusion, rejects the authority of Jesus Christ, proclaims disloyalty to His word, has no Scriptural precedence for its practice, leads not to unity, but marks division. It promises something nowhere promised in the Scriptures, it is both unscriptural and antiscritptural, and wears upon its face the mask of inconsistency. One who would practice this unscriptural thing should do the whole thing right, put in a sprinkling fountain, sprinkle the babies and the adults, and thus proclaim with a loud voice his departure from the "old paths," and manifest a deaf ear to the voice of the Book. But if one would be true to the great commission, "defend the faith once for all delivered unto the saints," and "preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace," let him speak only where the Book speaks, and stand with certainty where the apostles stood, then he will have no apologies to offer, no forgiveness to ask, but he will be loyal to Jesus Christ, and faithful to His word. May God help us always to be faithful.

APPENDIX B

STATEMENT READ BY CHAIRMAN COLLIS AT ANNUAL MEETING
OF TRUSTEES OF COLLEGE OF THE BIBLE, MAY 24, 1918

STATEMENT READ BY CHAIRMAN COLLIS AT ANNUAL MEETING
OF TRUSTEES OF COLLEGE OF THE BIBLE, MAY 24, 1918

As your chairman, I deem it my duty to make certain statements and recommendations to you as trustees of the College of the Bible.

First, I ask you to consider the trust committed to this Board. The Bible College of Kentucky University was founded in 1865 by Robert Milligan and John W. McGarvey. Its object was to prepare young men for the ministry of the Christian Church by thorough instruction in the Bible. After a few years that college, on account, as alleged, of insufficient funds, was discontinued, and the present College of the Bible, whose safe-keeping is committed to our care, was organized. There can be no doubt that the purpose of its founders was to exalt the word of God and to send out preachers mighty in the Scriptures to convert sinners and to build up our churches. The work of Robert Graham, J. W. McGarvey and I. B. Grubbs in teaching and training men for the ministry, has never been excelled in our brotherhood. These men were scholars, free from narrowness and abreast of the times; they revered the Scriptures and were true to the purposes of our great cause. They recognized the right of private judgment; in among themselves, but in their faith and loyalty to the word of God they were one. They

believed the Bible to be inspired in such a way as to protect it from mistakes and contradictions; they accepted what it said about the miracles of the Old Testament and the New. They believed in the deity of Christ and in his virgin birth. No one ever said that he doubted the Scriptures or the efficacy of prayer, or that he had lost his desire to preach because of the teaching and the influence of these men. In their days every one knew what the College of the Bible stood for.

The people who gave the money for our endowment did it with the expectation that the purposes of the founders of this college should be continued. Without that expectation the money that now supports the College of the Bible could never have been obtained.

As an auxiliary to our work we have had the Christian Education Society's fund, which was raised chiefly by John T. Johnson, to aid young men preparing for the ministry. Not a penny of that fund was given to teach anything but what was assuredly believed among us. A short time before President McGarney's death he secured a donation from Bro. Claud Garth, which amounted to about ninety thousand dollars (\$90,000.000), the income of which Bro. Garth directed should be used in assisting young men studying for the ministry. Bro. Garth was a man that revered the Bible. He said he wanted his money to be used in preparing men to preach the gospel as it was preached by J. W. McGarvey and Moses E. Lard. The income from these two funds, which amount to about one hundred and twenty thousand dollars (120,000.00), is helping to keep a majority of our

students in the college. It is a part of our trust to see that the instruction given the beneficiaries of this money is of such a character as to strengthen them in the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

We have never made any official statement that the purposes of this college are changed. On the other hand, in the selection of teachers, we have always seemed to go on the presumption that we were adhering to the principles for which the college was founded and fidelity to which had made it such a power in our brotherhood.

It has been affirmed, however, that there have been most serious departures from the teaching and the principles to which I have referred. Specific charges were made early in 1917. A meeting of this body was called to investigate these accusations. Unfortunately, that meeting, as far as its making a complete investigation was concerned, was a failure. After that, in the columns of one of our religious journals, certain of our professors were explicitly charged with teaching what discredited the word of God and destroyed the faith of their students. A policy of silence on the part of the accused was at first pursued, but finally a meeting of the trustees of the college and the curators of Transylvania University was called, at which the administration and the criticized professors were endorsed. This endorsement was given without any investigation. Such an endorsement, in the estimation of many of our brethren, is absolutely worthless and is regarded as worse than no endorsement at all.

On the same day we, the trustees of the College of the Bible, met in a separate session to receive a committee who asked that we appoint a time and place to receive another committee authorized to present a request from certain donors. A majority of the Board refused to make such an appointment, and so denied brethren and sisters who gave their money to endow this college the privilege of making a respectful request of those who are managing the funds that they put into our hands.

Since these meetings statements have been made by the president and the accused professors. These statements have not relieved the situation. In fact some think the statements confirm many of the most serious charges.

It is still claimed--

That the views held on the inspiration of the writers of the Bible are exceedingly loose;

That instead of apparent discrepancies in the sacred Word being reconciled, as in most cases they easily can be, they are treated in such a way as to discredit the narrative;

That certain miracles of the Old Testament and of the New are denied;

That the Bible account of the creation and the fall is rejected and men are said to "all up;"

That the term "deity," in speaking of Christ, is avoided and the term "divinity," as it can be used by Unitarians, is used;

That the virgin birth, without the intervention of a human father, and the bodily resurrection of Jesus, are not affirmed.

