

Be reconciled KATALLAGETE

*With us therefore worldly
standards have ceased to count
in our estimate of any man;
even if once they counted in
our understanding of Christ,
they do so now no longer.
When anyone is united to
Christ, there is a new world;
the old order has gone and a
new order has already begun.*

II CORINTHIANS 5:16-17

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About This Issue

Members of the Editorial Board of KATALLAGETE are also members of and involved in the work of the Committee of Southern Churchmen. In reality, the Committee is an extended staff of the Committee office in Nashville, Tennessee. It is composed of men and women seeking to witness to Christ's reconciliation of all men "while still in life," and in all areas of human endeavor. Some Committee members have been involved in this calling amidst the economic, and political and racial crises in the South for over forty years—long before there was a Committee, or a Fellowship, of Southern Churchmen.

The point I wish to stress is that the journal is but one facet of the work of the Committee of Southern Churchmen. Those of us charged with editing, writing, and distributing KATALLAGETE, Be Reconciled! know well what other Committee members are doing in the hope that, as President Kelly Smith stated in our first issue, we might provide a "challenge to those Christians and those Churches who assume that they are uninvolved to a more responsible and obedient participation in the life of the South while warning ourselves and other Christians that the Christian faith is not identical with any political or social movement." Some have and are participating in "marches" of various sorts and for various "causes"; some are producing a radio series for county seat radio stations; some have and will visit theological seminaries throughout the country and, in the context of a frank discussion and dialogue about what we believe to be the dangerous weaknesses besetting churches and seminaries throughout the nation, try to enlist men and women to return or to turn to the South; some have and will visit with ministers and laymen caught up in the throes of various sorts of community unrest; and all of us seek to find fresh and hopeful callings for those who have been and will be displaced in current turmoils and conflicts. The Editorial Board of the Committee, through the use of words, seeks to explore the meaning of obedience to the Life, and Death, and Resurrection of Christ in these days of crisis in almost every phase of human endeavor, inside or outside the churches. Hence, the Editorial Board, because it is the editorial sub-committee of the Committee of Southern Churchmen, is not content "just to talk"—although we do hope that others will be willing to engage us in a dialogue of words as well as of activities.

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As it happens, this particular issue of the journal looks from several angles at one of the most obvious, important, and perennial concerns facing the Christian in the South: how the Church is to be "involved in" the world in radical obedience to its Lord without denying in activism or quietism Christ's lordship of reconciliation over the world. In general, articles for KATALLAGETE are written by assignment; and yet, without knowing what others were saying, what seems to have been the result in this issue is a symposium of sorts on "the Church in the Modern World." The authors seem to agree that the way the Church is related to and involved in the world is never self-evident, but that it our day the question is of more than ordinary importance for the life of the Church, and the individuals who confess Christ as Lord.

The men contributing to this issue are writing out of a background of involvement and experience in the life and

JOSEPH M. HENDRICKS

work of the Church in the world. The editorials by Will D. Campbell and James Y. Holloway attempt to direct attention to the fact that the formulas and institutions by which we have attempted and are attempting to involve the Church in the world have failed because too often they are but an echo in clerical garb of the voice of "the world," and sometimes not even the world at its best! They warn that these formulas and institutions are being judged by God and tried by the world, and in both instances may be found to be a contradiction of or irrelevant to the true calling of the Church. Will Campbell, the Director of the Committee of Southern Churchmen, was a pastor in northern Louisiana and at the University of Mississippi before serving from 1956 to 1963 as Director of the Southern Office of Department of Racial and Cultural Relations of the National Council of Churches. Holloway, who teaches at Berea College, and is editor of KATALLAGETE, has advanced degrees in political science and Christian ethics, and has taught these subjects in the South for a number of years.

Walker Percy and James McBride Dabbs, both members of the Editorial Board of KATALLAGETE and active Christian laymen, deal with the theme of Church and world from the specific perspective of the South and the southerner. Mr. Percy directs attention to the essentially Stoic quality of the old relationship between white Christians and Negro Christians, and the rapid disintegration of that relationship after 1954. Both Mr. Percy and Mr. Dabbs suggest that the "theological habits of thought" of Southern life could lead to a new, significant, and mature relationship of equality among men of both races, or to the route of South Africa and Rhodesia. Charles Rice, minister to Episcopal students at East Tennessee State University at Johnson City focuses upon one of the factors which will in large measure determine the direction which the Church in the modern world will take: the resolution of the current crisis in Christian leadership. On the basis of a close exegetical study of the letter to the Christians in Galatia, Dr. Markus Barth demonstrates how St. Paul dealt with a crisis of Christian leadership in the early Church not unrelated to the one described by Mr. Rice. Furthermore, St. Paul's response to this crisis offers an important clue to the current dilemma of Christians. The contributions by Mr. Walter Lippmann and Father Daniel Berrigan speak for themselves.

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In the place of his usual remarks as President of the Committee of Southern Churchmen, the Editorial Board has prevailed upon Kelly Miller Smith to introduce this issue with his "open letter" to two congregations of Christians—one of which he serves as pastor. The subject is one that has fascinated the Church for decades: ecumenicity. Mr. Smith approaches the subject at the very point that the Committee believes the issue will be finally decided, with success or by relegation to the museum of other Christian fads. His open letter is about where the "ecumenical movement" really is, if it really is: where the people who are called Christians are—the local churches.

Fred Hall of Nashville, Tennessee, designed the cover for this and for the inaugural issue of KATALLAGETE. He is an advertising executive, and a member of the Committee of Southern Churchmen.

KATALLAGETE

This sermon delivered by the Reverend Kelly Miller Smith on Sunday, December 26, 1965 at the First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill, Nashville, Tennessee.

Trek Toward The Dawn

KELLY MILLER SMITH

Deuteronomy 2:2-3; "And the Lord spake unto me, saying, ye have compassed this mountain long enough"

The year now closing has been a momentous one. It has been filled with drama and drudgery and has been characterized by triumph and tragedy. All the way from the blood soaked fields of Viet Nam to the dark and broken streets of Nashville, there have been events which have commanded our attention and required our concern.

The blessings of the year of 1965 have at times been so great and so obvious that we have cried out with the psalmist: "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." And there have been times when the problems have been so critical and devastating and the solutions have appeared so remote that from the depths of our troubled spirits we have exclaimed: "My God, my God, why—WHY hast thou forsaken me?"

Nineteen Sixty-five has been a year of reflection for us at First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill. We have taken an eight month look over one hundred years of our existence as a church. With grateful appreciation and awesome wonder, we have reviewed our dramatic history. We saw how men—still taunted by the unhealed sores of slavery—set out on the venturesome journey of independence and dignity. To be sure, the road was hard and steep. They traveled over mountains that were rough and rugged and through valleys dangerous and dreary. Inspired by the Word of God and by the prophetic words and deeds of their consecrated leaders, and singing their moving spirituals, stately anthems and inspiring hymns, they marched together through the fires and the floods.

In our Centennial observance, persons from many walks of life have joined us. We have been applauded by the mighty and by the humble. Congratulatory messages have come to us all the way from the White House in Washington, D.C. to the unlettered porter in downtown Nashville. The achievements of our Church have been heralded in both the local and national press. In fact, I venture to say that we have even patted ourselves on the back a little.

The great danger is that we may be tempted to conclude that we have done enough now, that we can settle back and relax. But, there must be no attitude that "the battle is fought and the victory is won." We must not confuse the way-station with the destination. That which is the closing hymn of an exciting era must be but the prelude to an even more exciting and daring level of existence. There is a creatively disturbing word which Moses heard and which comes ringing down through the windswept corridors of time to us in this hour: "Ye have compassed this mountain long enough." The suggestion is that the first hundred years is but the first lap in our holy pilgrimage—our trek toward the dawn.

In order to suggest an answer to the question "where do we go from here—toward the dawn?" I would like to address a letter to two churches which bear the relationship of mother and child.

The epistle is addressed to the congregation of First Baptist Church, Seventh and Broad, Nashville, Tennessee and the First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill, Nashville, Tennessee.

* * * * *

Dear Brothers and Sisters In Christ Jesus:

I praise God for the witness you have made in the Nashville community. You have helped mend broken lives and

have given a sense of hope to many who have come under your influence. Both churches have served to make Nashville a better community.

In spite of the faithful service you have both rendered and in spite of your unquestioned influence in the community, there is a troublesome matter with which we must deal. The good news we both profess demands that we face it.

More than a hundred years ago, on March 16, 1865, the following letter was written to the First Baptist Church of Nashville:

"We, the colored members of the First Baptist Church of Nashville, Tennessee, do hereby petition to your honor for a separate and independent church to be known by the name of the First Colored Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee

We, your brethren in love and respect, done by order of the Church at its regular meeting for business the 7th day of March, 1865."

The reasons Negroes sought to be separated from the predominantly white congregation of which they were a part are fairly well known. When they prayed "Our Father", they were addressing the same God professed by the members of the church from which they were departing. The same Ancient Book of Inspiration called the Holy Bible was a "lamp unto their feet and a light unto their paths" and they claimed redemption through the same divine act and the same Son of God. They pledged allegiance to no kingdom save the Kingdom of God and of His Christ.

Yet, for these one hundred years these congregations have gone their separate ways. In the name of the Christ of Calvary, can we any longer justify a separation that is based upon such a triviality as skin color? Do we not hear the words of Almighty God Himself saying to us "Ye have compassed this mountain long enough?"

In the name of all that is high and holy, is it unthinkable that you two great congregations of Christians begin conversations on the topic of a merger of these churches?

Here you two congregations are, only five blocks apart. Both of you are planning gigantic building programs and both of you are trying to minister to the same part of the same city. Each of you receive telephone calls and mail intended for the other. More important than that, you are kin. You have the same spiritual ancestors. Your relationship is that of mother and child. And still more important is the fact that we are all the children of God and, by virtue of that fact, we are kin:

And all men are my kin,
Since every man has been
Blood of my blood;
I glory in the grace
And strength of every race,
And joy in every trace
Of brotherhood.

You have already made a start. The church which once had the chartered name "First Colored Baptist Church" is now the First Baptist Church of Capitol Hill. The racial reference has been left out. Both congregations have had persons of different ethnic identities worship together with

them. The Capitol Hill Church no longer has a uniracl membership. Yes, you have already made the start. The question is whether or not you are ready to take the first giant step in your trek toward the dawn.

In his history of First Baptist Church, Nashville, *The Spiritual Conquest of the Second Frontier*, P. E. Burroughs calls it the "fruitful mother of churches." The Capitol Hill Church was separated from First Baptist purely on the basis of color—race. Regardless of whose initiative it was that effected the separation, the result was the same. More than between any of the other children of the "fruitful mother of churches", serious discussion of merger between First Baptist, Seventh and Broadway and the First Baptist, Capitol Hill would speak eloquently and convincingly to a world whose faith and interest in that which we call the Church is seriously waning.

Some among us recognize the importance of the Church to worldly disinherited children of God and who know that for Negroes the church has been the "social cosmos"—the answer for all that was lacking everywhere else. Some will look at the social role played by the Capitol Hill Baptist Church and, fearing that this social consciousness will be lost, will object to merger. The fact is, however, that we are not suggesting that we should become less than the Church. To the contrary, the proposal is that we will become *more* the Church. If we talk, we must do so with an awareness of the fact that the Church of the living God must address itself to all of the concerns of man.

This letter is written with full awareness that some will point to "nonracial" problems which help keep predominantly white congregations from uniting. While admitting that the major reason for this continued separation of the people of God is prejudice, Kyle Haselden has listed other problems in his *The Racial Problem in Christian Perspective*. These other problems should be honestly faced if you two congregations decide to talk to each other after all these years.

While the Church should be the leader in movements that make for righteousness and right, we must confess that sometimes we *react* when we should have *acted*. Sometimes we are an echo when we should be a voice. But when the initiative has been taken by other forces and the course is right, why should the church not at least participate? Further, the church can and ought to give depth of meaning and direction to these trends toward right and justice. Certainly, we can never afford to do less than that which we call "secular" life is doing.

Many of our children go to public school together; why can they not go to Sunday School together? Members of the two congregations work together, why may they not worship together? In Nashville and in other parts of the country we eat together in the restaurants; may we not feast on the Bread of Life together?

If you two great congregations agree to talk, please begin with the premise that the ground at the foot of the Cross is level. Begin with the realization of the fact that the Kingdom of God is a Kingdom above caste; ours is a faith which transcends race. We are all one in Christ. Those who were once a dependent mission must come in the spirit of interdependence and brotherhood.

* * * * *

The suggestion which I am now making to these two congregations is not for "migration" but merger. Both congregations have something to contribute to the work of the Church and these resources should be combined. There is much in the long history of the church at Seventh and Broad which will enrich those who comprise the Capitol

Hill Church. There is something in the courageous action and social awareness in the tradition of the Capitol Hill Church which will enhance the church at Seventh and Broad. Whether we are willing to face it or not, we need each other, and God wills us one.

If there are those in either congregation who feel that such a proposal should cause them to lessen their support of the building programs now underway by both churches, it must be said that they do not understand the meaning of building *for Christ*.

We are living in an age when great and harsh criticisms are being hurled at the Church. Some have severed connections with it because they have felt that we are not doing that which is obedient and relevant. This move would, perhaps, restore the confidence of some.

In the meantime, we should not only have our doors open in the spirit of "whosoever will, let him come." We should go out into the "highways and hedges" and seek until we find those who have heretofore been excluded either because of official policy or the general practice of both congregations.

There is much that we can do in downtown Nashville if we are willing to walk together as the people of God. There is unparalleled strength awaiting, should these two congregations decide to respond favorably to the mandates of God.

When we do our best in this direction, the words of Ralph Walker may well be applied to us:

God bless the church on the avenue that hears the city's cry;

the Church that sows the seed of the Word where the masses of men go by;

The church that makes, midst the city's roar, a place for an Altar of Prayer,

With a heart for the rich and a heart for the poor, and rejoices in their burdens to share.

The Church that's true to the call of Christ who wept o'er the city's need,

And who sent His disciples to labor for Him where the forces of evil breed,

The Church that gives and the church that lives, as seen by the Master's eye—

God bless the Church on the avenue that answers the city's cry.

But we must not postpone being virtuous. We need not wait for this glorious and long awaited day if we are to march in accordance with His commands. There are things for us to do even now. Our hearts and our spirits must be prepared. Our eyes have grown so accustomed to the darkness that they are likely to be hurt by the true Light. In all that we do, let us remember that he has required of us that we continue our trek toward the dawn. He says to these congregations "Ye have compassed this mountain long enough."

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;

He is sifting out the hearts of men Before his judgement seat;

O be swift, my soul, to answer him; Be jubilant, my feet!

Our God is marching on!

I close, with the words used by the great apostle when he wrote about love to the Church at Corinth. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus." Amen

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Staff

Editor

JAMES Y. HOLLOWAY
Box 936, Berea College Station
Berea, Kentucky 40403

Editorial Board

JAMES MCBRIDE DABBS
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GIDEON W. FRYER
DUNCAN GREY, JR.
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The Committee of Southern Churchmen

KELLY MILLER SMITH, *President*
WILL D. CAMPBELL, *Director*
1106 Nineteenth Avenue, South
Nashville, Tennessee 37212
Telephone (615) 298-2644

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"For Three Transgressions, And For Four . . ."

JAMES Y. HOLLOWAY

Toward the end of the Second World War, Reinhold Niebuhr collected a number of his sermons into a book which he called *Discerning the Signs of the Times*. The title was from Jesus' warning recorded in Matthew 16:3, "O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" Twenty years later, we do well also to heed Jesus' warning and discern the signs of our times.

