

One of the most fascinating and complicated intellectual ventures on the Twentieth Century seems to me to be the problem: How, in our super-analyzed world of today, can you talk about what it means, genuinely, to be a human being—a *self*. Just think. You and I have already been dissected into a million pieces by biological, sociological, psychological, and cultural scalpels. We see ourselves as a whirlpool of glands and hormones, as a network or interpersonal relations, as an ocean cluttered with icebergs pushing down into our subconscious.

## FOUR VISIONS OF SELFHOOD

dr. william h. poteat

But, at the same time, we sense ourselves as being unsynonymous with all these descriptions of ourselves. We sense that we are something more. We are something over and above the sum of all the relations in which we stand. And here we face a problem, which is the key problem of the modern imagination: How can you talk about genuine selfhood when you are already swamped with persuasive definitions of what a self is.

Well, maybe that's the point. Maybe you can't *talk* about the self at all! You've got to do something else. At least, this seems to be the wisdom of contemporary philosophers and psychologists, doesn't it? Instead of talking about selfhood they *show* what the human personality is by dramatic examples taken from modern literature. The novel, the short story, and the drama lend themselves peculiarly well to painting a vision of selfhood, in which the modern imagination can grasp the self, not as substance, but as possibility.

For me, there are four visions of selfhood in contemporary literature which demonstrate in a unique way what the possibility for human personality is.

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### IN THIS ISSUE:

*How can a man of the twentieth century understand what the early church meant to say by the formula: "JESUS CHRIST, LORD"? One can begin by saying it means nothing and that is the end of it. Or one can make an effort to comprehend. If he does, this twentieth century man tentatively assumes that the primitive Christian was attempting to talk about an identifiable reality. Then he endeavors to engage the man of another time in dialogue. This is not a simple endeavor. First of all, he does not encounter him face to face. To be sure, the conversational partner has spoken his piece in and through the preserved documents, but he is not present for rebuttal. Moreover, they live in a different time/space continuum. The twentieth century man must attempt by sympathetic imagination to shed the world in which he thinks and observes, and endeavor to enter another world through which his partner observed and thought. This cannot be wholly accomplished. Empathy is by no means ever finally completed. The twentieth century man still remains in some important sense a man of his own time. He takes with him, consciously or unconsciously, to one degree or another, his own questions and concerns. Furthermore, this is not to be depreciated, for if he did not, authentic dialogue could not take place. The approach seems to be two fold: First, to endeavor to get at what a twentieth century man might comprehend that a first century man was understanding by the formula. Second, in the light of the first effort, to attempt to say directly how a twentieth century man might talk about the reality indicated by the sign: Jesus, the Christ, Lord.*

*In this issue of Letter to Laymen on page 3, our concern will be with the first task. At a later time, we will deal with the second.*

# Letter to Laymen



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# The Self As Possibility . . . continued from page one



## The Self That Waits

The first is what I want to call *the self that waits*. Probably this is the most meaningful vision of the self that is available to us now. The self that waits is radically unacquisitive. It is, you might say, *hopeless*; it lives in a mold characterized by much of the so-called Christian mystical writing. It waits in emptiness, forlornness, abandonment, absence, willessness, hopelessness. Of course, the dramatic representation of this that comes most readily to mind is Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. This is a play in which curiously nothing happens and what does happen is a kind of burlesque—tramps in baggy pants and ill-fitting shoes who don't seem to know what they are doing, who only know that they are waiting. This is just the point. It is at this point of exhaustion, when all expectation has run out, when one sees that he will not acquire what he waits for, that one perceives the actuality of his situation as a self.

## The Self That Loves

A second is *the self that loves*. There is that word "love" which is so confusing and misused, but I want to mention it in connection with Eugene O'Neill's very important play *The Iceman Cometh*. The story, put very briefly, is that of a travelling salesman who is repeatedly unfaithful to his wife. After each infidelity, he comes home to his wife (who is an invalid) and out of a mind that is simultaneously dominated by a genuine contrition and by hostility towards his wife, he recounts the infidelity and asks for forgiveness. Each time his wife forgives him, and at the end of the play, we learn that Hickey (the salesman) has killed his wife. When he is asked why, he says: "I could not forgive her for forgiving me." In other words, this was a most unusual wife—a wife who genuinely forgave Hickey for his infidelity. But he, on the other hand, could only construe her forgiveness as wrath and not as love, for he could not bear to face himself as a forgiven man.