These are but a few of the charges that, it is said, have not been satisfactorily met. How easy it would have been to meet them and to have put our brethren at rest, if the professors' views on these questions are in harmony with what our college has stood for from the beginning of its history!

In addition to the foregoing, there is much that has come to us in the form of letters that has never been made public, and, I think, has never received proper consideration. W. K. Azbill, writing under date of March 31, 1917, says:

Dear Bro. Collis:--Having just received the Christian Standard of this date, and read the matter of the College of the Bible, I am moved to write to you. It is not that I would hastily rush into the unfortunate controversy, but as one of the alumni and a friend of the college, I would be faithful to it.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Prof. E. E. Snoddy, and personally I regard him very highly. Having heard him preach at the Euclid Avenue Church of this city, and being greatly pleased by his sermons, just when "Science and Faith" was in manuscript, and I was about to submit it to the publishers, I sought his assistance by requesting him to read the manuscript; and he kindly did this, and sent me a letter which was very helpful. My relations with him are, and always have been, fraternal. In what I shall tell you, I will be most careful not to do him an injustice.

Subsequent to the things above mentioned, Bro. Snoddy read a paper before our preachers' meeting here on "The Philosophy of Henri Bergson," in which paper he intimated his agreement with that author's views. In remarks on the paper I criticized the work, "Creative Evolution," and Bro. Snoddy asked for time, at some future date, that he might set forth his own views, with the aim of being perfectly understood. The request was granted, and I asked for time in which to review his explanation. In a friendly way, he suggested that controversy between us be avoided, and consent was given for me to present a short paper on "Bergsonism," to be given after his address.

In his addresses, Bro. Snoddy's mental attitude was that of approval of Bergson's views, and he distinctly said he found more satisfaction in them than that life is motion, and that "if God should cease to act, he would cease to be."

I hand you herewith the paper I read following his, in which you will find quotations from Bergson showing what are his ideas of life, spirit, and God.

If the trustees of the College of the Bible desire to have these conceptions imparted to the student body with the approval of a very winsome personality, by a man of high moral intentions, a man of recognized learning and reputation, Dr. Snoddy is the right man in the right place. You may show this to Bro. Snoddy, and you may read it to the Board of Trustees, if you see fit.

It seems to me strange that men who hold such views do not see the wrong they are doing to those who founded and to those who are supporting our Bible schools. I am sure that Professor Snoddy would not intentionally do great wrong. But Christ himself testified that even those who kill his followers may think they are doing God's service.

Let us hope that this unhappy matter may be so wisely managed as to do the least possible harm, and result in some good. There is no doubt but that the nerve of religious interest is being deadened by unbelief in the college. Fraternally yours, W. K. AZBILL

A brother prominent in our ministry writes:

One evening I was sitting at supper by a brother pastor, a minister of the Baptist Church, when he asked me about one of the accused professors, this occurring about three years ago, and remarked that he was very "liberal." I asked, "How liberal?" and he replied, "He is as liberal as Willett, or more so." I asked him how he knew, and he said they roomed together when both were taking postgraduate work in one of the great universities.

I am not writing this for publicity, but I am debating in my own mind whether under such conditions common sense would justify our having colleges. What is the use? Why should the brotherhood spend money in that direction?

This brother afterwards, in an interview, reiterated what he wrote and stated that the one mentioned by the Baptist preacher was Professor Fortune.

One of our California preachers, a man of sterling integrity, wrote Sept. 22, 1917, expressing his surprise at the appointment of Professor Bower to a position on our college Faculty.

I regarded the brother's statement as somewhat vague and wrote asking him for something more specific. This is his answer:

Dear Bro. Collis:--I have delayed writing you for this long time in order to have something definite to give you. I wanted to see some of the brethren at Wilshire Church in Los Angeles, and learn from them about some propositions made to that church by Professor Bower when he was their minister. I succeeded in doing this last week. I put the question direct to one of the leading brethren of the Wilshire Christian Church in this way: "I want to ask you a question; you can answer it or not, just as you please. The question is this: Is it true that Professor Bower, while minister at the Wilshire Church, made overtures and suggestions that the church receive this unimmersed into its fellowship?" His answer was this: "It is true. He came to me as an elder of the church, in the presence of another prominent member of the church, with these plans, and proposed that they be adopted by the church and made a part of its policy and program. That it was the only way to succeed, and that it was the proper thing to do, and vital to the cause and success of the kingdom. It was Bower's proposition to receive the unimmersed into the fellowship of the church without immersion."

At about the same time he publicly defended this practice before the Ministers' Union of Los Angeles. He excused himself when his position was attacked, saying that he was only taking that position for the sake of argument, because he had been asked to speak on that phase of Christian baptism. His address on that occasion held forth the teaching that the unimmersed were Christians, and they had the fruits of the Spirit, and that we so recognized them; and that sooner or later we, as a people, would have to come to this position and fellowship with them in our churches, and that their baptism was valid, because they were conscientious in the matter, and had done it in obedience to the command of our Lord. Not that these are his exact words, but this is the substance of what he said. This, together with what he proposed to the brethren at Wilshire Church, shows clearly his state of mind upon the question of the unimmersed, and that we should receive them into the fellowship of the church.

A physician in Missouri wrote me, June 16, 1917, stating that about two years before that he had written to Professor Fortune, enclosing a stamp, asking him for the name of a Senior who would

likely give his complete induction of the Scripture teaching on two subjects, "The Holy Spirit" and "Satan." The brother said he felt the need of this help, especially in the prayer-meeting. He offered to pay for this service. But the service was never rendered.