Niebuhr's book is helpful because one of the sermons concerns the sowing of a seed the harvest of which is one of the signs of our times. He called the sermon "The Age Between the Ages;" the text was II Kings 19:3: "Thus saith Hezekiah, This is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth." Niebuhr explained the applicability of Hezekiah's words to the days following the Second World War in this way: "We can see clearly what ought to be done to bring order and peace into the life of the nations; but we do not have the strength to do what we ought." The text discerns our times rather accurately; indeed, we must also say that our situation is far more ominous than the one Niebuhr described twenty years ago. Our days are equally filled with trouble because we lack "strength to bring forth" a just and viable peace. Our days are more blasphemous not only because we have failed to bring justice and peace to our land as well as among the nations; but we now also lack the one positive note Niebuhr struck twenty years ago: a *vision* of what we ought to do—domestically or internationally—to bring peace and justice to the communities of mankind

* * * * *

Justice has something to do with right orderings, proper relationships between and among men and their political and social and economic institutions; peace has something to do, not so much with tranquillity, but with the working for justice while rejecting solutions to the problems of right ordering that call for the incineration of political and social opponents. Consequently, justice and peace cannot be built upon the forcible imposition of law or a reign of terror, but with the sort of vision Niebuhr spoke about twenty years ago—a vision that will lead men to look beyond themselves

and toward their neighbor not in hate and envy but in understanding and compassion. Justice and peace have something to do with a vision that denies men the fatal temptation of thinking more highly of themselves and their causes than they ought. Justice and peace have something to do with a vision that substitutes humility for arrogance and pride in the relations with neighbors, domestic or foreign. And it is the loss of just this vision which has sown the seeds of pride found in the contradictions which render our days so blasphemous.

For these twenty years and longer the vision of the Church has been so blurred that it has sanctioned racism throughout the North and South, by silence or liberalism, and in its passion for "realism" has helped reconcile the world to the legitimacy of atomic apocalypse "in pursuit of national interest."

The Church rejects the Gospel in a passion for "contemporaneity with culture," and rests its case on law (more and stronger, or fewer and decentralized) and politics (the "vital center" of the ADA, or crypto-Birchism). And for twenty years and more, the vision of a consensus-oriented, affluent culture has been so inverted that it has steadfastly refused to face up to the basic and unremitting contradictions of East Harlems and Westchesters; Watts Streets and Beverly Hills; the affluent society and the depleted society; protestations about freedom and democracy and primitive anti-communism; allegiance to and postage stamps commemorating the United Nations and war waged in the name of the principles of the United Nations by a predominantly white nation using technologically efficient weapons of mass destruction against a culturally backward, technologically-inept, non-white folk in Southeast Asia.

The recent commentary on the life and death of Malcolm X by Emile Capouya in *The Saturday Review* is an eloquent testimony on the moral erosion consequent upon the lack of vision in one place, and what the emergence of vision in another place might involve.

Right now, in this country, every man stands between the devil and the deep blue sea. The ideals we profess as a people have scarcely any other function than to color greed at home and violence abroad. We are in a moral and political crisis. Almost alone, Malcolm X knew it and declared it; his doctrine was cast in terms of race, but that was very nearly an accident. Those who responded to his intuition of what was happening to us understood him whether they were Negroes or whites. I think that any reader who is at all accessible to the message must be moved by his autobiography—ingenuous, often mistaken about

elementary facts, sometimes less than charitable, but mostly true and mostly very important.

* * * *

What unites the domestic tragedies of racism and poverty to the international tragedies of Viet Nam and the Dominican Republic is the lack of vision and strength to bring forth justice and peace and the resulting harvest of hateful contradictions. And certainly one of the signs within the signs is the at worst cynical or at best shortsighted refusal of many national leaders, political and otherwise, to speak forthrightly about the relationship of these tragedies. There is surely little vision in the highest and most responsible regions of government and society about ending the slaughter in Southeast Asia and to stop the gun-boat diplomacy in Central and South America. To escalate the military bombings and killings and thereby the "accidents of war" against the innocents in the belief that Hanoi and Peking will eventually "leave their neighbor alone" and "sit down and talk peace" is not a vision but a nightmare.

A vision is required to effectively assimilate "the other America" into American life, even when it means that American life as we now have it will have to be radically reordered. But so far we have cynically and callously rejected "the poor" (that is, Negroes throughout the nation, "yesterday's people" of Appalachia, and the racial minorities in the West and Southwest) from the counsels of the very programs designed to assimilate them into American democracy. Perhaps the Consensus Establishment is faltering at the realization that victory in the war against the real agents of poverty and hopelessness will require a basic reordering of the Establishment itself. If "the other Americans" are programmed to continue as they have for thirty years and more—wards of the court house and city hall gangs and the local power structure, and minions of the empires of the welfare bureaucrats—the vision is not the Great Society but the Prostitute Society.

There are young people among us who ought otherwise "to have everything to live for," who are not delinquent by any sane standard, but who risk social and parental ostracism as well as prison, thwarted careers, execution at the hands of legal or para-legal defenders of A Way of Life or, what is more terrifying, death at their own hands. They seem to be engaged in a desperate attempt to testify against the consequences of the ever-widening breach between what the Consensus Establishment professes, and what it does. To dismiss these young people—indeed, anyone of any age who in varying degree identify with this malaise—as un-

patriotic, chronic misfits and serving the communists is not a vision of democracy but a vision of paranoia.

Signs of the times, and even the testimony of the social scientists, demonstrate the inadequacy and impotence—although not the irrelevance—of legal and administrative procedures finally and peacefully to resolve the racial and economic turmoil that has beset American democracy for more than a century. But the vision of the Church—regardless of geography or other accidents of nature or history—seems to be what it has been for three hundred years: Law triumphant over Love! Justice triumphant over Mercy! Here, Christ's Church becomes folks' Church.

The Church—regardless of geography or other accidents of nature and history—has made almost no permanent headway in its own Household to reject the segregation of man by race, and by income, education, social status, etc., etc. By "Household" is meant the work of the churches by the gas stations, motels, courthouses, in the hollows and on the boulevards; "Household" also means seminaries and "church-related" or "non-denominational" colleges, and their investment and business enterprises, home and "foreign" missionary boards, charitable ventures, etc., etc. Have we been intimidated into the blasphemous silence of our revivalism, pietism, false witness and liberalism by "the best people" and their institutions? The vision such a Church follows is "outside agitation," or "wrong motives" or "neighborhood churches" or "specialized" ministry. Again, Christ's Church becomes folks' Church.

Witnesses to Christ's acquittal by resurrection are despised and rejected, even through death, by the blind, desperate, vicious and "lost" worlds of culture and religion—the worlds for which Christ died. Is the vision of the Church in response to this blasphemy "Blood for Blood!" "Law over Gospel!" "Death Victorious over Resurrection!"? If so, the Church rushes pell-mell into another Babylonian Captivity

* * * *

It is clear that the world and the Church have in these twenty years not only not gained strength, but also have lost the vision to bring forth a just and viable peace. Yet to list some of the signs of current times costs little and in itself means nothing. The heart of the matter is to "discern the signs," to account for and to respond to the failures of vision and strength.

Churchill used the prophet Joel's imagery to describe a certain period between the first and second world wars as "the locust years."

What the cutting locusts left
the swarming locust has eaten.

What the swarming locust left,
the hopping locust has eaten,
and what the hopping locust left,
the destroying locust has eaten.

The prophet's vivid imagery is equally appropriate to our days of trouble, rebuke and blasphemy because it forces us to heed the source and the meaning of the devastating locusts. It forces us to discern the signs of our times. That is, we must decide if the signs of our times reveal the judgment of God on us, and on our institutions and programs inside and outside the Church. If what is happening to us is *not* judgment, then we can (and we shall) continue to reduce the signs of trouble and rebuke and blasphemy to temporally antecedent causes. Then we can (and we shall) continue to nod very seriously and very scholarly when the outside experts—sociologists and psychologists and political scientists and specialists in national security affairs—are invited to inform us about the nature of the present "crisis." Come adjournment, neither bloody nor bowed, though having sighed mightily several times and let our belt-buckles out another notch or maybe two, we can return to our appointed tasks, congratulating each other on the interesting, serious and fascinating ambiguities and challenging opportunities that the Christian may find in the present "crisis." We can continue to account for the current impotence of almost every phase of the Church's vocation as a strategic, temporary, and temporal flaw—no more serious perhaps than failing to transmit successfully the meaningful and sometimes brilliant insights, analyses, and low-level abstractions of theologians, hermenutical consultations, or our best seminaries, to the ever-listless, unresponsive, unsympathetic, always-intransigent-man-in-the-pew. We can meet such flaws by programming a response centering around more of the gimmickery of "the world": curriculum revamping, ministerial "recruitment", seductions of faculty from sister institutions, and above all increased funds, for theological research, reduced teaching "loads", "teaching" assistants, modernized departments of religion in undergraduate colleges, telephones in offices of every theologian above the rank of assistant professor, plants of worship designed in the contemporary idiom, and a modern clergy designed to meet modern-man-where-he-is.

Of course it is as simple as it is easy to pour scorn upon our responses during these past years. The matter turns on whether or not our defensiveness and the gawking after culture represented in these responses are not the very things put into

jeopardy by the destroying locusts dispatched as the judgment of God on all that is false in our situation. And that is undoubtedly the case if what is happening to us and to our institutions is judgment by the cutting and swarming and destroying locusts of God, and not the strategic flaws and human frailties of temporally antecedent causes. If that is what is happening to us, what Niebuhr identified twenty years ago as "the age between the ages" has become an age of God's judgment on us.

* * * *

Let it be said at once that, of course God is always judging us. But what we must do today is to understand and respond to His judgment that is *now* upon us, *now* all around us, *now* the most critical reality of our time. And this is the new thing for us. We must try to discern what it means to live under judgment, not abstractly and not in the pages of a journal, but try to discern the signs of the judgment in our very immediate, very existential times of trouble, rebuke and blasphemy.

Perhaps the most important clue to what it means to the Church to live under judgment *now* is to be found in one of these signs. In the past four or five years, the inevitable and sometimes fascinating necessity of Christians to relate "Church" to "world," "Christ" to "culture," has become a matter of life and death for the Church itself. At this moment, therefore, the matter of "the Church and the world" is too critical to permit the first or the last word to be said in doctoral dissertations, ecumenical study groups, dreary weeks of "religious emphasis," or a journal of southern churchmen. The matter concerns the integrity of the witness of every single individual who professes Christ as Lord.

Let us be clear: the signs of urgency about the relation of Christ and culture, Church and world, is a matter of life and death, *not* for God, but for the Church, the institutional, organizational phenomena which are the expressions of those individuals who confess Christ as Lord—that is, the thousands upon thousands of the St. John's-by-the-Gas-Station. A schema, therefore, concerning "the Church in the modern world" will be the acid test not merely for Vatican II but for the entire Christian Church. And that, by the way, is the stake that Protestantism has in Vatican II and, in turn, the stake that Catholicism has in whatever Protestantism may eventually do about the Church in the modern world. Little insight is necessary to see that the real progress in ecumenicity will be made as Christians unite not for the sake of unity, but to witness to the world from the

catacombs scratched out in the shale and mire of a world that seems to find its meaning in wanton destruction.

To fail in any period to act in the faith that the Church is involved in the world by the very Event which calls it into being and defines its task and mission, is to confess by word and deed that Christ's death is and was in vain and that His resurrection is and was a hoax perpetrated on the world by simple and sentimental idealists. For the fact is that the Church is related to and involved in the modern and secular world (and what else can "the world" ever be but "modern" and "secular"?) neither by its own choice nor by historical caprice. The Church is not its own; and by its nature and mission, therefore, it cannot exist for itself without destroying itself and denying its Head. The Church exists for "the world." Put another way, Christians do not live for themselves, but *in* and *for* Christ and therefore must and can live *as* Christ lived. Further, the Church "is" the Church only when its actions involve it in the world in the very same way that Christ is and was involved in the world. "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." The "perfection" commanded is "Emmanuel": to be *with* others as God is *with* us in the birth and life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, freely, "in grace and truth." Hence, Christians are liberated from the melancholy luxury of the endless debates about whether to be involved in or to withdraw from *any* modern, secular world. That decision was lifted from our consciences and assumed by Christ at Calvary and at Pentecost.

Christians, in the same way as all men, are first of all involved in the modern, secular world because their existence — however "existence" might be explained by Sartre, or Hoyle, or Russell — thrusts them "in" the world quite independently of their predilections on the matter. About this, Christians understand that God "elected" to give the world additional time, to permit the modern, secular world to continue after Easter, even though the drama could have ended then, or at Pentecost—or, for that matter, could end at *any* moment. But Christians are also involved as witnesses not merely to the fact that all of us men live in a sort of postscript to Easter, but primarily to testify to and about the nature of that gift of additional time: it is a judgment on us, for God will not let us have the last word, and persist in death, arrogance and pride. The gift of additional time means that death is judged and crucified; that the final Word of God to us is Resurrection and Life; that men are given additional time, not

because they merited it, but in order to participate in the new order established by God's reconciliation of all men to Himself and therefore to each other. All this, as St. Paul puts it, "while still in life," and while looking forward to the life promised to us that is yet to come.

From this perspective, therefore, our days of trouble, and rebuke and blasphemy are not fundamentally different from any days or centuries since Pentecost. Hence, it is neither startling, nor modern news that the world is "secular" or that "God" is "dead." The fact is that the world has been able to come up with nothing more novel or startling than that since the Crucifixion. The world has always been "secular." What other option does it really have? The novelty of our time is that the world, in its heart of hearts always bored and disinterested in us, no longer needs our blessings or our acquiescences or even our "moral and spiritual" support to carry out its schemes and programs and crusades of deifying some men by incinerating some others. What has "come of age" is not the world in its practical atheism (it has just "come clean" with us); but it may be that the Church will "come of age" by admitting that the world is secular. Through and by the actions of God in science, technology, automation, racial revolutions as well as in the unabashed secularism in our dearly cherished western civilization, the Church is being told again that it is the Body of Christ, not one of the many appendages of culture. We are being told that the Alpha and Omega of the Church is God's reconciliation of us men in Christ and His decision to "elect" some of them to testify to that reconciliation. This means, as Karl Barth says, that the Church with Peter must learn to walk on the water. In the idiom of our region, the Church must now "fish or cut bait." And in just this apparent agony might be discerned a sign of renewal — so long as we remember that the Source of that agony is not our analyses of our flaws but God's hand in and upon us. If we are renewed in the challenge of "secularism," it will be God's work, not our tactics.

So, one of the signs among other signs of our times is that the Church — not the world, which is fundamentally uninterested in the issue — may begin to wake up to the fact that the world is secular, but worships with deep piety and devotion at many altars — politics, race, economics, culture, war, family, money, and, of course, religion. It is the use that the world might make of our faith as one of its religions that has always been its chief interest in the Church. But now we are entering another epoch in which the world tells itself that

in its maturity, achievement and sophistication it is increasingly bored with the possibility of translating the irrelevances of Christianity into a modern and meaningful religion. What we may expect, therefore, is that the world which now chooses to be openly and stridently secular will ignore us, or will very impersonally and very legally remove all of the conveniences she has granted us since early in the fourth century of our Lord. Or, it may be that we shall be permitted to keep a certain few of them if we are willing to identify (or at least associate) the Body of Christ with the religion and the crisis of the moment: communism or anti-communism; segregation or desegregation; free enterprise or socialism; Goldwater or Ho Chi Minh. But as matters now stand the world is not really interested in whether the Church joins, or refuses to join. And *that* is why the Church must say to the world and all its secularity and death-wishes and hates and loves: "*Be Reconciled to God!*" because you *are* reconciled to God.