## The Self That Goes Mad

A third vision is the *self that goes mad*; that is, the image of a self that is radically contracted out of the public universe, and which discovers, through this occurrence, a deep kind of integrity which the public world cannot assimilate. A key example of this kind of self is Kafka's short novel, *The Metamorphosis*, in which we have the story of a man, Gregor Samsa, who goes to sleep one night and awakens the next morning having had a troubled dream. He looks down his chest toward his lower extremities to see, to his horror, that he has in the night been changed into a giant cockroach! He discovers that the sheet that was upon him when he went to sleep has slipped off his hard insect belly onto the floor and all he can see are the legs of a giant cockroach moving in front of him. He tries desperately to get into communication with his family, but they are sickened and horrified at their brother, who has had the tendency to turn into a cockroach. The pathos of the story is that while Samsa was a man he was an insect; it was not until he was turned into an insect and tried to get into communication with his family that he discovered that the noises he was making (thinking that they were quite human and intelligible) were only patchings of insect noises. It is only now—at this moment—that Samsa has a chance to become human.

## The Self That Is Humiliated

Finally, I would like to call attention to the *self that is humiliated*. Here, one frequently finds the author employing comic devices to convey this. One I think that will be familiar is T. S. Elliot's *The Cocktail Party*. The character I have primarily in mind is Celia Coplestone, the woman who has had an affair with Edward Chamberlain, and who has tasted in full the ashes of a broken, estranged human relationship. Having gone to the psychologist, Sir Henry Harcourt-Reilly, for counselling, Celia decides that the vision of the depth of life which she has experienced demands a radical decision. She decides not to return to the kind of life she has led, but to die to her old self. In the story, Celia's decision is dramatized by her becoming a nurse among African tribesmen. The consequence of this is that she is martyred by uncomprehending savages who crucify her on an ant hill where she is eaten alive by ants. Now, I call this a comic device because, after all, can any death be more humiliating than this? It is not as though Celia were like a Hemingway character who dies fighting a bull or is brought to defeat by predatory sharks; at least there is a kind of human grandeur and heroism in this! But no! Celia's death is anything but heroic. What is heroic about being nibbled to death by ants? Yet this kind of humiliating death is perhaps the only way in which the Christian category of "crucifixion" can be pictured today. Celia died to her old understanding of herself. No trumpets blared. Yet Celia discovered a new and fresh vision of life.

In looking at these snatches from literature, then, we can see something of the new visions of selfhood which are presented to us today. Each vision is very clear that the self is a thing which is not a thing—it is a potential; a possibility.

Question: Did I understand you to say that real forgiveness at times looks like wrath, or did I read my own thoughts into yours?

Dr. Poteat: It does look like wrath, and this is very evident in the particular play we considered, *The Iceman Cometh*. What O'Neill means for us to understand as love, Hickey construes as wrath. In other words, Hickey is reproached by his wife's forgiveness and cannot accept it as forgiveness. It really is forgiveness, but to him it looks like wrath. So, it does not go beyond us at all to say that it not only requires grace to forgive, but it requires grace to be forgiven.

Question: Isn't this also the message that the Old Testament is proclaiming? I mean, that what people were calling wrath was actually love, and that what we call love today is actually wrath. When we see our neighbor, we can't stand to see him there, for he intrudes into our lives and make us take account of ourselves. This bothers us, and we scream at our neighbor to get away, to get out. But the neighbor keeps intruding. God, in dealing with Israel, was constantly doing this.

Dr. Poteat: I think you are absolutely right. Grace always works in our lives through the encounter with the neighbor. And the self that loves and forgives, that repents and dies to itself eludes all the categories of academic classification; but a glimpse of this self can be captured through the dramatic images of modern literature, as we have seen.

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# THE CHRIST OF HISTORY

## THE EVERYMAN-CHRIST

The need to "make sense" out of our sufferings and actions is deeply human. Apparently men every where and time have sensed themselves as pilgrims looking for a way to really live in this world. In the language of the poet, EVERYMAN quests after some light, way, truth, door. More or less awarely, he searches for a bread or word of life. He dwells in hope that some tomorrow will bring a delivering power, an illuminating story, some saving event, a final blessedness. When that day comes, so he dreams, then surely in some way the essence of life and the living of it will be different. All peoples have forged signs and symbols of this human characteristic. For the Hebrews of old, one such image was the coming "anointed one," the Messiah, translated into the Greek as the Christ.

This Messianic hope of EVERYMAN is born out of his experience of the limitations of existence. His encounter with the unknowns, ambiguities, sufferings and deaths of this world closes his insecurity. This primordial anxiety breeds the Messiah image. Watch him, as he is thrown up against his finitude, become a seeker after some truth which will overcome the unbearable incomprehensibles of life. Watch him search, however subtly, for the justification which will alleviate his sense of insignificance. Watch him relentlessly strive for a peace which will somehow blot out his lucid awareness of the tragic dimension of life. One senses in this spectacle a creature vainly striving to rise above his creaturely limits. Finding his givenness burdensome beyond bearing, he dreams of discovering some other kind of a world. Indeed he already has a different world for he literally exists in his present hopes about the future. Thereby he escapes his actual life in the Now. His very meaning is his anticipation that some tomorrow will render his situation quite different. On that day the ultimate key will come clear; the final excuse for his existence will emerge and true contentment will bathe his being. Then shall he truly live, so he imagines, delivered from this present world of uncertainty, unfulfillment and anxiety. Such a life-quest is an experience, I submit, that all of us are quite privy to. Men dwell sometimes very explicitly, most times quite vaguely, in great expectations of that which will relieve them of the necessity of living their given life in the present situation. This great hope, whatever its form, is the CHRIST OF EVERYMAN.