Subsequently this Missouri brother wrote to President Crossfield, putting a series of questions to him. These questions related to the Books of Genesis, Isaiah, and Daniel. Then he put the following questions:

Do you believe, or have you ever said, that the Christian Church would have to give up some things it has always contended for before Christian union comes about?

Do you believe, or have you ever said, that we would have to abandon exclusive immersion for baptism before there can be Christian union? Do the professors in the College of the Bible believe Paul's statement that "Adam was first formed, then Eve?" If so, how do they reconcile that with the doctrine of evolution?

Then he concluded his letter with these words:

These questions, I think, cover the ground. Now, if Bro. Crossfield will be kind enough to let me hear from the chair once occupied by the beloved and sainted Milligan, I shall be very grateful to him. I enclose two stamps.

Here is President Crossfield's reply:

It would require a volume to answer your questions. The question for us is not, "What did Mr. Campbell contend for?" or "What did Milligan insist on?" or "What did Braham labor for?" or "What did McGarvey stand for?" but, "What think ye of Christ?" Oh, no, we have not departed from the ancient faith.

The brother, commenting on our president's letter, says:

I was never more disappointed in an inquiry in my life. Not a question answered. And so easily could they have been answered.

In addition to this I felt that I should not withhold from you the fact that a brother who was in a position to testify stated to me that he knew that in a class of twelve advanced students a majority of them did not believe in the divinity of Christ.

Through the influences of this hurtful teaching many young preachers who are serving our churches are propagating these false views.

A brother writes:

I have in mind two, both graduates, who openly talk and teach that they do not believe it is necessary for a person to be baptized, and are willing that the unbaptized be received into the church; and they say that they got it from one of the men now under accusation at Lexington. They do not believe the miracles of the Bible, etc., etc.

It has been reported to me that one of our students, one who seems to have more influence in the college than any other, upon three different occasions made light of the ordinance of baptism and the preaching of what has been known among us as "First Principles." Another is said to have held up his Bible and remarked, "You may believe all that is in this book, but I do not."

I have written much, much more than I intended, but still more might have been written. I hope that I have presented sufficient to make us realize the seriousness of the conditions that confront us as trustees of the College of the Bible.

I ask you now to consider some of the results of this deplorable situation:

1. The brotherhood is greatly disturbed over our college, the name of which at one time was regarded as a synonym for sound Bible teaching.

2. Our churches are troubled, and that harmony which existed at one time in Kentucky is destroyed. A few years ago the fellowship of our brotherhood in this State was complete and beautiful. These college conditions have greatly marred that fellowship.

3. There is great danger that our missionary enterprises will suffer because of these unhappy conditions.

4. By the liberal use of scholarships, and of the Garth and Education Funds, and by persistent advertising and soliciting for students, we may be able to keep up a fair enrollment, but as the time passes and the clouds of doubt and suspicion continue to gather over our institution, the securing of students will become more and more difficult.

5. The usefulness of the college depends upon a generous endowment. This endowment was well started through the influence of the names of Graham, McGarvey and Grubbs. In about a year before the death of President McGarvey, considerably more than one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) was secured by our financial secretary, W. T. Donaldson. The money given was donated by men and women who expected the Bible to be taught in the college as it had been from its beginning. Since the death of President McGarvey we have scarcely added five thousand dollars (\$5,000) to our endowment, except what has been collected from subscriptions made before Bro. McGarvey's death and from the Men and Millions Movement. Money in considerable sums intended for our college has been diverted to other channels because of this dangerous teaching. Wills, it is

said, have been changed by which we shall lose bequests intended for us. A brother who gave five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for the Grubbs Chair of Exegesis is demanding that his money be turned over to another institution, because we have not complied with the condition made in accepting the gift that the teaching in that chair should not depart from that of the revered and scholarly Grubbs. Others feel as this brother does.

6. Worst of all, if what is alleged be true, we are teaching that which will eventually undermine the faith of the people by placing in our pulpits men without firm convictions with regard to divine truth; and this wonderful movement for which Kentucky has stood unshaken is doomed. Do we want to write "Ichabod" over the cause for which our fathers suffered and sacrificed so much? God forbid.

A determined and persistent effort has been made to cloud the issue by circulating reports that these charges have been made on account of jealousy, and on account of certain strained relations between brethren involved in the controversy. This effort is most unworthy. Who can read another man's heart and know what his motives are? I think it can be conclusively shown that there is absolutely no ground for attributing such unworthy motives to those who oppose the administration. As for the strained relations, they are unquestionably the result of this controversy and not its cause.

But whatever may be the motives prompting those who bring the charges, these are the facts: Definite statements have been made

of erroneous teaching on the part of our professors; the great majority of those claiming to have the knowledge of these things have never appeared before a competent and impartial tribunal; the law of our Saviour--"by the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established"--has never been applied.

The charges can not be met by impeaching the motives of those who bring the charges.

Brethren, a great responsibility rests upon us. This is not our institution. It belongs to our brotherhood. It was established for a well-known purpose. It is our duty to see that that purpose is carried out.

If, however, the trustees have decided to depart from that purpose, we should frankly state our policy and give our reasons for that departure. If we are not committed to a changed policy, let us take some steps to put ourselves and the college right in the estimation of our people.

The passing of resolutions by us and the issuing of bulletins cannot restore confidence. Let us look honestly at conditions as they are. It seems to me that the best remedy for all concerned is to wipe our slate clean. I would suggest that we suspend for a year, and that this time be taken for a thorough reorganization of our teaching force and for the purpose of getting our finances into better shape. I would further suggest that the plans and purposes of the college be kept during this year before our brethren, that they may understand that we propose to have such teaching done

in this historic institution as its sainted founders would approve if they were to come back to us.