* * * *

The reconciliation of which we speak is not the reconciliation, and thus the acquiescence, of the Church to the world, but the reconciliation of the men of the world to God. But to suggest that "Be reconciled to God!"—and thus be reconciled to all men because God has done for us what we cannot do for ourselves—is the peculiar message of the Church in these days of trouble, rebuke and blasphemy appears lighthearted, detached, and downright irresponsible. To sound on the trumpet the notes "Be reconciled!" (i.e., KATALLAGETE!) sounds cheap when no mob of sheriff or deputy is clubbing or kicking you, or shotgun blasting your comrades and your brothers in the night or in broad daylight in the presence of eyewitnesses; it sounds cheap when no sophisticated white Northern liberal is ruthlessly and smilingly shaking his head at your youngsters and invoking "neighborhood schools" and "responsible citizenship"; it sounds cheap when no bombs and no napalm falls on your hut or your wife or your babies; it sounds cheap when no preacher or politician or police bureaucrat equates "stopping" communism with the Gospel of Christ or democracy as he damns your conscience's refusal to equate Christianity or democracy with the nightmare of blunders and slaughter and terror in Southeast Asia. It sounds cheap, and cheap it is—unless the Church witnesses in word and deed that "Be reconciled!" is Christ's involvement, *now*, in the very world that exhibits itself in such trouble and rebuke and blasphemy. Unless—or perhaps it is more accurate to say "until" — we do so, our ambassadorship of Christ is sentimental and fraudulent. Unless — or

until — we do, the injunction “Be reconciled!” will have the appearance of an ideological pacifier which, being translated reads “Be ye acquiescent!” to every outrage which man perpetrates against his fellow man.

This is the inevitable consequence when we seek to tie God’s reconciliation of all men to a political strategy, or whenever reconciliation, love, forgiveness, and mercy are cut from their Source in God’s actions in Crucifixion and Resurrection and take root in human sentimentality and pride. To speak and act sentimentally about reconciliation, love, forgiveness and mercy mean to deny that they are instruments of God’s judgment, law, and justice, or to deny the inextricable relation of the latter to the former. To speak sentimentally about reconciliation and love, judgment and mercy, is thus to send Mr. Frank Buchman to convert Hitler; or to send Dr. Billy Graham and the Reverend Oral Roberts to witness to Sheriffs Clark and Coleman and Rainey or Governors Barnett and Wallace; or to send the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion to witness to Mayors Wagner and Daly and Yorty and Superintendent of Schools Willis or Chief of Police Parker, or J. Edgar Hoover. The other danger of sentimentality is legalism. Legalism threatens the church’s proclamation of reconciliation with the subtle temptation that once the 1964 Civil Rights Bill is enforced throughout the South, once recalcitrant counties are brought to heel with the 1965 Voter Rights Bill, once concordants between the power structures of white and Negro leaders have been signed, once Negroes serve on juries, and once whites (and Negroes) are punished for murdering or for exploiting the economic or civil rights of Negroes, the church can in good conscience slip back into the fleshpots of revivals, building programs, curriculum study, fellowship breakfasts, Civitan Clubs and the fellowship of political action with the power structure fighting highway road signs and the blight of the junk yards. If there is anything left for the Northern Church to teach us in the South it is the total failure of that form of sentimentality. Is it any less hypocritical — and therefore potentially less explosive—than the hypocrisy of the South? St. Paul (and John Calvin and Karl Barth) see the crux of the matter: *Gospel-and-Law*, in-one-breath; but *Gospel-and-Law in that order*. “Go and sin no more” means just that. It means that the Law is in force and is operative, that it works; thus: “Sin no more!” for the Law forbids it, and the Law *is* operative *now* because it is preceded by the power of the Good News that all men are reconciled to God and to each other.

So what the Church must do—by words and deeds—is to insist (first of all to ourselves) that the fact of reconciliation is not a human achievement but an act of God. Just how and *where* to make this proclamation has always been and will always be a vexing problem to the Church, so we should not become transfixed by it. Our times do not achieve their novelty or peculiarity by the existence of this problem. At the present moment we cannot know precisely *how* and *where* the Church can best carry out its mission to a world which insists with increasing enthusiasm that it needs no God, and having come of age must overthrow the childishness of traditional faith. One reason for this particularly serious uncertainty is that, for the first time in centuries, the atmosphere surrounding the problem of “Church and world” is beginning to clear up, so the Church must learn to walk on the water without the skiff boats of the world. But another reason for the uncertainty is to be found in the patent failure of the traditional organizations and institutions of the Church — a failure which in very large measure stems from its failure to proclaim that reconciliation is *not* a product of time and history and humanity but that reconciliation stands beyond and over time and history and humanity. In the Christian idiom, “Be reconciled!” is an eschatological proclamation and injunction, not a political or social or temporal slogan, and that is the quality of the proclamation we must make, however and whenever we make it.

* * * *

“Be reconciled!” is God’s Word to man. It is the Word, as the Crucifixion and Resurrection make clear, of God’s judgment on every pathetic and revolting maneuver by which we seek to reconcile ourselves by murdering our neighbor and our God. This eschatological dimension of reconciliation is what discerns the consequences of our technological wars against those who reject our presence on their continent and our domestic contradictions of racism and poverty. These are rods of God’s anger and judgment against us; the eschatological dimension discerns that the consequences of our failures to be the Church is God’s judgment on us; the eschatological dimension is what relates the Church to the world, the New to the Old Testament, Gospel to Law, love to judgment, the Word who came to dwell with us “in grace and truth” to the word of the Lord that came to Amos that summarizes God’s judgment on us:

“For three transgressions and for four, I will not revoke the punishment . . .”

Hence the sign that most accurately discerns our times is neither “God’s” “death” nor the world’s secularity or “coming of age.” Rather, it is the hand of God’s judgment upon us. What happened at the Crucifixion and in the Resurrection reveals that God will not indulge our attempts to reject His reconciliation of us when we substitute our schemes for His Word, no matter how seriously and how religiously we attempt the substitution. That is what the judgment of God is all about: His refusal to tolerate our denials of His reconciliation to Him and thus to each other. The judgment on us is God’s judgment on all of our structures and programs and institutions and councils and committees and theologies which somehow deny and reject what He wrought at the Crucifixion and Resurrection: His reconciliation of us to Himself and to all men. To judge us, He uses His ways and plans, not our ideas. Thus he may use the troubles and blasphemies of our social and racial and political revolutions—possibly the life (with its two “conversions”) of Malcolm X and the shame of and response to his murder—to judge the lack of vision in the Church and Consensus Establishment. Even the Church’s rejections of God Himself are used to reconcile us through judgment. What Joseph told his brothers is a statement about God’s judgment of His people’s sin: “Ye meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.” This is also a statement about justification by grace.

“The time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God.” A somewhat similar word came to the shepherd of Tekoa, “You only have I known of all the peoples of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.” Judgment begins on the Household of God because we — not the modern, secular world — are the ones guilty of rejecting and denying by word, silence, and deed, Christ’s reconciliation of us. We are the ones who make false witness in testifying that God’s reconciliation of us all is a sentimental indulgence of wickedness and murder; or a triumph of law over love, and death over resurrection; or that relevance to and contemporaneity with the world takes priority over proclamation of the Good News; or that a modern shrine designed with all the contemporary idioms of comfort and convenience is dearer to Jesus than the little ones near and far who die slowly by hunger or are killed in a moment of stark terror; or that we must deny or demythologize the eschatological dimension of the Son of Man’s *judgment* that “. . . inasmuch as you have done it to the least of these, my brethren . . .”

Time enough, hopefully, to try to discern in more detail the signs of God’s judgment on the

household of the world in which we also take bread and lodgings. God is surely using the terrifying and almost apocalyptic consequences of the world’s current arrogances and prides and death-wishes as judgment on our lack of vision and strength to bring forth justice and peace. Just as clearly, however, the rods of God’s anger do “not so intend,” as Isaiah warns; they do “not so think” of themselves as instruments of God’s judgment and mercy.

Shall the ax vaunt itself over him who hews with it,
or the saw magnify itself against him who
wields it?

As if a rod should wield him who lifts it,
or as if a staff should lift him who is not wood!

Something which the late H. Richard Niebuhr expressed so eloquently about the judgment of God in the Second World War we must hear and heed about our own wars, whether they be in Southeast Asia, or on poverty, injustice, racism and misery.

The fundamental Christian assumption about divine justice may be stated . . . by saying that it is never merely punishment for sin, as though God were concerned simply to restore the balance between men by making those suffer who have inflicted suffering, but that it is always primarily punishment of sinners who are to be chastened and changed in the character which produced the sinful acts . . . War as a judgment of God is a purgatory, not a hell.

Christians cannot interpret God’s action in war as the judgment of vengeance for another and profounder reason: the pains of war do not descend primarily on the unjust but on the innocent. Wars are crucifixions. It is not the mighty, the guides and leaders of nations and churches, who suffer most in them, but the humble, little people who have had little to do with the framing of great policies. Even pacifists in jail have little reason to think of themselves as the martyrs of war when they reflect on all the children, wives and mothers, humble obedient soldiers, peasants on the land, who in the tragedy of war are made an offering for sin.

Dr. Niebuhr penned these words in May, 1942.

* * * *

The promise and hope of the prophets always enclose their threats. To the “elected people” (cf. II Corinthians 5:15-20) this means, to borrow Tillich’s phrasing, that “their destruction is their fulfillment.” God’s judgment on our rejection of His reconciliation does not destroy us, it fulfills us. The prophets and Jesus and Paul could never lose hope because witnessing God’s action in judgment, they knew He was near and that His love was steadfast. Out of God’s judgment on our denial of His reconciliation of us all will emerge new structures, formulas and leaders. As yet, however, we can not see even darkly through the glass

Yet, if we seem now to advocate the repeal of recently enacted civil rights laws or oppose the passage of others we are being less than clear. And certainly we are not suggesting that love and law are contrary to each other. The point is that those of us who should be interested in relating the two seem not to be relating them at all but to be promoting the one and ignoring the other. The further point is that the one we insist on promoting continues to let us down.

If law is for the purpose of preventing crime every wail of a siren calls out its failure. Every civil rights demonstration attests to the courts' inability to provide racial justice. Every police chief who asks for a larger appropriation because of the rising crime rate is admitting his own failure. Every time a law has to be *enforced* it is a failure.

The simple fact is that for the Christian, law is an inadequate minimal. Do not even the publicans the same? If this is all we have to offer the world then Jesus Christ was of all men most mad.

Still we hear, "But the Thomas Colemans must be restrained." Exactly! Then where is the fruit? When *will* he be restrained? The truth is that he now sees a truce being signed between his two traditional enemies, Negro leaders and the Federal government. No doubt, this has been necessary in moving in the direction of simple justice, especially when he has declined offers to be a party to the truce. Be that as it may, the rejections continue, the killings go on, the hostilities mount and intensify, perhaps to be set loose wholesale again on another day when the Feds and the Marchers have all gone home, or turned to stopping the war with Venus, and what we see as the gains of this day turn out to be the rack rent of that day.

The further truth is that he has not yet been effectively restrained. Law succeeds in putting him in a cage but he continues to shoot through the bars.

If the argument now is on the basis of what will work, then let us put it there.

Few criminologists today see punishment, and especially capital punishment, as an effective deterrent to crime. I have had the frustrating experience during the past six months of working with a group on a frantic, around the clock, basis in an effort to abolish capital punishment. The argument that got the most votes in the legislature was the above finding of leading criminologists. Since that time some of those same individuals have marched in the streets over the acquittal of Thomas Coleman. When they hear, "You are after re-

venge," they reply, "No, not revenge. Preventative." Now this is sheer madness.

* * * *

What then do we say? Certainly we cannot say we are not interested in stopping the killings all around us. Any Christian who is not involved to his maximum in correcting the injustices of the Southern region had best examine his commitment to Christ. Certainly we cannot say we are not interested in the success of the civil rights movement. Too long we debated the number of angels on a needle point while our brothers were in chains. Certainly we cannot advocate retreating from the world into the security of established religion. God knows that didn't work! But the question is, what is one's maximum involvement? Is it law or is there a still deeper issue and involvement?

What distinctive word, what message of hope does the Christian have for the racial crisis? It may be that he has no word of hope in the sense that hope is understood generally. But he certainly has a distinctive word. That word is *The Word*. *The Word* become flesh.

And that *Word* leads us to the death of Jonathan Daniels and our response to it. What can one say when a brother whom we have set apart and sent forth is dead? We can say, "Our brother is dead. Let's go bury him." Then we can say a benediction. And perhaps nothing more is appropriate.

But we who set Jon Daniels apart and sent him forth have said far more than that. We got immediate appointments with the highest official of the Department of Justice. We pressured through releases and statements and marches and court stays for Federal intervention. We have said such things as: "We must have Federal initiative and involvement in the investigation and prosecution of murders . . ." And now we are considering civil proceedings of our own against the murderer of our brother. We have indicated that the President is a scoundrel for not "doing something." And worst of all we have said that unless the conditions which we have set forth are met, Jonathan will have died in vain.

Yes, that is worst of all because nothing, absolutely nothing, any of us do or do not do now will cause his death to have been in vain. That is out of our hands. He can never have died in vain because he loved his killer. By his own last written words he loved his killer. According to those words, he did not love him (that is, Selma) the first time he saw him but he loved him when he died. (If one is looking for a martyr in it all, to die at the hands of one you love for a cause in which you believe

strongly enough to let the beloved kill you is coming mighty close.) If he had loved only the Negroes with whom he lived and ate and worshipped it might have been different. Then one might set up conditions and issue ultimatums in order to get mileage out of his death, in order to have his death "mean something." But since he loved his murderer his death is its own meaning. And what that means is that Thomas Coleman is forgiven. If Jonathan forgives him, as he did when he came to love him, then it is not for me to cry for his blood. Any act on my part which is even akin to "avenging" his death is sacrilege. Vengeance negates martyrdom. It never confirms it. The sacramental act was Jonathan's, not mine.

When he loved his killer he set him free, for that is what love is. We might at least have learned that much from two thousand years of punishing Jews for killing Christ.

But apart from that, for the Christian to invoke the law of the State in this case is as absurd as it would have been for the early Christians to have gone to Court following the death of Polycarp in 155, or for the Gospel Missionary Union to have lobbied for a war with Ecuador when Nathaniel Saint was killed at the hands of a savage Jinaro Indian mob in 1958. Jonathan was as certainly an evangelist as Polycarp. He was as certainly a missionary as Nathaniel. And any time a Christian is set apart and sent forth to proclaim the bold and offensive *Word*, death is apt to be the outcome. While I cannot find it within me to rejoice in this death, we at least must know that what happened was the worst that they could do, that all Satan can produce is death and that that enemy has been conquered by *The Word*. If Tom had understood this, he would have seen his act as one of folly. Knowing well the law, it made a lot of sense.