Some of you might go further than that, and suggest that we all resign and a new Board of Trustees be elected by the donors, the real owners of the college. To this I would give my approval, if it can be done legally.

If you are disinclined to this thorough work of reorganization, I would recommend that a committee of brethren be chosen, men of unquestioned integrity, men in whom our people everywhere have confidence, to make complete investigations of conditions and to recommend a course of action for us.

I would suggest that this committee be composed of the members of our State Missionary Board who have no official connection with the college and an equal number of brethren chosen by the donors who have asked for an investigation. I would further suggest that these brethren select some other brother, preferably a lawyer in good standing, to assist them in the investigation.

I recommend that this committee have full power to conduct the enquiry according to rules adopted by themselves and that they shall decide whether a stenographer be employed and the proceedings be published for the information of our brethren.

All the expenses of this investigation should be paid by the college.

If this investigation should prove that the charges against our professors are false, it will be a glorious day for our college.

If, on the other hand, they should bring to light conditions that need to be changed, these changes should at once be made and the good name of the College of the Bible be restored. Truth need never fear the light. "He that doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be manifest that they are wrought in God."

You will notice, brethren, that I make two alternate suggestions:

1. That we take a year to reorganize the college;
2. That a thorough and impartial investigation be made.

If these recommendations do not meet with your approval, and a wise plan suggests itself to you, a plan that will put our beloved college in a position to carry on the glorious work for which it was established, and will restore peace and good will to a brotherhood that is now so sadly disturbed over these heart-breaking conditions, let that plan be adopted.

This statement is submitted to you with the hope that you may give these matters your serious consideration and that in so doing you may be guided by that wisdom which comes down from above, so that on the last day, you and I, as trustees of the College of the Bible, may not be ashamed of the way in which we have met the responsibilities of this critical time.

MARK COLLIS

Chairman Board of Trustees of the College of the Bible, Lexington, Ky.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Journals

- Adler, George. "The Miracles of Christ." Christian Standard (September 3, 1960).
- Apple, L. H. "Preaching the Word of God." Christian Standard (September 5, 1964).
- Ashworth, Robert A. "Modernism and Christian Assurance." Christian Work (March 1, 1924).
- Biggs, J. Quincy. "Evangelism in the Bible School." Christian Standard (October 22, 1927).
- Blackmore, Roy C. "How to Reach Your Community for Christ." Christian Standard (September 15, 1956).
- Boatman, Russell E. "What the Prophets Taught About Christ." Christian Standard (May 25, 1946).
- Bolten, John, R. "The Bible is the Word of God--Let's Teach It and Live It." Christian Standard (May 19, 1956).
- _____. "The Ecclesia of God." Christian Standard (May 19, 1956).
- Book, Morris Butler. "Exalting the Name of Christ." Christian Standard (August 19, 1963).
- Butler, Burris. "The Church Speaks of the God of Space." Christian Standard (August 10, 1963).
- _____. "What is the Gospel?" Christian Standard (October 26, 1940).
- Campbell, Alexander. "Prefatory Remarks." Christian Baptist (August 2, 1824).
- _____. "Bethany College." Millennial Harbinger (May, 1850).
- _____. "Literary Institutions." Millennial Harbinger (August, 1836).

- Campbell, Alexander. "Reply to Elder A. W. Corey." Millennial Harbinger (April, 1947).
- Campbell, Thomas. "Declaration and Address" (Pittsburg: Centennial Edition, 1909).
- Canton Repository, August 16, 1957.
- Collis, Mark. "The Brethren Review the Convention." Christian Standard (October 29, 1927).
- _____. "The Convention Proposed for this Fall." Christian Standard (March 19, 1927).
- _____. "God." Christian Standard (December 8, 1928).
- _____. "Mark Collis Proves Courage of His Convictions." Christian Standard (June 22, 1918).
- _____. "Mr. Collis Makes Report of His Stewardship to Brethren at Large." Christian Standard (June 22, 1918).
- _____. "The Person of Jesus, the Christ." Christian Standard (January 12, 1929).
- Crabtree, E. Richard. "Incentives to Belief." Christian Standard (August 28, 1965).
- Crawford, C. C. "The Church and Missions." Christian Standard (November 17, 1928).
- Christian Century (March 20, 1924).
- Christian Century (April 3, 1924).
- Christian Work (May 31, 1924).
- Crouch, Edwin G. "Jesus Christ is Lord of All." Christian Standard (August 27, 1960).
- Crouch, Owen L. "The Constraining Power of the Love of Christ." Christian Standard (July 14, 1951).
- Crowder, Orvel C. "Christ, Our Living Priest." Christian Standard (August 7, 1954).
- "Dean Calhoun Speaks." Christian Standard (March 31, 1917).
- Elmore, Robert E. "The Rise and Decline of the Church." Christian Standard (July 4, 1931).

Fife, Robert O. "The Church Speaks from God's Revelation." Christian Standard (August 17, 1963).

Fitch, Alger. "The Word of God for Man's Deliverance." Christian Standard (August 29, 1964).

Fite, W. A. "The Victory of the Resurrection." Christian Standard (February 6, 1943).

"The Fundamentals." Forum (July. 1923).

Gaebelein, Frank E. "The Bible College in American Education." School and Society (May 9, 1959).

Greenlee, John E. "The Lordship of Jesus." Christian Standard (September 26, 1959).

Hagger, Thomas. "The Book We Should Read." Christian Standard (November 19, 1927).

Hayden, Edwin V. "Good Listening Enhanced Good Preaching." Christian Standard (September 19, 1978).

_____. "Restoring the New Testament Church." Christian Standard (June 15, 1946).

_____. "Still My Convention." Christian Standard (August 6, 1978).

Heron, Henrietta. "Pentecost Preparation Power." Christian Standard (November 23, 1929).

Hill, Henry E. "The Glory of Redemption." Christian Standard (August 25, 1962).

Holmes, Arthur. "Passion and Precision in Preaching Christ." Christian Standard (November 10, 1928).

Holt, Basil. "Efforts to Restore the Primitive Church." Christian Standard (August 15, 1931).

"In Favor of the Impartial Investigation of the College of the Bible." Christian Standard (April 14, 1917).

Indianapolis Star, October 12, 1927.

Indianapolis Star, October 16, 1927.

Johnson, George. The Princeton Theological Review, article, 1914.

Johnson, T. H. "The Office of the Holy Spirit." Christian Standard (December 3, 1927).

Jones, E. Ray. "Components of Faith." Christian Standard (July 24, 1965).

_____. "Of Preachers and Sermons." Christian Standard (March 5, 1972).

Jones, Murl M. "God's Answer to Juvenile Delinquency." Christian Standard (September 15, 1956).

Kellems, Jesse R. "Growth of the Restoration Movement." Christian Standard (October 29, 1927).

Kershner, Bruce L. "Reformation Movements." Christian Standard (August 1, 1931).

_____. "Reformation Movements." Christian Standard (August 8, 1931).

Kershner, Frederick D. "The Problem of Ministerial Training." Christian Standard (June 12, 1937).

_____. "The Message of Thomas Campbell." Christian Standard (March 16, 1940).

Ketcherside, W. Carl. "The Church Speaks of Discovering and Unleashing Hidden Powers." Christian Standard (August 3, 1963).

Lappin, S. S. "A Turn in the Road." Christian Standard (October 22, 1927).

Laughlin, Ernest E. "What Christ Taught About Himself." Christian Standard (June 1, 1946).

Leavitt, Guy P. "Better Sunday Schools for a Better America." Christian Standard (September 1, 1956).

Ledbetter, Carl S. "Open-Membership." Christian Standard (August 31, 1940).

_____. "Open-Membership." Christian Standard (September 21, 1940).

Leggett, Marshall J. "True Love is of God." Christian Standard (September 19, 1964).

Lown, W. F. "Our Oneness in Worship and Hope in the Lord." Christian Standard (April 30, 1966).

- Lown, W. F. "Private Colleges in Crisis." Christian Standard (June 18, 1978).
- Machen, J. Gresham. "The Battle Within the Churches." Homiletic Review (September, 1923).
- Marshall, Frank H. "The Ministry of Christian Education." Christian Standard (October 20, 1928).
- McKowen, James S. "How to Kill a Giant." Christian Standard (September 11, 1965).
- McLean, Donald. "Indoctrination--the Why and the How." Christian Standard (December 29, 1928).
- Miller, Claude J. "The Problem of Sin and Its Solution." Christian Standard (December 1, 1928).
- Miller, Raphael H. "The Faith that Overcomes the World." Christian Standard (June 12, 1937).
- Morgan, Orval M. "The Victorious Faith." Christian Standard (July 31, 1965).
- Nations, Gilbert O. "The Church of the Dark Ages." Christian Standard (November 26, 1927).
- New York Times, February 26, 1922.
- New York Times, March 5, 1922.
- New York Times, March 12, 1922.
- Nichols, James T. "With One Accord in One Place." Christian Standard (November 5, 1927).
- Price, Sam W. "The Challenge of the Restoration Movement." Christian Standard (May 1, 1948).
- Ralls, John. "Creation Versus Evolution." Christian Standard (January 16, 1965).
- _____. "Creation Versus Evolution." Christian Standard (January 23, 1965).
- "A Resolution Adopted at Indianapolis." Christian Standard (October 22, 1927).
- Rutherford, J. K. "If Christ Had His Way in Our Patriotism." Christian Standard (July 1, 1961).

- Scott, Harold. "Christ the Power for the Present Hour." Christian Standard (June 2, 1956).
- Shannon, Robert C. "A Plea for Bible Preaching." Christian Standard (December 14, 1963).
- Small, James. "The Authority of Jesus." Christian Standard (December 24, 1927).
- Smith, A. G. "The Lord's Ordinances." Christian Standard (December 15, 1928).
- Smith, Gerald B. Journal of Religion (May, 1922).
- Smith, T. K. "The Glorious Church." Christian Standard (September 12, 1959).
- Snodgrass, R. C. "New Testament Repentance and Its Modern Application." Christian Standard (September 4, 1937).
- Stambaugh, J. H. "Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem." Christian Standard (November 12, 1927).
- Stone, Sam. "A Greater Preaching Convention." Christian Standard (August 28, 1977).
- _____. "Reluctant to Change." Christian Standard (August 28, 1977).
- Sweeney, Edwin S. "Atonomy of the Local Church." Christian Standard (November 5, 1927).
- Sweeney, William E. "The Challenge of Pentecost." Christian Standard (October 19, 1929).
- _____. "Our Position is a Plea." Christian Standard (July 16, 1927).
- Taylor, Claude C. "The Menace of Modernism." Christian Standard (November 19, 1927).
- VanBuren, James G. "God's Word Lives." Christian Standard (August 2, 1958).
- Walker, Dean E. "Scriptural Conversion." Christian Standard (November 2, 1940).
- Walker, W. R. "Fruit-bearing Branches." Christian Standard (May 8, 1937).