That is what Reinhold Niebuhr was telling us years ago when he said that admonitions that the self ought to love itself and others "are spiritually impotent." He continued:

An insecure, impoverished self is not made more secure by the admonition to be concerned for itself; for an excessive concern for its security is the cause of its impoverishment. Nor is it made secure by the admonition to love others because that is precisely what it cannot do because of its anxiety about itself. That is why a profound religion has always insisted that the self cannot be cured by law but only by grace; and also why the profoundest forms of the Christian faith regard this preoccupation as not fully curable and therefore as requiring another kind of grace: that of forgiveness.

Of course, we are insistent in all our sayings that what we are working for is a society in which

this will not happen again. But even that is troublesome. I feel comfortable enough working and marching for a society in which a man can vote, go to school, ride a bus, buy a house, get a job or burn his draft card. I, somehow, am not quite so comfortable working toward a State that will defend God against those who stone his prophets.

Perhaps to be stoned is the only witness we have left.

And might the truth of the matter be that we don't quite, not yet quite after all this time and all our learning and all our protestations of faith, trust the central theme of the Gospel, the triumph of grace over law.

The notion that a man can go to a store where a group of unarmed human beings are assembled, fire a shotgun blast at one of them, tearing his lungs and heart and bowels from his body, turn on another and send lead pellets ripping through his flesh and bones, and that God will set him free is almost more than we can stand. But unless that is precisely the case then there is no Gospel, there is no good news. Unless that is the truth we are back under law, and Christ's death and resurrection are of no account.

When Thomas killed Jonathan he committed a crime against the state of Alabama. Alabama, for reasons of its own, chose not to punish him for that crime against itself. And do we not all know what those reasons were?

When Thomas killed Jonathan he committed a crime against God. The strange, the near maddening thing about this case is that both these offended parties have rendered the same verdict—not for the same reasons, not in the same way, but the verdict is the same — acquittal.

The Christian response here is not to damn the "acquittal by *law*," but to proclaim the "acquittal by *resurrection*." One frees him to go and kill again. The other liberates him to obedience to Christ. Acquittal by law was the act of Caesar. Render unto him what is his. The State, by its very nature and definition, can do anything it wills to do — Hitler proved that much. Acquittal by resurrection was the act of God. And He has entrusted us with that message.

Thomas also committed a crime against Jonathan. And Jonathan rendered a similar verdict when he loved him.

But he also committed an offense against us, against those of us who set Jonathan apart and sent him forth. Thus far we have come out worst of all.

Perhaps it is because we are afraid of the Colemans of this world. Perhaps it is because he rebuffed us in the Delta and elsewhere. But worse than either of these it may be that we just plain do not love him.

The blood that is on our hands is more than that of Daniels and Reeb, Schwermer and Lee, Cheney and Goodman, Evers and Jackson. The blood that is on our hands is the immortal souls of the Colemans and the Raineyes. They did it in the name of Jesus Christ.

That makes them blasphemers. If we, the righteous ones, the children of light, can offer them only law for their deliverance we are approaching the point of joining them in that offense.

If he persists in his blasphemy, and we in ours, we may yet be integrated with him—but in Hell. What then have *we* overcome?

A few years ago I heard a civil rights leader say to a group of whites, "If I come in a restaurant and sit down near you I don't care if you hate me. I don't care if you vomit in your plate. Just don't keep me from sitting there." This is understandable. This may even be what simple justice is about and let us not minimize its importance. But it falls far short of the reconciliation affected by a crucified God.

That *Event*, that *Word* assures his right to the table because it abolished such worldly categories as race. And it stops the vomiting in the plate. That is what reconciliation is about. That is what God has done. Emmanuel.

The nine poems in this issue were written by Robert Stewart, a native of Texas who teaches in The Department of English at United College, Winnipeg, Manitoba. He holds degrees from Kenyon College and Yale University. His poetry has appeared in *New World Writing*, *Canadian Forum*, and *The Queen's Quarterly*.

END OF THE FALL

ROBERT STEWART

Down windy streets through leaves that fly I walk
while over all Connecticut October
is turning sober.

Drunkard of seasons, now let's sit and talk.

The step here looks presentable and warm
(west wind is chilly but this house will break it),
so why not take it

kindly, as offers made for love not form.

Will you excuse me if I seem abrupt,
I am not looking for a monstrous moral
and do not quarrel
with your intoxication—interrupt
if you feel moved to do so, time is ours,
the sun is not straight up yet. But my humor
(you know the rumor)
is to ask why brown leaves and faded flowers?

SEASON

I heard one rumor in the trees all night,
the wind of winter's killing breath loud blowing.
I must be going.
I naturally do not grudge his right.

I wear these not for death, much less for pleasure
I would repent. The red towns which I painted
I reacquainted
with that clear crop the monthly creatures measure.

Nature was blessed, wine was bright with the tang,
and I am not ungrateful for fruition.
No, my contrition
is not contrite, but lord! it has its pang.

MAN

If you do not fear death and have no sins,
what makes you low, what makes you so hung-
over?

Be like a lover
who thinks, if old love passes, new begins.

SEASON

Old pandar wisdom—but no use to me.
It is my brother comes again. The season

(and here's my reason)

once past is past like a broken wave at sea.

MAN

True, true indeed, but in the winter dawn
came Christ the King across the shining portal
to make immortal
all joy that is although past time is gone.

SEASON

Ah, I was not there then and that's the pain,
nor have I yet been called there since that coming.
You men, whose drumming
harries the nations to their arms again,

yours is that blessing; but you scuff the straw,
averse to what beset the star-bright stable,
turning a table
of hospitality back into law.

Of strength itself law splits the heart, cracks
through
the soundest bones, sucking their lively marrow.
And lost that sparrow
the wan wolf spies fall far afield like you.

MAN

Absolute trust prevents the wolfish meal
for every sparrow in his single flying.
But there is dying
of others. Law is our prayer to heal.

The Lord have mercy on our failure, we
try to do things he could and would do. Loving,
we must be moving;
and moving, we turn our back on charity.
The pity of it—see—puts out the sun,
and you and I must thus consent to parting.
The snow, now starting,
brings round the prayer, and so our best is done.

PRAYER

Now O calm King, come out through the gold door,
come Christ, the peoples' hope, the peoples' savior,
let fall behavior
evoke your great re-entrance. Come once more.

The Failure and the Hope

WALKER PERCY

Those of us in the South who call ourselves Christians have come face to face with the most critical and paradoxical moment in our history. The crisis is the Negro revolution. The paradox lies in this: that the hope for the future — and both the hope and the promise, in my opinion and for reasons which shall follow, were never greater — requires as its condition of fulfillment the strictest honesty in assessing the dimensions of our failure.

What lies at issue is whether or not the South will bring to bear its particular tradition and its particular virtues to humanize a national revolution which is in the main secular and which is going to be accomplished willy-nilly with or without the Christian contribution—or whether it will yield the field by default.

The failure of the Christian in the South has been both calamitous and unremarkable. And perhaps that is the worst of it: that no one finds the failure remarkable, not we who ought to know better, not the victims of our indifference who confess the same Christ, and not even the world who witnessed our failure. No one was surprised. The world which said many years ago, "See how the Christians love one another," would presumably have been surprised if these earlier Christians had violated each other or turned their backs upon the violation. Now as then the children of the world are wiser than the children of light: they witnessed the failure we concealed from ourselves and found it not in the least remarkable.

The world in fact does not think badly of us. It holds us generally speaking to be good, an

asset to the community. The sickness of Christendom may lie in fact in this: that we are judged by the world and even to a degree have come to judge ourselves as but one of a number of "groups" or institutions which have a "good" impact on society. One thinks of those panel programs and seminars on educational TV which set out to explore the means of combatting juvenile delinquency, crime in the streets, drug addiction and so on. Someone on the panel usually gets around to listing the forces for good in the community which can be enlisted in the battle. There is the home, the schools, the labor unions, the business community; and there are the churches

And in the matter of racial injustice, the churches are treated with the same respectful impartiality. The media approvingly report the news that such and such a bishop has integrated the parochial schools or that this or that minister has joined a bi-racial committee, in much the same tone with which they report that IBM has set up its own Fair Employment Practices Committee. The bad behavior of Christians is not treated as any worse or more scandalizing than bad behavior anywhere else. When God is invoked by the Klan and the Citizens' Councils, when ministers open the meeting with a prayer; when white Catholics in Louisiana get in fist fights with Negro Catholics on the church steps, nobody cries shame. The world does not laugh and in fact is not even pleased. Because, as everyone knows, churches are, generally speaking, on the list of good institutions and

do in fact make valuable contributions to the community — along with the home, the school, the media

Christians in the South should, of all people, know better. Or perhaps it is more accurate to say that if they don't know better then Christendom is indeed sick unto death. But in their heart of hearts they do know better. Because the South, more so than the rest of the country, is still Christ-haunted, to use an expression of Flannery O'Connor. Whatever the faults of the South, it is perhaps the only section of the United States where the public and secular consciousness is still to a degree informed by theological habits of thought, the old notions of sin, of heaven and hell, of God's providence, however abused and shopworn these notions may be. Flannery O'Connor, a Catholic novelist, counted it her great good fortune to have been born and raised and to work in the Protestant South. In the Catholic novel she claimed, "the center of meaning will be Christ and the center of destruction will be the devil." The South has always known this, even when its morality was mainly concerned with sex and alcohol to the exclusion of ordinary human cruelty. And the Southerner is apt to inherit, almost despite himself, a theological turn of mind. More likely than not he has grown up in a place drenched in tragedy and memory and to have known first hand a rich and complex world of human relationships which are marked by a special grace and a special cruelty and guilt.

Our region, I submit, is to a larger degree informed by theological habits of thought than the rest of the country. And those of us who are professing Christians have better reason than most to understand the theological basis and consequences of our actions and less excuse to fall victim to the sociological heresy which sees the Church as but one among several "good" institutions which can be used to engineer a democratic society.

It is all the more shameful then that the failure is precisely a theological failure. How much more tolerable would have been our position if it had fallen out otherwise, if we could have said to the secular liberals of the Northern cities: yes, it is true that we differ radically from you in our view of the nature of man and the end of man, that we have reservations about your goal of constructing the city of God here and now; further, we don't like some of the things you tolerate in your perfect city. But we applaud your attack on the perennial evils of poverty, inhumanity and disease, and we too believe that men can be reconciled here and now but that they can only be reconciled through the meditation of God and the love of men for

God's sake. We strive for the same goals; we say only that you deceive yourself in imagining that you can achieve these goals without God.

But we can't even say that. The defect has occurred on the grounds of our own choosing. The failure has been a failure of love, a violation of that very Mystical Body of Christ which we have made our special property at the risk of scandalizing the world by our foolishness. A scandal has occurred right enough, but it has not been the scandal intended by the Gospels. The failure, that is to say, has occurred within the very order of *sin* which we have taken so seriously and the world so lightly. Where we have failed worst is not in the sphere of community action wherein little store is set by theological values. Churches indeed have not done at all badly in discharging their sociological functions, combatting juvenile delinquency and broken homes and alcoholism. The failure has been rather the continuing and unreflecting cruelty of Christians toward the Negro, the Negro considered not as beloved household pet ("Cruelty? No! Why, I would do anything for Uncle Ned and he for me!") but considered as member of the same Mystical Body, freed and dignified by the same covenant which frees and dignifies us. The sin has been the sin of omission, specifically the Great Southern Sin of Silence. During the past ten years, the first ten years of the Negro revolution, a good deal was heard about the "good" people of the South, comprising the vast majority, who deplored the violence and who any day would make themselves felt. But these good people are yet to be heard from. If every Christian era has its besetting sin, the medieval Church its inquisitorial cruelty, 18th Century Anglicanism its Laodiceanism, the 20th Century Christian South might well be remembered by its own peculiar mark: *silence*.

The default of the white Southern Christian was revealed in its proper ironic perspective by the Civil Rights movement itself. When the good people of the South did not come forward when they were needed, their burden was shouldered by, of all people, the liberal humanist who, like the man St. Paul speaks of in his epistle to the Ephesians, is stranger to every covenant, with no promise to hope for, the world about him and no God—but who nevertheless was his brother's keeper. In the deep South of the nineteen sixties, the man who nursed the sick, bound his wounds, taught the ignorant, fed the hungry, went to jail with the imprisoned, were not the Christians of Birmingham or Bogalusa but were, more likely than not, the young CORE professionals or COFO volunteers, Sarah Lawrence sociology majors, agnostic Jewish social workers like Mickey Schwerner, Camus existentialists and the like.

It is possible for a Southerner to criticize his region in the harshest possible terms, not because he thinks the South is worse than the rest of the country and can only be saved by the Berkeley-Cambridge axis but for the exactly opposite reason: that, in spite of her failures, he suspects that it may very likely fall to the destiny of the South to save the country from the Berkeley-Cambridge axis. If this should prove the case, it is not simply because cities like Los Angeles and New York are exhibiting an almost total paralysis and fecklessness when confronted with Watts and Harlem, while at the same time Atlanta and Greenville are doing comparatively better. (Truthfully I think the South is "doing better" for an odd mixture of Southern and Northern reasons, none of which have much to do with Christianity, for example, Southern good humor and social grace plus a sharp Yankee eye for the dollar and the "public image.") No, the criticism is levelled and the game is worth the candle because, at least in one Southerner's opinion, the ultimate basis for racial reconciliation must be theological rather than legal and sociological and that in the South, perhaps more than in any other region, the civil and secular consciousness is still sufficiently informed by a theological tradition to provide a sanction for racial reconciliation. (By contrast, the Catholic Church in other parts of the country also provides a powerful sanction but it is a purely religious sanction and not necessarily reflected in the habitual attitudes of civil bodies such as legislatures and school boards.) The South can, that is, if she wants to. She can just as easily choose the opposite course, like Protestant South Africa.

II

The thesis that it may fall to the South to save the Union just as it fell to the North one hundred years ago, might appear not merely paradoxical but in the highest degree fanciful. Yet there are, I believe, good and sufficient reasons for entertaining special hopes for the future, not the least of which is the coming into being of peculiarly Southern groups of Christian churchmen. Like Israel, the South is still killing God's messengers, men like Reeb, Daniel, and Morrisroe, but at least she is killing them and not ignoring them, or worse, conferring upon them lukewarm Civitan honors. And now she may have new prophets.

There are also historical reasons which are largely negative and have to do with the failure of other "good" traditions, traditions which, noble though they might have been and still are, do not perhaps possess the interior resources of renewal which seems to be the perennial and saving gift of Christianity. These failures have cleared the

ideological air as it has not been cleared since the first slave came ashore in Virginia. In the failure of old alternatives, future choices become plainer.

The traditions in question and their respective historical difficulties are: (1) the collapse of the old-style "good" white man in the South and the dramatic disintegration of his alliance with the Negro, and (2) the on-going demoralization of the secular urban-suburban middle-class society, the very culture from which so many of the Civil Rights activists derive.

The thesis of this article, for which there is not room to lay the proper ground, let alone defend, is that the major ideological source of racial moderation in the South has not been Christian at all but Stoic, that this tradition has now collapsed, that in spite of its nobility (or perhaps because of its nobility) it possessed fatal weaknesses and therefore served as a distracting and confusing alternative to racism, and finally that its collapse has confronted Christians with a crucial test the outcome of which will be unequivocal triumph or unequivocal disaster. The chips, that is to say, are down and it is time they were.