Walker, W. R. "The Ministry Christ Ordained." Christian Standard (October 31, 1942).

_____. "When All of God's People Are One." Christian Standard (October 27, 1928).

Watchman-Examiner, VIII (July 1, 1920).

Webb, Henry E. "The Power of the Word of God." Christian Standard (May 26, 1956).

Welshimer, P. H. "Building the Church Through the Bible School." Christian Standard (September 8, 1956).

_____. "A Clarion Call to Followers of the Old Paths." Christian Standard (May 26, 1927).

_____. "The Divine Basis for Christian Unity." Christian Standard (June 5, 1937).

_____. "The Glory of the Church." Christian Standard (June 30, 1956).

_____. "Preach the Word." Christian Standard (October 4, 1940).

_____. "Preach the Word." Christian Standard (October 12, 1940).

Manuscripts

Blowers, Russell. "Thy Kingdom Come!" Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Detroit, Michigan, 8 July 1975.

Book, Morris Butler. "Exalting the Name." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 12 October 1940.

Briney, J. B. "The Authority of the Bible." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Kansas City, Missouri, 13 October 1928.

_____. "The Theory of Evolution Examined." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Kansas City, Missouri, 11 October 1928.

Cachiaras, G. H. "New Testament Preaching: The Message to the Greeks (Mars Hill)." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 17 October 1942

- Carroll, Ben. "By Sin Enslaved." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Denver, Colorado, 7 July 1976.
- Chalk, John Allen. "God Still Cares for the Brokenhearted." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Anaheim, California 24 July 1974.
- Chapman, L. A. "Whence Came Man?" Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Kansas City, Missouri, 11 October 1928.
- Cole, Glenn G. "The Present Status of Evolution." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 14 October 1927.
- Dampier, J. H. "The Victory of the Ascension." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 16 October 1942.
- de Gafferell, J. E. "The Bible, the Word of God." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Lexington, Kentucky, 18 June 1931.
- DeWelt, Donald. "By the Holy Spirit, Victorious." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, 8 July 1976.
- Fife, Robert O. "Revelation and Restoration." Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention: 1974-1977, 1977.
- Garrett, Leroy. "The Nature of Biblical Authority and the Restoration Movement." Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977, 1977.
- Gibson, Gerald A. "God Still Cares for the Lost." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Anaheim, California, 24 July 1974.
- Hebert, Evariste. "Finding the Word." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Springfield, Illinois, 22 June 1933.
- Hinrichsen, A. N. "The Fact of God." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Long Beach, California, 25 June 1954.
- Holmes, Arthur. "The Personality of God." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Lexington, Kentucky, 18 June 1931.

Holt, Basil. "The Hope and Immortality." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 12 October 1942.

———. "The Inspiration of the Scriptures." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Springfield, Illinois, 22 June 1933.

Kindred, C. G. "Personality and Work of the Holy Spirit." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Lexington, Kentucky, 12 June 1931.

Lown, W. F. "A Biblical Study of Tongues." Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977, 1977.

McAlister, Paul K. "Inspiration, Written Word and Truth." Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977, 1977.

McReynolds, Paul R. "The Biblical Nature of Inspiration." Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977, 1977.

Merkel, Arthur W. "Conservation and Nurturing of New Christians." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Detroit, Michigan, 10 July 1975.

Mills, John. "The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Detroit, Michigan, 11 July 1975.

Minnick, Harry. "The Resurrection of Jesus." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1927.

Murphy, Robert G. "Doing God's Work . . . On Purpose." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 12 July 1973.

North, Ira. "The Minister: Key Man in Church Growth." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Dallas, Texas, 7 July 1971.

Phillips, Richard. "The Christian Student and the Intellectual Revolution," 1966.

Pierce, John R. "Developing Leadership in the Local Church." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, July 1977.

Ralls, John. "Creation Versus Evolution." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, St. Louis, Missouri, 9 July 1964.

Roberts, R. David. "Biblical Message on the Message and the Means of Evangelism." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Denver, Colorado 8 July 1976.

Russell, Robert L. "By Sin Enslaved." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Denver, Colorado, 7 July 1976.

Scates, Erskine E. Jr. "Devoted and Discriminating Reading." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Detroit, Michigan, 10 July 1975.

Schweitzer, George. "Jesus Christ is Lord of Creation." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Columbus, Ohio, 13 July 1960.

Smith, Mont. W. "Ethno-Theology: Restoration Theology Translated." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, 7 July 1977.

Stacy, Robert. "By the Spirit, Victorious." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Denver, Colorado 8 July 1976.

Staton, Knofel. "The Kingdom Requires Conversion." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Detroit, Michigan, 9 July 1975.

_____. "Stimulating Adults to Study the Bible." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, 13 July 1973.

Tharp, Wallace. "The Deity of Jesus." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 12 October 1927.

Thomas, Reggie. "The Church Speaks to Youth in the Space Age." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Long Beach, California, 29 July 1963.

Van Buren, James G. "Grace, Truth and Glory." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, 7 July 1977.

_____. "The Meaning and Place of Baptism." Theological Forum: North American Christian Convention, 1974-1977, 1977.

Webb, Henry E. "Emphasizing the Restoration Ideal in the College and the Local Church." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, 6 July 1977.

Welshimer, P. H. "The Folly of Open-Membership." Address delivered at the Pantages Theater, Memphis, Tennessee, 1940.