The degree of reconciliation achieved under this noble and mainly non-Christian ethic was more considerable than is generally realized. As a result of the old "fusion principle", as it was known, the Negro in the deep South enjoyed more civil rights in the period immediately following Reconstruction than at any time afterwards—until the last few months. Restaurants and trains were not segregated. Congressman Catchings of Mississippi, one of the noblest of the Old Redeemers, reported that there were more Negro officeholders in his district than in the entire North. This alliance, it is important to note, was struck between the Negro and the white conservative against the poor whites and the Radical Republicans. It has been this same white conservative leadership which in many parts of the South exerted a more or less consciously moderate racial influence even after it was politically overwhelmed by the latter-day Populist-racists, Vardaman, Heflin, Bilbo and their followers. The old alliance with the Negro was in part politically motivated. But it also had a strong moral basis. It is the contention here that this morality was paternalistic and Stoic in character and that it derived little or none of its energies from Christian theology. Even in those instances where the best Southern leaders were, like Robert E. Lee, professing Christians, James McBride Dabbs has shown that there was a strong Stoic component in their character formation. Perhaps the most distinguishing mark and, as it turned out, the greatest weakness of the Stoic morality, was its exclusively

personal character and its consequent indifference to the social and political commonweal. The Stoic took as his model, either consciously or unconsciously, the Emperor Marcus Aurelius who wrote in his *Meditations*, "Every moment think steadily, as a Roman and a man, to do what thou hast in hand with perfect and simple dignity and a feeling of affection and freedom and justice." Such a moral ideal, lofty as it is, has largely to do with the housekeeping of one's interior castle, specifically the maintenance of its order and the brightness of one's personal honor. In the light of such a code, the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ wherein each of us is a member, one of another, and no one is inviolate in the precincts of his soul, must remain incomprehensible.

But it was they, the Stoics, who lived by their lights and we who did not. The best of them kept the old broadsword virtues while the Christians by and large egregiously sinned against their own commandments, through commission and omission—in the latter case through an impoverished morality restricted largely to rules for the use of sex and alcohol. It was the Christians in the South who supplied the main ideological support for slavery. It is the Christians now who still underwrite segregation with Levitical quotations and Ham-Shem sociology. Nor is it enough to say that Christ was no social reformer and that St. Paul wasn't worried about freeing slaves. Where the Southern Christian failed was on his own ground, in his own performance in the face of here-and-now cruelty and suffering and inhumanity.

Even when the Christian did come to the aid of the afflicted and abused Negro, he often did so for Stoic reasons, with the old benevolence and the sense of personal bond toward Uncle Ned and Aunt Jemima but without that larger and more mysterious charity which at one and the same time binds men close and sets them free, one of another, and does not keep books on gratitude.

Most of us have known the old tradition first hand and recall it with affection and admiration. I remember in the most vivid way long conversations with my uncle about the plantation system. At that time—in the 1930's—the sharecropper system was coming under heavy attack from "Northern liberals." As a planter, my uncle felt that the attacks were unjust. He believed that the sharecropper system was an outgrowth of a natural partnership between the Confederate veterans who had nothing left but the land and the Negroes who had nothing but their labor. No doubt he was right. To justify its use in modern times, he cited his own experience and that of his friends, who dealt with their tenants, more than honorably,

serving also as father and friend. To behave with dishonor was to these men a detestable thing, but to mistreat a Negro was unthinkable, precisely because the Negro was helpless. But other men, a great many other men, were not so scrupulous. And the Negro remained helpless, precisely because he had no entity in the public order of things and neither law nor religion felt constrained to underwrite such an entity.

We may speak now of the old tradition without fear of patronizing it, because it was it and not the Christian tradition which fleshed out some of the noblest men this country has produced. We may go even further. As Dabbs wrote in his remarkable book, *Who Speaks for the South?*, the final evidence that there was something wrong with the South as a society, that in the last analysis it was not a great society, was that it produced neither saints nor great artists.

Stoic excellence, in short, was not enough. Its code had little relevance in the social and political order. For not only was there the tendency to wash one's hands of prevailing social evils, there was ever the temptation to *Schadenfreude*, the peculiar sin of the Stoic, a grim sort of pleasure to be taken in the very deterioration of society, the crashing of the world about one's ears. Southern literature is full of direful, eschatological—and pleasurable—reports of the decline and fall of both the South and the United States.

Though it was defeated politically around 1890, the Stoic tradition has persisted until recently. Nearly everyone in the South has known someone like Atticus Finch in *To Kill a Mockingbird* with his quite Attic sense of decency (and his correspondingly low regard for Christianity) and his courage before the lynch mob. It is, however, this very Stoic tradition which has finally collapsed as a significant influence in the Southern community. The old conservative often became the new conservative, that is, a segregationist and "States' Righter." The force for moderation is now more likely to be the business man—the "power structure"—the mayor, the manager of the new IBM center or the NASA complex who wants no part of the K.K.K. or the Citizens' Councils, though for reasons which have nothing to do with Christ or with Marcus Aurelius.

The ideological vacuum created by the failure of the gentle tradition has been filled not by Christians but by other elements, the moderate business community and the secular reformer. The Christian clergy has been increasingly active but the inertness of cultural Christendom is well-known. Is it possible that this well-known lag between clergy and laity can be traced to still viable Stoic

elements in Christendom considered as a cultural artifact which one inherits more or less passively as he inherits language and custom?

There is not much doubt about the existence of such a lag. An increasingly familiar fact of life in the Southern parish, Protestant and Catholic, has come to be the tension between the "radical" new minister or priest and his "conservative" flock. There are the usual grumblings about brainwashing in the seminary. But is this lag to be understood in purely socio-political terms of liberal *vs* conservative? I think not, because this particular bias has proved quite as refractory to pulpit appeals as to political appeals. I suspect that a good deal of the offense taken can be laid to a fundamental Stoic offense to any demand for public appeal and political morality. There is still the old reflex which somehow rules the preacher out of bounds when he talks about social morality as well as sexual morality. The very man who will get up at all hours to get Ol' Jim out of jail and even risk his life to protect Ol' Jim from the lynch mob is also outraged when Jim's sons demand better schools and better police — not come hat in hand but demand them as ordinary rights of a citizen. And of course the fact is that many of the old-style "good" people, both Christian and Stoic, have now turned against the Negro because of what they deem his "insolence." "If the Negro had not become aggressive," a good Christian man told me the other day, "I'd still be on his side. It is these demonstrations, his *demanding* rights of me, which changed my attitude." Of *me*? Here is the heart of the matter certainly: it is where the rights are deemed to come from which causes the offense.

Such a response can be traced, I believe, to an antique Southern preoccupation, not with theology, as a rule of social intercourse, but with *manners*. By manners I do not refer in this context to that courtesy which one Christian awards another by virtue of the infinite value he assigns to the other's person but rather to manners understood as a primary concern with an intercourse of gesture, a minuet of overture and response. It is an economy of gesture which in its accounting of debits and credits, of generosity given and gratitude expected, of face and loss of face, which is almost Oriental. (Note also the similarities of the classic Stoic tradition with certain Oriental moral philosophies.) A great part of the social intercourse between whites and Negroes in the South, I daresay, was founded on a complex and meticulously observed protocol of manners. And it came to pass that an extraordinary social fabric was woven between black and white using these very elements and in the face of the most trying circumstances. Nor is

this to say that this Southern tradition of manners is irrelevant to the problems of the day. It would be a great pity indeed if the ordinary everyday good manners of Southerners, black and white, should be overturned in the present revolution.

But the American Negro in 1965 may reply that the social graces of his ancestors in Alabama didn't in the end do him or them much good. It is his present "bad manners" which now offend his old ally—though in all honesty I must admit that the opposite seems the case: the continued "good manners" of the Southern Negro is nothing short of amazing. The point is of course that in a society based largely on an intercourse of manners even the mildest public and political action taken to redress grievances is apt to be received as a code infraction and hence "bad manners."

The old alliance failed through a fatal weakness which now stands revealed. It was based primarily on personal relationships and never really possessed the interior resources, political or religious, through which the integrity of the Negro's person could be guaranteed in its own right.

What is the lesson? The lesson is surely that at the very time the old order has collapsed and new social forces are beginning to stir the South from its long sleep, the Christian laity is still responding with old cultural reflexes to a new and somewhat unmannered order of things. Surely also, the remedy is theological, not merely preaching a gospel of reconciliation, but teaching: setting forth, that is, what is the case as well as what ought to be. What is the case is that the Christian porch is no longer habitable, that pleasant site of cultural Christendom neither quite inside the church nor altogether in the street from which one had the best of both, church on Sundays and at Baptism and marriage and death, and the rest of the time lived in the sunny old Stoa of natural grace and good manners. It doesn't work now.

III

The Negro in the South has a new ally. He is not the old-style gentleman or Stoic or quasi-Christian but rather the liberal humanist who is, more likely than not, frankly post-Christian in his beliefs. The clergy has been active in the Civil Rights movement, sometimes heroically so, but the impetus has not in the main been theological—except among black Southern Christians but even in this case to a decreasing degree, especially among the younger Negroes. Among the volunteers of the Mississippi Summer Project of 1964, it was the exception rather than the rule to come across anyone who had come to Mississippi to implement Christian principles even though the project was

sponsored by the National Council of Churches. It was rarer still to find a Southern Christian layman. And yet they were on the whole an earnest and admirable young group.

Here is a point of view, not at all atypical, expressed by one of the volunteers,

Along with my Core class I teach a religion class at one every afternoon and a class on non-violence at four fifteen . . . In religion they are being confronted for the first time with people they respect who do not believe in God and with people who do believe in God but who do not take the Bible literally. It's a challenging class because I have no desire to destroy their belief, whether Roman Catholic or Baptist, but I want them to look at things critically and to learn to separate fact from myth in all areas, not just religion.

There is no reason to doubt this statement—that this young person does not wish Baptists and Catholics to lose their faith—though a good deal could be written about the assumptions and begged questions behind the statement. What is noteworthy perhaps is a lack of seriousness, a certain casualness with which the perennially mooted religious questions are assumed to be disposed of. The old animus against the Christian proposition has been replaced by a shrug. Here, at any rate, is the new "good" man, a person of unquestionable good will and earnestness who explicitly disavows orthodox Christian belief. She places her confidence, not on the old verities, but on "facts" (that is to say, observable and replicable phenomena) and on social techniques.

This secularization of the Civil Rights movement has been largely misunderstood in the South. The failure of Southern Christendom has not only been theological—a default in the duty of reconciliation—but prophetic in its blindness both to what happened and what is to come. Confronted by a revolutionary and to a large degree non-Christian movement and obfuscated by his own Stoic reading of race relations—"we have nothing but love for our Negroes and they for us" etc.—the Southern Christian has all too often made the unhappy mistake of labelling the Civil Rights movement as Communist, immoral, Unamerican and so on. Apparently there are a few Communists involved and apparently there has been some sexual misbehavior, but this is not an occasion for rejoicing. The reason the Christian racist goes to such lengths

to discredit the new allies of the Negro and is so pleased when they uncover sexual sin is not hard to discover. For the bitterest pill for him to swallow is the fact, hardly to be contested and which in his heart he does not contest, that the Negro revolution is mainly justified, mainly peaceful (from the side of the Negroes) and mainly American. For to admit this hard reality would entail *pari passu* a confession of his own failure.

How stands the Christian then vis-a-vis the challenge of the new-style "good" man? Better off than before, I think, and less compromised than he was in his relation to the old-style Stoic quasi-Christian gentleman.

The present hope is to be found, paradoxically as it is often the case with Christian hope, in the very extremity of the failure. The old Christian porch, that is to say, is becoming increasingly uninhabitable by moderately serious persons, which is to say our best young people. It is surely not too much to say that if Southern Christendom does not soon demonstrate the relevance of its theology to the single great burning social issue in American life, it runs the risk of becoming ever more what it in fact to a degree already is, the pleasant Sunday lodge of conservative Southern business men which offends no one and which no one takes seriously.

The larger hope and opportunity of the Christian gospel lies of course in the terrible dilemma of the new "good" man himself, the denizen, we might call him, of the victorious technological-democratic society. A great deal has been written about him and his Twentieth Century sickness. Suffice it here to say only what he has said about himself: that the very urban and middle-class society from which has come so many of the earnest young revolutionaries is itself marked by the malaise and anomie and other symptoms of the new sickness. There is nothing new in this. Indeed preachers speak every Sunday about the emptiness of modern man and the One who can fill the emptiness. And they are right. But God help us here in the South (or in Chicago or Los Angeles) if we imagine that reconciliation is not our business here and now and that all we have to do is convert the Communists and bring Christ to the "empty modern man." Because these latter are not going to be listening. The fruits, by which they had every right to know us, were too meagre.

Mr. Dabbs, a writer and farmer, lives near Mayesville, South Carolina and for a number of years was President of the Southern Regional Council. The following articles are based upon talks he recorded for the radio committee of the Committee of Southern Churchmen, and are carried on several radio stations in the South. Mr. Dabbs is a member of the editorial board of *Katallagete*. His most recent book is *Who Speaks For The South?*

Southern Indirection / The Southerner and Time

JAMES MCBRIDE DABBS

After ten days in the South, a Northern acquaintance said to me once, "I don't understand you Southerners. I ask a straight question and never get a straight answer. You turn it off, you tell a story, you just don't notice." "Elizabeth!" I said. "Do you really expect to get a straight answer from a Southerner? Why, for several hundred years white Southerners have been talking with colored Southerners without getting a straight answer. The Negroes had better sense. They told the whites what the whites wanted to hear. Finally, everybody—that is, everybody—got to talking in circles. Listening to two Southerners talk is like watching two dogs meet: they go 'round and 'round each other. When a Southerner comes at you straight, he's getting dangerous."

This indirectness is rooted in both good and evil. Its evil root is cowardice. For a long time now we have been afraid to face basic issues; for the issue underlying all others has been the race issue. Since we didn't know how to handle this, there was a silent agreement to let it alone. "Thank God," says a character in a Southern novel, "some folks got sense enough to forget what they ain't got courage to change." So we have tried to forget the basic issue. But if we cannot raise the basic issue, then we can hardly raise any issue; for question leads on to question and suddenly we're facing the unfaceable.

Of course, you may call this good sense, and we've usually called it this—when we've thought

about it. But it is good sense bought at the price of judgment and wisdom; we have practiced getting along; we haven't really tried to solve our problems.

On the other hand, this way the Southerner has of walking around people is also rooted in wisdom. In respect for other people. In the belief that there's an inner private life, where a man is alone with his conscience and his God. Trying not to intrude upon this privacy, we walk around a person, finding out where he stands, what connections he has, what relations, most importantly who are his relatives, his family, his kinfolks. The typical question addressed to the stranger is, "Where're you from?" What place, what family, what people? And, after all, this is about all you can surely know about anybody. You learn this, and then you guess what kind of person he is.

This hesitation about probing the inner life of a man is rooted, therefore, both in fear and in respect. It's the way we've learned to look at life; it's a part of Southern culture. What would Christianity say about it?

It would have to say that the roots that reach down to fear are unchristian, and that this fear is the judgment of God upon us for our subordination and mistreatment of an entire race. We are all afraid, whites and Negroes together, that we may raise questions that may lead to violence. "Let sleeping dogs lie," we say.

KATALLAGETE

The roots that reach down to respect are deeply touched by Christianity. But this respect needs to be softened and deepened by compassion. Our culture makes us aware of the essential loneliness of the individual. Birth and death are private, and all the great crises between. But Christianity makes us aware that, though we are separated from one another in this world, we are still one in God; that underlying the private world of everyone of us is the great public, the universal, world, where we rest at last in God, in whom even now we live and move and have our being.

Southerners have more time than other Americans. In the first place, the early settlers brought more time with them: they brought more of the past, more of Old England, than did the Puritan settlers of New England. The Puritans fled from a corrupt England to set up the Kingdom of God in New England; the Southerners did not think of themselves as leaving a wicked world behind to set up the Kingdom of God ahead. They brought, therefore, more of their past, thus enriching their present. The present became not simply the ground for future hope, it was also the memory of past life.

Not only did Southerners bring more time with them, they've always taken more time. They've had more leisure and they've valued it more. There's a story of the great American historian, Francis Parkman, which illustrates this by contrast. While exploring in the West, Parkman shot a beautiful antelope. The expressive eyes of the dying animal reminded him of a woman's eyes, and "If I'd had time," he said, "I could have felt remorse. But I didn't have time." Southerners have had time, and it is partly because of this that, though we have done our share of evil, we have been inclined to feel remorseful and guilty. We have had time to think about our sins. Too seldom, alas, have we had time to repent of them.

This brings us to the whole matter of racial injustice. White Southerners have been unjust to Negroes generally, but, when we had time to think about it, we often felt remorse. It is ironic

that it was from the labor of the Negro that we gained time to feel remorse about our treatment of him. Of course, only a few whites gained this leisure; but, because of the position of these, leisure became an ideal. Southerners generally haven't had to apologize for moving slowly, for taking time to play, indeed for working sometimes as if they were playing. Negro Southerners have valued leisure even more than white Southerners, mainly because they couldn't make as much out of their work, and couldn't see so clearly, therefore, the advantages of the future.

Actually, it doesn't matter now how Southerners came to have a sense of the richness of the present. In rather sharp contrast with other Americans, they have it. We didn't plan it this way; this is the way it worked out. From the Christian point of view, this is the grace of God working among us. What we do with this sense determines whether it will bless us or curse us. If we merely use the leisure gained for our own physical pleasure, or if we continue to use leisure which we do not ourselves earn but take from the hard work of others—then this grace of God will become his judgment, and we shall find ourselves increasingly separated from other people, from the world, and from God. For, as Jesus said, my Father works till now, and I work; and in one way or another, in fear and trembling, we are always working out our salvation.

Working it out in this world, in time. Working out of time into eternity. Perhaps this is what life is for; perhaps this is what the world is for: to learn how to live beyond it. We shall not pass into eternity except as we pass through time; we shall not find eternal life except as we find temporal life; and temporal life is now, in this moment, not in the past or the future. He who really lives in the moment, probing its depths, exploring its possibilities, may at some unforeseen moment find himself, though still alive and in the flesh, in eternity. Then will the truly saving grace of God be manifested to him and in him.

Living richly in time the Southerner, often unaware, is moving along the borders of eternity.

The Crisis In Christian Leadership

CHARLES E. RICE

The presence of Christians in the public struggle for racial justice is a matter of fact. This phenomenon may yet overshadow the ecumenical movement as the great new fact of our era. The sheer notoriety of Christians among civil rights demonstrators has engaged the attention of Americans of every rank and denomination. Black and white have stood with the minority race and have faced firehoses, police dogs, jail terms and murder.

No one can know how much the role of Christians has determined the character of the contest for racial justice, for the end of this movement is not in sight. Neither can we know yet what impact the behavior of the Christian demonstrators will have on the churches. The latter question is already a critical one for the white churches. It will surely become more critical than is now apparent for the Negro churches. Regardless of the outcome of the civil rights movement, therefore, the churches are confronted with a crisis in Christian leadership. Legislative progress in civil rights has not and will not diminish or resolve the problem for Christians, because the very nature of Christian leadership and the mission of the Church have been called into question.

The problem about Christian leadership takes shape if we review the recent history of white Christian involvement in the cause of civil rights. In the beginning was "the pronouncement." Denominational bodies, state and national councils of churches vied for press attention with their resolutions, most of which merely echoed and can be dated by the watershed ruling by the Supreme

Court in 1954 on school desegregation. In a document billed as "A Message to American Christians" by the National Council of Churches of Christ in 1952, for example, there is scant mention of racial equality as an urgent Christian theme.

At best, the pronouncements, before or after 1954, are not impressive as documents of a peculiarly Christian sensitivity and influence. They bear the stamp of the professional which events have shown is far from indicative of faith and practice in the churches. The timing of these documents betrays little influence on the political machinery of the country. The judicial, legislative, and executive efforts for racial justice cannot be pointed out to our children as Christian milestones. The only notable effect of the pronouncements was the polemic fever which they evoked in segregationists.

The first concrete sign of Christian leadership in the civil rights arena came with the advent of "token" school integration. The white clergymen emerged as the prominent example of Christian response. At first he seemed swept into the action more as a victim than as an instigator. He merely happened to be where the action was. He was the pastor in Little Rock, Clinton, or New Orleans who could not stand by while Negro children en route to school, were taunted and bullied by adult toughs and agitators. Whether his behavior was lauded or cursed, his action and the events which prompted it now seem long ago and far away. He was but the prelude to a more deliberate and more provocative clerical involvement in public events.

The publicity which has accrued to professional Christian leadership in recent years is without parallel in Christian history. The clergyman via the mass media has been made visible around the world as a figure in sit-ins, kneel-ins, and marches for civil rights. Bishops, mothers of bishops, priests, deacons, nuns, preachers in business suits, and seminarians have been a part of the big picture. Inevitably, they have projected through the land a new kind of specialized ministry—the Movement Ministry. The peripatetic parson now—all of a sudden—claims the world of civil rights as his parish.

This new form of Christian leadership or ministry leaps all lines of denomination and doctrine. The Movement Christian has developed a special kind of missionary strategy. He is writing manuals designed to help the initiate learn Movement tactics. The substance of evangelism is the enlistment of other Christians in the cause. The Movement itself is his orthodoxy, even though he may be aligned with a particular denominational social action group. His recital of experiences in places like Selma or Bogalusa takes on almost cultic significance. His liturgical calendar is rapidly being filled with a host of the newly martyred.

We cannot question the faith or courage of the Movement Christian. We can, however, question the mixed blessing which his witness has produced for the identity and mission of all Christians. He has reinforced two ancient stumbling blocks of the Christian ministry: professionalism and individualism.

Much of the effectiveness of the Christian Movement leadership is inseparable from the image of the professional cleric. For good or ill, it is tagged more as clergy behavior than as Christian vocation. Understandably, much of the resistance to this role is, in part, anti-clericalism. This feeling is underscored when one assassin reports his deed with the words: "I've just shot two preachers."

The individualism of the Christian role in the civil rights movement is even more pronounced, and perhaps more fatal, than the professionalism. Individualism is the all-American virtue by which each man acts according to the dictates of his singular conscience. He may, in the name of conscience, defy all other authority on earth. He may defy the Bishop, the law of the state, the Supreme Court, local taboos, or whatever. And this virtue has thus far been the only common denominator of Christian behavior in the social struggle for civil rights. It has been the first and last resort of the Movement Christian and, ironically, it has been

the first and last resort of the segregationist Christian.

The Movement Christian has made a powerful witness in behalf of a cause—the cause of justice for the Negro. This much cannot be gainsaid. But the character of his witness has not and cannot by its very nature be heard as judgment upon the willful, rampant individualism which is the besetting sin of all American Christians. The white, segregationist Christian has not renounced Christ as he understands Christ. The question of loyalty to Christ and the issue of Christian identity and mission is obscured so long as both sides cast it in terms of good guys and bad guys.

II

The behavior of individual Christians cannot be described as Christian leadership unless it illuminates the peculiar and common mission of Christians, that is to say, the vocation of the Church. The performance of Christians in the civil rights movement has so far produced no decisive signs of renewal of the Church. Those who had devoutly hoped that this renewal would come through the Movement have by now found other reasons for staying in the Movement. The white churches, meanwhile, have perpetuated themselves without notable misgivings about their identity and mission. History, ecclesiastical or secular, cannot record that the churches as institutions were significant factors in the racial crisis of our generation.

There have been, of course, militant and vocal pockets in the churches but, at best, they have revived old schisms and provoked new ones. The twin evils of clericalism and laicism, as we have noted, have been fanned to a warm glow. Distrust, bitterness and strife have erupted. No amount of clever public relations work or slick image building can deliver us from our crisis. The Church needs more than remodeling; she needs renewal. The potential leadership for renewal meanwhile seems stalemated on the issue of race.

The difficulties now confronting Christian leadership are much deeper than the issue of race. Long before the racial struggle assumed its present grievous proportions, we were in trouble as the Church. Our ineptness and frustration in this particular social upheaval is but a symptom of the Church's condition. The question for Christians is whether the Church of Jesus Christ as an historical entity can vindicate herself as a viable vessel of faith. Is there such a thing as Christian leadership at the very substance of the Church's life? Is there, in fact, a society — a phenomenal interpersonal reality — cutting across all human

divisions with such reconciling depth as to warrant divine appellation?

To march or not to march? — that is not the question. Who *are* we as the Church, whether we march or not, is closer to the question. Our question is not resolved, even should all the objectives of the civil rights movement be realized — with or without the help of Christians. We will never know the Christian significance of the Movement, in any case, unless we have wrestled with the prior question of whether *any* dimension of history has import for the mission of the Christian Church.

The turbulence of racial reforms and the reaction to them by church folk have stripped us of any easy optimism about renewal. Those of us who welcome the twentieth century gains in ecumenicity, Biblical studies, and liturgical revival are learning that all these, valuable as they are, do not spare us the travail which is involved in the radical renewal of the Church.

The cause-conscious Christian has simply not been radical enough for all his boldness. He has not reckoned with the identity and mission of the Church even if he has been clear about his own vocation. The Christian "Movement man" has been more convincing as an advocate of political and social liberalism than he has as a churchman. Perhaps he wants it that way and perhaps he is faithful, but he has at best merely helped confront the Church with her question. He has been tempted to forget that, as a Christian, it is *his* question too. The cause-oriented clergyman, in particular, has found the burden lighter when he joins a movement than when he seeks to recall the Church to her judgment and vocation. When this kind of clergyman has had his day in the streets, we are still reminded of the words of Yeats:

The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand,
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.

Many Christians have already found a sense of accomplishment, camaraderie, excitement and meaning outside the churches. Many others have acclimated themselves to similar rewards in boards, bazaars, budgets and other ecclesiastical good works. Some have even contrived to have the best of both worlds. But there remains a great gulf between all these options and the possibility for Christian responsibility in the renewal of the Church.

III

Renewal presupposes judgment. Wherever we may be as Christians we cannot fathom our re-

sponsibility unless we can identify and accept the judgment which is upon us as individuals and as churches. If we make a commitment to renewal we must make it without knowing what forms the judgment will take. The securities of budgets and full pews and institutional success are in jeopardy; and so are the certainties we have courted in the movements and para-church groups (a euphemism for "in-spite-of-the-churches").

An alert, recent graduate of a state university asked his priest, in all earnestness, "How does it feel to be a part of a dying institution?" His query revealed both his sensitivity and his academic illusion. Life is always lived in the throes of dying institutions. The time will come when the young graduate will have to face his own question. Renewal of the Church at least means that we will resume our creative response to the omnipresence of mortality. As Christians, our mission is neither to save the churches nor to hasten their demise. Faith asks only how can we be the Church in the midst of dissolution, death, and decay. A responsible answer to that question can be as vital in the churches as out of them.

Renewal is not an occasional office of Christian leadership. It is not a challenge or a penance visited upon any one generation of Christians. Renewal is the substance of Christian mission and the definition of Christian leadership. Christian leadership is not a matter of promoting the churches or of promoting social movements. Christian leadership is found only wherever initiative has been taken in delivering life from any form of death. This is the form and this is the authority of Christian ministry. The possibility of a life which is cruciform and continually resurrected—this is the hope and the design of renewal of the Church.

Leadership in this dimension cuts across all the customary lines. It undermines any dualism of clergy and laity, church behavior and street behavior. There are diversities of gifts, functions, and occasions, but the common calling of Christians to renewal of the Church is at once corporate, charismatic, and commissioned.

The churches are going to change. Let there be no doubt about that. Whether in changing we re-discover what it means to be in Christ we cannot yet know. On this crucial question the crisis of Christian leadership becomes the burden of every Christian.

Dr. Barth is Professor of New Testament at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. His most recent books include *Acquittal by Resurrection and Conversations with the Bible*. The following article is based upon a study of Galatians which will be published sometime later.

Jew and Gentile; White Man and Negro:

An Exegesis of Gallatians 2: 11-21

MARKUS BARTH

But when Cephas came to Antioch I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he ate with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And with him the rest of the Jews acted insincerely, so that even Barnabas was carried away by their insincerity. But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, "If you, though a Jew live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?" We ourselves, who are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners, yet who know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose.

Among the most difficult texts in the New Testament are the first three chapters of Paul's letter to the churches in Galatia. Yet few chapters in the Bible speak more directly to the crisis in human relations which besets the Church as well as the nation. Indeed, the children of the world have exhibited more determination and wisdom in facing this crisis, even though Christians are called out to be a light to the world. In his letter to the Christians in Galatia, Paul's words on the relationship between Jew and Gentile present an understanding of the consequences of the good news of Jesus Christ concerning "men, while still in life," which the Church today ignores at its peril.

Paul reports in Chapter 2:11-14 an incident in Antioch caused by Peter's withdrawal from table-communion with Gentile Christians. The event culminates in a public, and apparently passionate and flaming, reproach or refutation of Peter by Paul. There is no explicit statement that Peter yielded to Paul's argument, but commentators usually assume that the clash ended with a victory of Paul.

When Rock came to Albany I had to rebuke him to his face, because he was clearly in error. For, before the committee appointed by James arrived, he was eating with Negroes. But when they came he shrank back and segregated himself because he was afraid of the whites. He even got the rest of the white liberals to play the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they were not planting their feet firmly in the truth of the Gospel, I said to Rock right in front of everybody:

—OR—

"If you, a white man, have freely accepted integration and not segregation, how do you now compel Negroes to accept white customs? Here we are, white people by birth and not 'inferior niggers'. And yet we know that a man can't get right with God just by walking in our Southern way of life. It is only as we live the way of Christ Jesus. Now all of us have put our faith in Jesus Christ, so as to be made right by our Christian faith and not by our Southern traditions, because custom never made a saint of anyone. Now if, in our struggle to be true to Christ we ourselves wind up segregated, does this make Christ a party to segregation? Heavens no! But if I try to rebuild a wicked system which I've already knocked down, then I may consider myself a violator. For so far as the Southern way of life is concerned I died, so I could be alive toward God. I was strung up with Christ. I'm no longer alive. It is Christ who lives in me. This physical life which I now have, it is simply an expression of my faith in God's son who loved me and gave himself for me. I dare not reject God's unmerited favor. For if getting right with God is a matter of observing traditions, then Christ had no business dying."

Koinonia Cotton Patch Version
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Either a submission of Peter to Paul on the spot, or a return of Peter to Jerusalem, or a departure of Paul to new conquests on Gentile soil are among the possibilities that have been suggested as the consequences of that victory.

The words of Paul found in verses 14c-21 treat of at least three different topics: of Peter's impossible behavior (vss. 14, or 14-15); of justification by faith and not by works (vss 16-17, or 16-18); and of Christ's death and life, including Paul's participation in both, death and life (vss. 19-21).