_____. "Jesus the Christ, Son of God." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Lexington, Kentucky, 21 June 1931.

Wray, Ernest Hunter. "Faithful Until Death." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Lexington, Kentucky, 19 July 1931.

Wymore, Leonard G. "By Grace Transformed." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Denver, Colorado, 9 July 1976.

Interviews

Dampier, Joseph. Professor, Emmanuel School of Religion, Johnson City, Tennessee, 7 July 1977.

Trinkle, O. A. Retired minister, Alma, Michigan, 3 November 1974.

Walker, Dean. Chancellor, Milligan College, Johnson City, Tennessee, 7 July 1977.

Wymore, Leonard. Director, North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, 10 July 1977.

Letters

Murch, James DeForest. Personal letter, March 6, 1971.

Phillips, Mildred Welshimer. Personal letter, October 11, 1976.

Wymore, Leonard. Personal letter, November 24, 1975.

_____. Personal letter, May 6, 1976.

_____. Personal letter, February 3, 1977.

_____. Personal letter, April 26, 1977.

Tape Recordings

Ketcherside, Carl. "The Priesthood of All Believers." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, 14 July 1972.

Moorehead, Robert. "The Kingdom Unites Men." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Detroit, Michigan, 10 July 1975.

Smith, Wayne B. "Preach the Word." Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, 5 July 1977.

Webb, Henry. "Is Fundamentalism Compatible with the Plea?" Address delivered at the North American Christian Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, 11 July 1973.

Miscellaneous

Hayden, Edwin V. "Report: Committee on Restudy" (Cincinnati: North American Christian Convention, 1972).

Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. Annual Report, 1928.

Secondary SourcesBooks

Abbott, B. A. The Disciples: An Interpretation. St. Louis: The Bethany Press.

Adams, James Truslow. The March of Democracy. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933.

Ahlstrom, Sydney E. A Religious History of the American People. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972.

Algermissen, Konrad; trans. Joseph W. Grundner. Christian Denominations. London: B. Herder Book Co., 1945.

Allen, Frederick L. Only Yesterday. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1931.

Arant, Francis M. "P. H."--The Welshimer Story. Cincinnati: The Standard Publishing Foundation, 1958.

- Bedell, George, et al. Religion in America. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1975.
- Benson, Clarence H. A Popular History of Christian Education. Chicago: Moody Press, 1943.
- The Bible, King James Version.
- Blackwood, Andrew. The Fine Art of Public Worship. Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1934.
- Boisen, Anton T. Religion in Crisis and Custom. New York: Harper and Brothers Co., 1955.
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. Life Together, trans. John W. Doberstein. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954.
- Bower, William C., and Ross, Roy G. The Disciples and Religious Education. St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1936.
- Bridges, Horace J. The God of Fundamentalism and other Studies. Chicago: Pascal Covici, 1925.
- Brown, William A. The Church in America. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922.
- Brunner, Emil. The Misunderstanding of the Church, trans. H. Knight. London: Lutterworth Press, 1952.
- Bryan, William Jennings. Seven Questions in Dispute. New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1924.
- Burt, Edwin A. Types of Religious Philosophy, rev. ed. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951.
- Buswell, James Oliver, Jr. A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962.
- Campbell, Alexander. The Christian System, 2nd ed. Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Co., 1839.
- Campbell, John L. The Bible Under Fire. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1929.
- Carter, Paul A. The Decline and Revival of the Social Gospel. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University, 1954.
- Chafer, Lewis Sperry. Systematic Theology, I. Dallas: Seminary Press, 1947.

- Clarke, William Newton. Sixty Years with the Bible. New York: Scribner and Sons, 1917.
- Cole, Stewart G. History of Fundamentalism. New York: Harper and Row, 1931.
- Conkin, Paul K., and Burner, David. A History of Recent America. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1974.
- Dow, Clyde W. "The Historical Approach." In Introduction to Graduate Study in Speech and Theater. East Lansing: University of Michigan Press, 1961.
- Drake, Durant. Problems of Religion: An Introductory Survey. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916.
- Durnbaugh, Donald F. The Believers Church. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1968.
- Eavey, C. B. History of Christian Education. Chicago: Moody Press, 1964.
- Flew, Anthony. "Theology and Falsification." In New Essays in Philosophical Theology. Edited by Anthony Flew and Alasdair MacIntyre. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1955.
- Flew, R. Newton, ed. The Nature of the Church. London: SCM Press, 1951.
- Fortune, A. W. Adventuring with Disciple Pioneers. St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1942.
- Fosdick, Harry Emerson. Christianity and Progress. New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1922.
- _____. The Man From Nazareth. New York: Harper and Row, 1949.
- _____. The Modern Use of the Bible. New York: Macmillan Co., 1924.
- Furniss, Norman F. The Fundamentalist Controversy, 1918-1931. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954.
- Gabriel, Ralph H., ed. Christianity and Modern Thought. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1924.
- Garrison, James Harvey. The Reformation of the Nineteenth Century. St. Louis: Christian Publishing Company, 1901.