Before us, then, we have the description of a dramatic incident, the pronouncement of justification by Jesus Christ, and some astonishing utterances concerning a man's union with Christ. The misdeed faced in all parts of this section is the imposition of the law upon Gentiles. He who falls back upon legal restrictions breaks up the community at table; any pounding upon works of law contradicts justification by faith; if righteousness

were attainable by the law, Christ's death and life would serve to no good. A most common and secular matter, even eating together, is linked up with the judgment of God. To settle the table issue, Paul unfolds the criterion valid and the procedure followed in God's court. In turn, table fellowship and God's judgment are connected with the most intimate and existential statements treating of union with Christ in death and life. The meal question provides necessity and opportunity to speak of God's way of "right-wising" or "rectifying" man. The reference to God's judgment and Christ's role in it leads to the statements on Christ's and man's death and life. Food and faith, righteousness and Christ, death and life, belong together, whenever this passage is treated as a unit.

I

In 2:11-14 a case pertaining to the realm of ethics is presented. We might also speak of the realm of church order, or of brotherly love. Paul does not treat this realm as an appendix to the *kerygma* or *didache* of justification by faith. He who is wrong in one matter will be wrong in both. The subsequent statements about unity with Christ in death and life (vss. 18-21) are not opposed to or in tension with the proclamation of justification, but they are introduced as the core, reason or mode of that justification which excludes separate tables. Ethics is to live according to justification; faith is to live in union with Christ and with Gentiles; to live without resuscitating divisive laws — this is to live for God. According to this passage Paul does not know of an abstract, theoretical, ethically irrelevant doctrine of justification, or of an equivalent faith in justification. Neither does he suggest a mystical, personal union with Christ, which would have nothing to do either with the specific past, present or future judgment of God, or with the conduct of Christians among another and under the eyes of non-believers. To put it more bluntly: "justification in Christ" (vs. 17) is according to this passage not a theory, but a moral matter; therefore, union and solidarity with Christ in death and life can only be affirmed when there is also union and solidarity with brothers. All these elements are interdependent, inalienable, inseparable. "The social and moral character of Christology", or "the ethical essence of justification and faith" — these may be called the topics of Galatians 2:11-21. In this passage sharing at a common table — this "secular" act — is the criterion of orthodox faith. We learn that there is no union with Christ, except in the union of Jew and Gentile. Individual Jews, or individual Gentiles, are not justified, except together; they cannot die to the law or live for God, except to-

gether. This means that no man approaches God through Jesus Christ's mediation, except in the company of fellowman. Ephesians 2:18 says in one sentence the same thing: "Through Him both of us (together, and only together, not, each of us!) have in one Spirit access to the Father."

The ground and core of Paul's stance at Antioch and of his report to the Galatians are contained in those things which Paul says about Jesus Christ. To understand his logic we may well have to start from the basic and final argument with which he originally confronted Peter, and which he now presents to the Galatians. Paul's presupposition is contained in the statements about Christ. Paul's conclusions are contained in his utterances *ad hominem*. His Christology is soteriological; it determines his anthropology and ethical admonition.

What does Paul say about Jesus Christ in these verses? In paraphrasing or quoting the utterances of Paul and in starting from the end and going backward to the beginning, the following affirmations are central:

2:21: Christ died not in vain; He is the grace of God. For (2:20) He loved me and gave Himself for me. I live bodily and historically by (or in) His faith, (or, faith in Him). He lives in me. With Him I am crucified (2:19). He is our legal deliverer from sin, not a minister of sin; or, with other words, His action for sinners in God's court, and reliance upon Him, do not make Him a sinner (2:17). All men and each man, including Jews, are justified alone from or through the faith of Jesus Christ; therefore, we Jews came to believe in Jesus Christ as much as Gentiles did. Past, present and future events are enumerated: Christ has loved and died; He is living; through His faith, we will be, or seek to be, justified.

But not only explicit Christological statements are found in Galatians 2:11-21. Much is said also about man. Verses 11-14 treat in narrative form of the communion, then of the conflict, among men. Judaeo and Gentile-Christians of Antioch, Peter and Paul, James and visitors from Jerusalem, Barnabas and the assembled Antioch congregation are the men mentioned. A former harmony is disrupted by a snowballing tendency toward segregation, and by open strife and condemnation. In the didactic part of 2:11-21, first (vs. 14cd) the impossibility of Peter's behavior is pointed out: while he lives no more like a Jew, but like a Gentile, how can he force Gentiles to submit to Jewish customs? Then (vs. 15) the common background of Peter and Paul (and other native Jews?) is acknowledged: they are Jews by birth, they are not of Gentile origin. Then (vs. 16) a decisive event is pointed out: these native Jews came to

know how any and every man is justified by God; acknowledging this, they believed in Jesus Christ in order to attain that same justification. Thereby they submitted to the judgment that they, too, are sinners in need of justification by Jesus Christ (vs. 17). The parenthetical statement made in verse 18 affirms that rebuilding a formerly broken structure (which has proven useless as a defense mechanism against God's indictment; cf. Romans 2:1-29) is equivalent to suicide in God's court. Verses 19-20 deal with the life and death of an exemplary man; even of Paul himself. The puzzling statement is made that he has already died — by the law to the law (or: by one law to another law?) — and that this death was the necessary presupposition of his life for God. The self which lives is not the old ego, but "Christ in me." Though Paul's life still has all features of bodily, temporal, mortal life, faith alone is the realm, the climate, or the power in which he lives. Living thus, he can and does not nullify God's grace.

All these statements on man might be considered a series of observations concerning man's condition, behavior, experiences, and aspirations. They are indeed so incisive and far-reaching, so diverse and coherent, so plain and surprising, so relevant in individual and social regard that some scholars (for example Rudolf Bultmann in his *Theology of the New Testament*) felt bound to suggest that the whole of Paul's theology may be summed up in a special anthropology or soteriology. However, we should take note that all conditions, changes and guidelines concerning man's experience and existence are not self-supporting or self-evident. When Paul turns to explaining *why* Jews as well as Gentiles are sinners, *why* a man can be dead and alive at the same time, and *why* there is no necessity or right to make Gentiles subject to Jewish customs, then he speaks of Jesus Christ and of His love, His death, and His life, and of the judgment to which all men are subject because of Jesus Christ. The anthropological statements, dealing with the realm of the subjective, are important and true enough — true to God and true to man. But they do not exhaust or confine the truth; truth is not only in the subjective. These statements rest upon the solid ground of the objective deeds of God done through Jesus Christ. Without God's judgment and Christ's love, the designation of all men as sinners, and the triumphant assertions concerning the faith and life of justified men would be pessimistic or optimistic guesswork. They might well express self-delusions.

A preliminary sum of the matter presented in Galatians 2:11-21, then, may look like this:

1) Jews and Gentiles are so closely joined by God's judgment that they form one congregation, eating at one table, untroubled by any laws (vss. 11-14). This assertion may appear to stand in no slight tension to the restrictions contained in the Apostolic Decree (of Acts 15:20, 29; 16:4; 21:25; cf. Revelation 2:14, 20); but it agrees with the revelation given to Peter and the stand taken by him in Joppe and Caesarea (Acts 10-11), and with Paul's message to the Corinthians (I Corinthians 10:25).

2) The reason for the table communion is what Lutherans call the death-and-life article of the church, even the doctrine of justification by faith not by works, (vss. 15-18). This justification is obviously "by Christ alone" or "by faith alone", not by faith *and* works of law.

3) The verses 19-21 offer both the objective and the subjective reason of that "doctrine": Christ's death and life are not "in vain" but they are the very events that involve, affect, inform and form "my" life and death. Not only in some distant future, but even now, while man is still walking in the flesh, he is not condemned to walk *according* to the flesh (of II Corinthians 10:3). Rather Christ lives in him and he lives in Christ's faith. The love experienced is grace, and nothing but grace. It excludes taking refuge in the law and behaving as shamefully as did Peter at Antioch.

All these things are mysterious enough. And yet they possess a clarity, directness and beauty of their own which can be preached and explained to educated and uneducated alike. In his interpretation of this text Luther expresses his enthusiasm for Paul and his overflowing gratitude. He affirms that the message of justification and grace is in this way not found in any other New Testament author, except in John.

II

An application of Paul's understanding of the ethics of justification by Christ alone to a present crisis in human relations is clearly in order.

When white, good-willed, liberal North Americans are very enlightened and open to the social needs, necessities and opportunities of the present hour, they are willing and eager to receive the Negro into "our" schools, "our" neighborhoods, "our" jobs, "our" clubs, "our" churches, sometimes even into "our" families and bedrooms. The end of segregation and integration is very often identified with that kind of "acceptance." But it presupposes, among other things, that there are two cultures, two races, two histories, two types of man. It is hoped, expected and actively pursued that the two will encounter one another in such a way that the

white partner forgives the colored fellowman for being colored, that he makes him an honorary white man, and attempts to treat him as if there were no distinction, but just human beings. This is great progress against the subjugation of Negroes to slavery and their classification with inferior beings. No more is required of the Negro, than that he should learn his lesson, keep clean his front and backyard, keep down his voice, wash his hands, enjoy the treasures of higher culture, stabilize his courtship and marriage customs — just as white men supposedly have always done. We may call this attitude paternalistic or patronizing. It presupposes the superiority of the white man; it indicates his readiness to condescend to the lower level of others, and to help them to attain to the higher spheres. The paternal white man has his counterpart in the black Uncle Tom.

A Biblical analogy to this intention and procedure is found in the opponents of Paul who were ready to have Gentiles share in the privileges granted to Israel. The grace of God and the coming of the Messiah was expected to benefit fully the Gentiles, provided only that they accepted a minimum of the Jewish standards. We should be careful not to assume that Paul's opponents fought for a divided Gospel and a divided church. Rather, they were enthusiastic for unity and oneness; they were all against discrimination and for integration. But, they held that the unity sought was assured only in the continuation of previously particularist elements. To be a full child of Abraham, for example, a Gentile had to be circumcised.

Paul never wrote a word against Jews who kept circumcision, Sabbath and other commandments. He considered the law given to the Jews to be holy, righteous and good, and incomparably superior to the non-gods whom the Gentiles had been serving. But he led a passionate war against a paternalizing or slavish attitude which tried to establish and maintain the unity of the church and the truth of the Gospel upon the lines followed by his Galatian opponents.

In some of his polemical statements we can discern whether Jews, Judaeo-Christians or Gentile Christians form and inform the opposition against him. Sometimes we cannot. Always it is clear that Paul proclaims a unity of Jews and Gentiles which is established, upheld, and to be confessed "in Christ." He does not preach a unity under the Sinaitic Law and its interpretation by the elders. And he declares those *anathema* who preach such unity. Therefore Paul does not proclaim or expect that the Jew should forgive the Gentile for his being a Gentile, or that the Gentiles have to become emulators and imitators of the

Jews. That (Mosaic) law which is given the Jews, has not been given to the Gentiles also, and it should not be imposed upon them.

Rather both, Jews and Gentiles, have become something new — "one new man" as it is put in Ephesians 2:15. This newly created man is not a third type of man, a neuter between Jew and Gentile for example, or a superman to be dubbed *tertium genus* (third sort of man, a third nation) or a "Christian character" whose life and essence, virtues and values lie simply beyond history, culture, language, predilection or special gifts and tasks. The newness of the new man consists not of something which individual by individual can have for himself and about which they can exchange notes. But as Ephesians 2:11-22 shows, the newness requires the presence of at least two men who were formerly on opposite sides, the one near, the other far; the one in, the other out; the one a Jew, the other a Greek.

Now when Paul, in I Corinthians 12:13; Colossians 3:11; Galatians 3:28, enumerates, in three catalogues, the constituency of the one (new) man in Christ, he always begins with Jews and Gentiles. But from Jews and Gentiles he proceeds daringly to mentioning other formerly divided social groups. Servants and free men, Barbarians and Scythians, male and female are distinctly mentioned. Parents and children might also have been included as indicated in Colossians 3:18-4:1 and the parallels. Today, perhaps, suburbanites and slum dwellers, Republicans and Democrats, squares and beatlemaniacs, Western democratic and Eastern Communistic people, highly skilled and culturally deprived persons might also be added. It is Paul himself, not this interpreter, who considers the union of Jews and Gentiles in Christ paradigmatic of a unity to be established between the existing different economic, sexual, age, national, *et cetera*, groups. God's world politics as established by his dealing with Jews and Gentiles has become for Paul the policy by and in which marriage, education, labor, cultural, national relationships have to find their order. Faced with today's problems, we may add economic development at home and abroad, racial integration and world peace. There is no limit set to the relevance of what has happened to Jews and Gentiles in Jesus Christ.

The application of these observations to the present state of race-relations in America appears obvious. The talk of "our" schools, "our" suburbs, "our" job, "our" culture is inimical and diametrically opposed to Paul, for it corresponds to the theology of his opponents. Certainly many of these opponents were Christians. They stood for the unity of the church of Jews and Gentiles and with-

stood a rigid segregationism. But they made the mistake of seeking to impose the law of the former ingroup upon the up and incoming outgroup. This mistaken search for the unity of Jews and Gentiles is, according to Paul, as serious and fateful as the error of those who never believed in integration and union of the two groups. Paul throws a curse against his supposedly Christian opponents only (Galatians 1:6-9), not against the Sanhedrin. The sin of the paternalistic friend of integration may be greater than that of his blind segregationist opponent.

What the "liberal" fighter for justice might learn from Paul is, among other things, this: There are no human races, but there are different histories of different groups of men. There is no solution in denying differences, but there is a way to overcome their mutual exclusiveness. There is not a third type of superman to be expected. But the existing types of men can live together in peace.

The judgment of God who finds both groups sinful and has mercy upon both, is the presupposition of a new attitude of both and between them. Acts of human justice, formation of new customs and opinions, and the actual behavior of men are all, be it positively or negatively, consciously or unwittingly, related to God's judgment. Not only the former outsider, but both the near and the far, the possessing and the indigent have to repent

and to become something new. They need one another as much as they need God for attaining unity and holding it fast.

What Paul says about the church can be applied to social and economic life. There is not a black and a white culture, but culture in the high sense of this word (cf. the German *Kultur*) is present and worth describing only inasmuch as it is a noble, constructive, peaceful way of living, working, suffering together — even of black and white, man and woman, rich and poor, older and younger people.

America may recover or find a culture only inasmuch as school boards become willing to revise educational goals, as city planners and private builders find better solutions than the erection of depersonalizing towers and sprawling suburbs, as an ethics superior to Victorian moralism and boasting immorality is found. Solutions to these problems are not easy. They are not yet known and not at hand. But Paul's statements on Jews and Gentiles and his stance taken in Antioch are precedents that point in a good direction. He speaks of and to Christians and appeals to their faith. Today's situation is marked by the fact that often children of the world, that is, the non-Christians, show greater zeal or wisdom in public matters than the Christians who were called to be a light in the world.

TIGERS OF WRATH

I watch the sinewy tigers lapping blood—
they gain and gain. New size and force appear
to refill emptied veins, a kind of flood
by animal existences where mere
fluidity before bedaubed my heart
with refuse from the shores of upper dreams:
Man has not done me wrong or played the part
of hunter in my jungle, but it seems
right to rage past with these fierce animals
that course the quiet and settled streets, because
no one from mosque or merrymaking calls
God to relieve him of his weasel's claws,
his weasel's wish to suck the eggs; instead,
a weasel walks inside my tiger tread.

ON THE BAT'S BACK

In pursuit of summer I
rode on batback through a sky
blackening about our flight.

Faster always summer went
though my bat unresting bent
leather wings across the night.

Now, dismounting, I have come,
tired of my own purpose, home;
and the bat I used climbs high
in the moon's beam, without intent
riding the wind, complete as some
archangel in its proper right.

RELATIONSHIPS

At one with fox and flower
my foot goes where it will
in this mysterious hour
and yet is still.

The horror of the bone,
impatience of the blood
stop, like a ringing telephone
that's answered, understood.

But understanding rather
like breathing than like thought
has found in fox and flower
this kinship with my foot.

CUTTING THE TREE ON
DECEMBER TWENTY-THIRD

The trunk gapes to the flashing axe
and fragrant blood cries down the wound,
while all the strings my heart can stretch
are twangling as if someone tuned
for stranger modes. Kind hold, relax
and do not twist the pegs to raise
the long-forgotten mystery.
The tree feels nothing. Through a phrase
we have lost our heart for fallacy.
Whose hand you are I cannot ask
nor why you cross my heart tonight;
I came out on a simple task,
fetching a tree to bear our light,
but now must go perplexed with plight.

For many years, Adlai Stevenson was chairman of the board of directors of the Field Foundation, and in that capacity became acquainted with and lent his support to the activities and interests of some of the members of the Committee of Southern Churchmen. We are grateful to Mr. Lippmann and the Washington Post Company for permission to carry his tribute to Governor Stevenson.

Adlai Stevenson

WALTER LIPPMANN

We must wonder whether we have buried with Adlai Stevenson some element of the promise of American life. For in this generation he has stood apart, not only for his deeds and his words and his wit and his loveliness, but as somehow a living specimen of the kind of American that Americans themselves, and the great mass of mankind, would like to think that Americans are.

He was not a common man or a typical American of our times or, indeed, of any other time. But he evoked for us the mystic chords of memory because he touched again "the better angels of our nature." From Lincoln to Adlai Stevenson the heritage is direct and unbroken, a family tradition which began with his great-grandfather. Like Lincoln he made men feel what this Nation had to be if the American experiment was to succeed. Like Lincoln he was what the prairies and the New World had made of the educated Englishman who led this country in the 18th Century.

This Lincolnian American is, as compared with Washington or Jefferson, the first authentic American, the new man of the New World. Before Lincoln, the distinguished Americans were transplanted Englishmen. Since Lincoln there has existed the idea of a special American type which is excellent and admirable and holds the promise of a better human future. Adlai Stevenson was a rare, perhaps a late-blooming, example of such an American. He was admired by the discerning all over the world and greatly loved. An essential ingredient of the admiration and the love was the knowledge that only America could have produced him, and that this revealed what America really was.

The question is now whether this country is still devoted to the American idea which he embodied. No one supposes, of course, that the country can be filled with Stevensons any more than a hundred years ago it was filled with Lincolns, any more than Britain is filled with Churchills. It is only occasionally and for a while that nations are represented by their greatest men. The question is whether in our critical moments the better

angels of our nature respond to our authentic ideals.

For there is abroad in this land today a very different spirit contending for the soul of our people. The original American has had for a central idea, as Lincoln said at Gettysburg, that America was an experiment of consequence to all mankind and that, primarily, the influence of America was its example. The new spirit among us is imperious and assumes that our influence is measured by our money and our power.

The struggle between the two spirits has appeared and reappeared throughout our history. But with the enormous and sudden increase of our power and wealth, the stress and strain of the struggle for the American soul has become fierce. It is the uncertainty as to which spirit will prevail that divides, more than tactics or manners or policy, the American people among themselves and from the world around us.

Adlai Stevenson's enemies were not men whom he had injured. He injured no men. His enemies were men who recognized that he did not share and was a living reproach to the new imperiousness of our power and wealth, that he was a deeply established American who had no part in the arrogance of the newly rich and the newly powerful and the newly arrived. His very presence made them uncomfortable, even abashed, all the more because he was so witty when they were so hot, so elegant when they were making a spectacle of themselves.

Shall we see his like again? Or was he the last of his noble breed? On this question hangs the American future. On one course we shall plunge ourselves into the making of a ramshackle empire in an era when no empire can long survive, and we shall wave the flag to cover our spiritual nakedness.

Or, we shall, as Adlai Stevenson would have done, remain true to our original loyalty, and transcending assertiveness, vulgar ambition, and the seductions of power, we shall make this country not only great and free but at peace with its own conscience.

"Dear Friends In Christ"

DANIEL BERRIGAN, S.J.

When a good man dies, there is no mistaking the loss. We know it in our bones and in our flesh. We know it as if we had awakened one morning and, turning to rise, come upon a bandaged stump in place of a whole limb. We know our loss, as the price of being awake at all. We know it, when we have loved another, his voice and face and living thought; when death has left us only a photo upon a wall, and silence, and a life of secret grieving.

Indeed death does not always have the same sting. It comes easily to the old; it thins their blood to water; then like a midday sun, it draws them into the atmosphere, leaves the veins dry, like a vine cut down in autumn. We can understand the word of the King to Hamlet: "you must know, your father lost a father, that father lost, lost his . . ." But the death of the young is another matter: When it occurs in circumstances of injustice and brutality, it cleaves us to the bone; it challenges faith with manifest absurdity, it leaves us appalled and dismembered. How could such a thing occur? What is the meaning of this death? Or, indeed, does it have any meaning at all? And if the violent death of the young is meaningless, what are we to say of this absurd universe, of this absurd God? Our faith has accepted the fact of death, has made it at least remotely bearable. The word of God penetrates the appearance of death, blesses our hope of immortality, gently quiets our protest and rebellion. Those we love, it assures us, are not taken from us; their lives are changed for the better. A mystery breaks through the universal

fate of death, which the Greeks saw as iron necessity and the Romans softened with a gentle longing for immortality in the memory of man. The Christian word is both rigorous and merciful; it assures us that love of others is more than a temporal blessing, that we shall see again those whom we have loved in both flesh and spirit. "We shall all rise again." To be man is to be immortal, as man.

The words of Paul to the Christians of Corinth imply a universal release from the slavery of death. His words profoundly alter not only our view of the afterlife but our view of the world, our understanding of what human community is, of what our duties of piety toward others are, of what the simple word "brother" means. But the word of God is one thing; our understanding of it is surely another. Awareness of our brother, a living awareness that accepts the price and task of reconciliation, does not come easily to men. Such an awareness dislocates our loyalties; it demands that one go beyond the blood, beyond the tribe, in order to come upon the will of God. Family loyalties, family professions, family status, family ethics, are placed in question. When the Gospel is in the air, all, all other loyalties are heard only with extreme reservation; for their summons is often intoxicating . . . and sometimes poisonous.

But the blood of Christ summons us to all men. When I have drunk His blood, I may not ever again question the blood which runs in the veins of other men; of men of color, of men who worship in another Church, of men whose blood runs violated in the streets. When the blood of Christ is upon

the altar, there is neither Greek nor Jew, freeman nor slave, male nor female standing about the altar. There is only one New Man, Jesus Christ, of whom we all are members, limb for limb. A universal bloodstream joins man to man, religion to religion, race to race, sex to sex. The family of man is once and for all created in Christ; a delicate web of life joins me to the race of man, in Him. The constricting curse of nationalism, tribal loyalties, racial frenzies, class injustices, is lifted; in Christ the call of the blood is heard at last for what it is, in the manifest intention of God. It is a call, as old as the blood of Abel, as young as the blood of Jonathan Daniels; it cries out from the earth, I am your brother.

We have all been moved to the heart by the death of this man. Unworthy of the blood of Christ, we are unworthy of the blood of such a brother. We cannot easily claim him, we come only reluctantly, and with a kind of dread, to the truth in which this man's sacrifice implicates us. It is not easy to be brother to such a man; our understanding depends in fact on the most electric and ironic change of heart.

How can we know *my* brother, Jonathan Daniels, without knowing as well all the brothers whom he recognized as his own? How far will this death stretch us upon the rack of the world? We are not merely celebrating a new friendship this afternoon, as though I, a Roman Catholic, had come suddenly to understand in the death of a Protestant, the presence of a brother. Jonathan Daniels did not win me so easily. Nor can I welcome him easily to my own heart. Indeed this young death has called me further than I had thought, or even wished. How could I have gained this man for friend, and not have gained you? How could I grasp the hand of the dead, without seeing that this hand was closed, with the rigor of its final choice, upon white hands and black, Jew and Catholic, the defeated and the persecutor, the Vietnamese, the Congolese, the Russian—all men, all intractable and stained and unworthy hands—even my own?

No, we celebrate something far more than a new friendship this day. The word of God tells us so. The word of God says that the death of this man is martyrdom, a drama, a crisis, a summons to change of heart, a death and resurrection, mysteriously joined to the destiny of Christ, and the destiny of all men; a death that sucks us into its vortex, its moment of truth, its bloodletting and cruel defeat, its terrifying call to conversion. The truth of such a death comes hard to us. We are unready for it; we are used to an easy faith: which is to say, to easy lives and easy death. We

expect faith to bless our somnolent hearts, to reduce our suffering, to prosper our blood line. But the Bible has another message for us; it calls us to an universal existence, to life in public, to responsibility for, and to, all men. And in order that a man may be a universal man, he must overcome the call of the blood and all it implies; its insularity and fear, its adoration of idols, its dread of life. The call is as old as the murder of Abel, the exodus of Abraham, the vocation of Moses, the call to the New Testament mission. The disciple must leave all things; he must leave father and mother and flocks and good repute and secure lodgings, and presuppositions and prejudice and false hope, and the cheap grace that flows tranquilly in the veins of the tribe. He must go out from himself; into exile or bondage or prison. And this is not all.

The New Testament summoning to faith may be a call to martyrdom. Blood will have blood, we are told; the Blood of Christ lays claim on the blood of man. All the idolatries and paganisms consecrated by the worship of blood, by the superiority of the blood, by the blood that visits the unthinking brain and the unconverted heart—all these are destroyed, the unholy fevers are stilled, the inhuman chill is warmed, when "a man lays down his life for his friend."

A transfusion of blood. The blood of Jonathan Daniels, flowing in the dust of an obscure southern town, has joined the great stream of the blood of Christ, the blood of martyrs, the blood of good men. Despite the call of the blood, the call to clerical peace and clerical immunity, unexpected and undeserved like the blood of Christ, Jonathan Daniels is joined to the bloody witness of black man and white, of Jew and Gentile, of man and woman, crying out from beneath the throne of the Lamb "those who had been killed for the sake of the faithfulness of their witness."

Such a witness indeed sternly forbids all other calls. Before the spectacle of the martyrs, their moral splendor, their incorruptible gift, heaven and earth stand transfixed. We know with the best part of us, which the blood of heroes has quickened, that martyrdom is neither to be explained nor explained away. Before the martyrs our conceits fall silent; our human expectations wither; the web of nature in which man had been ensnared, is torn asunder and the fact of martyrdom becomes a miraculous crossroads, a place crisis, a place of drama. No one can come upon it, and come away unchanged. The unbeliever is shaken by a mystery for which neither logic nor cynicism had prepared him; the believer is shaken from his paltry security, from a faith which had taken into account neither the omnipresence of tragedy nor the rigorous call for love

A martyrdom is a crossroads and a place of meeting; it is also a place of worship. We know that in the early church, men spontaneously set their altars up at the place where good men had died in witness. Where the blood of good men had run, the eucharist was celebrated, the blood of Christ was drunk. And in that place, men came to know their brother for the first time; slave and free, Jew and Gentile became one in Christ, drawn one to another by the blood that lay warm upon the altar. In such a way, the witness of blood is a supreme witness to human unity. It is a hard saying; our blood runs cold at the price exacted in order that the simplest of human recognitions may have place, that man may know his brother. But who is to instruct us in a better way?

Dear friends, in the geography of our land, the rivers of the South may yet flow north. It may be that the land has imperceptibly tipped, that the blood sacrifices of one hundred years shall now turn in our direction; to ease our moral impasse, to shed light upon our path. Our own blood flows tranquilly in our veins; its untroubled murmur, its childish complaints, the fear that lies in it like a biotic, the dread that sends us fleeing change, fleeing sacrifice, fleeing neighborhoods, fleeing our brothers—who can speak to this death? Indeed, a few have stood in the breach, have conquered

their dread, have put their bodies where their words were. In the letting of their blood, such men have been freed of the cowardice that plagues the blood of the living. And such men may yet help to free us of the imperfection to which life itself condemns us. Being white, we cannot be black; being Episcopal, we cannot be Catholic, being affluent, we cannot be poor. But when a man has given his blood, he has literally given everything; more, he has been transformed into his gift. So he becomes a universal man in the gift of his manhood. His blood has reached further, and cried out more truthfully, than ever his word could, so a gift that is normally postponed until the end of things, is brusquely placed in our hands. A man of the last day becomes the man of our day. We may now, if we will, take in our hands the life blood of Daniels where the gunshot released it. The living blood is offered to God, and to men, to transform our pusillanimity into heroism, our denseness into moral clarity, our dead words into prophetic speech, our inanity into faithful deeds. In this blood, may we take heart; may we take up with new heart the task of the living: one nation, one mankind, one Body of Christ.

This sermon was preached by Father Berrigan at the memorial service for Jonathan Daniels held at St. Andrew's Church, Yonkers, New York.

ROBERT STEWART

CHRISTMAS EVE

This branch of green amazes me, it shows
no sense of timing, sense of its role:
We brought it in for Christmas Day,
but somewhere in the spray
a recollection glows,
like fire in a coal
or thoughts of August on a winter night
with that delight
begun
in the sun
long ago
where the yellow cliff of sand
came grass-rimmed up—the beach below,
blueberries ripe to hand,
and in the wind that passed
God knows
what smell of summer's death and winter's snows
massed
upon bending boughs—
till I am not alone (though now alone),
but hear cicadas drowse
and drone,
hear grasshoppers and sparrows,
almost the feet of ants,
while calendars that dwindle,
world that narrows
at light's advance
show flickers from the heart can still rekindle
the dead wood of our past and all the past
of other thought or bone
so that the clarity, at last
and as much more than ghost,
lets the gnarled Jesuit who gave the Host,
the three converted Indians standing like stone
somewhere along the pinebranch—conjured lake
seem here to share port and the Christmas cake.

TIME'S RETREAT

Time has turned tail,
no more bark, no more bark.
You coyote time,
all the dark is your dark.
The moon's light was pale
but still light,
so you worried it half of the night,
with the daystar's return you turn tail.

ROBERT STEWART

SOME LIGHT ON THE MATTER

I would have bet Christ had it with the cross
or, if not that, from Christians anyway,
so you can guess my doubts were at a loss
while he shone in my door the other day,
Made rainbows on the panel like the top
of something crystal, say a candlestick
or a decanter; for the usual stop
of light by lumber (this was oak and thick)
Was missing there. Perhaps the one-time tree
felt carpenters should be made way for so,
but through whatever process, one could see
Christ flaming light in a prismatic bow.
Imagination plays us tricks; but things
which like the sun make rainbows shine, are some
way made so beautiful affection springs
to greet them like a dog whose master's come.

NEW YEAR'S DAY

The new year in the hand of God
lies like a brooding egg
inside a nest of love;
and yet my words, slow geese, still move
on but a narrow leg,
squawking the while they plod.
Look at them poke on flat and tame
in goosesteps through the yard
like earthbound infantry.
"Wake space, convert those honks to flame!"
(Launch footgoose or risk lard.)
Run at them. "Shoo! Grab sky!"
They'll be all right upon the wing,
for geese take then wild order
of high-spread V's. Remember,
they should get off before December
to find that southern border
which promises a spring
Whose April's always. So now let
clapped wings greet time that flies
faster than wrinkling feet,
the nest be built, the full bird set,
impulsive mysteries
against the thin shell beat!

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