- Garrison, Winfred E., and DeGroot, Alfred T. The Disciples of Christ: A History. St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1948.
- Gasper, Louis. The Fundamentalist Movement. Paris: Mouton and Co., 1963.
- Gatewood, William B., Jr. Controversy in the Twenties. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1969.
- Gilkey, Langdon. Naming the Whirlwind: The Renewal of God Language. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963.
- Gladden, Washington. Recollections. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1909.
- _____. Who Wrote the Bible? New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1891.
- Gonzalez, Justo L. A History of Christian Thought, Vol. I. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970.
- Goodman, Paul, and Gatell, Frank. America in the Twenties. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1972.
- Gray, James W. The Coming Kingdom of God. Chicago: Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1914.
- Hailey, Homer. Attitudes and Consequences. Rosemead, California: Old Paths Book Club, 1945.
- Hakes, J. Edward, ed. An Introduction to Evangelical Christian Education. Chicago: Moody Press, 1964.
- Hamilton, Floyd E. The Basis of Christian Faith. New York: Harper and Row, 1964.
- Harrell, David Edwin, Jr. Quest for a Christian America. Nashville: Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 1966.
- Henry, Carl F. H., ed. Christian Faith and Modern Theology. New York: Channell Press, 1964.
- Hocking, William E. Science and the Idea of God. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944.
- Hodge, Archibald Alexander. Outlines of Theology. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1928.

- Hofstadter, Richard. Social Darwinism in American Thought. Boston: Beacon Press, 1955.
- Horsch, John. Modern Religious Liberalism. Scottsdale, Pa.: Fundamental Truth Depot, 1921.
- Hort, Fenton J. A. The Christian Ecclesia. London: Macmillan and Co., 1898.
- Johnson, Ernest, ed. Patterns of Faith in America. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957.
- Johnson, George. The Doctrine of the Church in the New Testament. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943.
- Kershner, Frederick D. The Restoration Handbook, Vol. 1. Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Co., 1918.
- Latourette, Kenneth Scott. A History of Christianity. New York: Harper and Row Co., 1953.
- Lowell, C. Stanley. The Ecumenical Mirage. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1967.
- MacGregor, Geddes. Corpus Christi. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1958.
- _____. Introduction to Religious Philosophy. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1959.
- Machen, J. Gresham. Christianity and Liberalism. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1923.
- _____. The Virgin Birth of Christ. New York: Harper and Row, 1930; reprint: Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1965.
- _____. What Is Faith? New York: The Macmillan Co., 1927.
- Matthews, Shailer. The Faith of Modernism. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924.
- Mayer, F. E. The Religious Bodies of America. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1956.
- McCrossan, Thomas J. The Bible: Its Christ and Modernism. New York: Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1925.
- McGiffert, A. C. The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1915.

- Mullens, E. G. Why Is Christianity True? Philadelphia: American Baptist Publishing Co., 1921.
- Murch, James DeForest. Adventuring for Christ in Changing Times. Louisville, Kentucky: The Restoration Press, 1973.
- _____. Christian Education and the Local Church. Cincinnati: The Standard Publishing Co., 1943.
- _____. Christians Only. Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Co., 1962.
- Neill, Stephen, Ed. Twentieth Century Christianity. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1963.
- Niebuhr, Richard. Resurrection and Historical Reason. New York: Scribners Sons, 1957.
- Olmstead, Clifton E. History of Religion in the United States. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960.
- Osborn, Henry F. Evolution and Religion in Education. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926.
- Rauschenbusch, Walter. A Theology for the Social Gospel. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1919.
- Richardson, Robert. Memoirs of Alexander Campbell, Vol. I. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1971.
- Roark, Dallas M. Deitrich Bonhoeffer. Waco, Texas: Word Books Inc., 1972.
- Rogers, James R. The Cane Ridge Meeting House. Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Co., 1910.
- Sandeen, Ernest R. The Roots of Fundamentalism. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970.
- Schneider, Herbert W. Religion in Twentieth Century America. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952.
- Scott, E. F. The New Testament Today. New York: Macmillan Co., 1921.
- Sharpe, Dore R. Walter Rauschenbusch. New York: Macmillan Company, 1942.
- Smith, Gerald B. Current Christian Thinking. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928.

- Smith, Gerald B. A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1916.
- _____, ed. Religious Thought in the Last Quarter Century. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927.
- Stagg, Frank. New Testament Theology. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1962.
- Stearns, Lewis F. Present Day Theology. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898.
- Straton, John Roach. The Famous New York Fundamentalist-Modernist Debates. New York: George H. Doran, Co., 1924.
- Trueblood, D. Elton. Philosophy in Religion. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957.
- Tyler, B. B. A History of the Disciples of Christ. New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1894.
- Vanderlaan, E. C. Fundamentalism Versus Modernism. New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1925.
- Walker, Williston. A History of the Christian Church. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959.
- Warfield, Benjamin B. The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible. Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1948.
- _____. The Person and Work of Christ. Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1950.
- Wedel, T. O. The Coming Great Church. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1945.
- Weigle, Luther A., ed. Preaching in These Times. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940.
- Welshimer, P. H. A Bible School Vision. Cincinnati: The Standard Publishing Co., 1909.
- West, Earl I. The Search for the Ancient Order, Vol. I. Nashville, Tennessee: Gospel Advocate Co., 1949.
- Witmaer, S. A. The Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges Looks Forward. Fort Wayne: Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges, 1960.

Unpublished Material

- Bennett, Rollo James. "History of the Founding of Educational Institutions by the Disciples of Christ in Virginia and West Virginia." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1932.
- Hart, Nelson Hodges. "The True and the False: The Worlds of an Emerging Evangelical Protestant Fundamentalism in America, 1890-1920." Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1976.
- Keeran, Keith P. "A Critical Evaluation of Rhetorical Processes in the Preaching of Pearl Howard Welshimer Through an Analysis of Representative Sermons." M.A. Thesis, Abilene Christian University, 1976.
- McBath, James H. "Speechmaking at the Chautaugua Assembly, 1874-1900." Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1950.