## THE JESUS OF NAZARETH

The New Testament age opens with the Jews, like EVERYMAN, expecting the Christ. Of course, they were doing so out of their concrete historical memory. The Christ-quest is always tied to specific life situations. It was into this particular Jewish yearning, around the beginning of the first century, that one Jesus intruded. It might have been, in an abstract sense, Herman of Hebbbronville or Jones of Smithville. But it was not. It was this fellow Jesus of Nazareth in Galilee. Very little detail is directly known about this man. But as all of us do, he lived a life and died a death. It was to be sure, *his* life that he lived and *his* death that he died. This is most important for it was in the midst of these very definite historical occurrences, as they disturbed the hopes of Israel, that the New Testament happening of Christ took place.

Perhaps the core of the issue could be put something like this: a very specific man lived a very specific life and for that very specific life, died a very specific death. Somehow in these concretions the depths of human existence became exposed. A man got born, lived his life, and experienced death even as you and I. Yet there was a plus. Not a metaphysical plus, but what might be termed a plus in specifics. I mean he lived a life essentially like that of anyone else, save he seemed to *really* live his. However one chooses to account for it: special mutations of genes,

unusual neurotic tendencies, peculiar environmental influences, unique occurrences of lucidity—is all quite beside my concern at the moment. Here was one who apparently not only lived, but *lived* his living. He appropriated his life as an unqualified gift and bore it as a significant mission. The *givenness* of creaturely living appeared to him to be the very meaning of it. Indeed he kept saying that what everyone is looking for it very much AT HAND.

EVERYMAN, here in Jewish guise, was understandably disconcerted by the style of this unknown and everyday stranger. The very point is that Jesus collided with the lives of all he encountered. He invaded, broke into, penetrated their worlds, leaving them painfully unsettled. To the proud he seemed humble and they were threatened. If men hated life, he loved it. To those who hung desperately onto living, he appeared nonchalant about it all. If they thought of life as detachment, he was utterly involved. If their living was a bondage, he was too obviously free. Where men were other-directed, he was independent. When they were confidently self-determining, he seemed lost in loyalties. To conservatives he was manifestly revolutionary; he impressed the radicals as a reactionary. Obviously, the life of such a human being would be in jeopardy. When men's lives are audited to the quick, either they must re-do their lives, or destroy the occasion of the audit. Jesus was executed.

Death comes to all men. So it had to come in some fashion to Jesus of Nazareth. The specifics are what concern us. A life that was in some way *really* lived, drove men to destroy it. Let this be said again. Precisely because his living somehow exhibited the way life actually is, men felt he had to be removed. Rulers saw him as a danger to society. The hierarchy feared him as a menace to religion. The strange irony here uncovers a tragic inversion in human history. There is yet another important concretion. The man of Galilee embraced death as he embraced life. Call it the slaughter of the innocent or the miscarriage of justice; call it murder or mistake; call it social expediency or the intervention of fate; however, and whatever, he took unto himself his death without malice as a part of the givenness of his life. Not that he sought death. But when it came, and as it came, he died it as significant. In consequence, there was a compounding of disturbance. His dying as his living, was disquieting.

In some such fashion did the life and death of an unknown, Jesus of Nazareth, protrude into the history and the hope of Israel, and therefore into the life of EVERYMAN. But this is not yet the end, nor even the finally important aspect of the tale.

## THE JESUS-CHRIST-EVENT

In the midst of the happenings surrounding Jesus, some individuals were seized by a radically new possibility for living in this world. Incredible as it was to the many, a few actually raised the question of Christ in connection with Jesus. This moves us to the heart of the matter. To really hear this question is to sense an absolutely unbelievable twist in the Christ symbol. The very life-image of the Jews, their very existence, their very history was cut to the marrow by the question: Is Jesus the Christ? Quite understandably they reacted to it as scandalous. Because it was a scandal, crucial decisions had to be made. Here are the keys to the New Testament Christ-happening: scandal and decision.

The scandal is clearly manifest in the broad picture. The EVERYMAN-CHRIST for the Jews was concretized in the anticipated coming of a mighty king or cosmic figure who would fulfill the corporate dreams of Israel. Patently, such a figure Jesus was not. He came a helpless babe in a feeding trough. He left a pitiful personage on the state gallows. This have to do with Messiah? How ridiculous! Indeed, in the light of the sacred hopes, it was blasphemous.

Now the offense of the Jew is the offense of EVERYMAN. The question about Jesus insinuates an unmitigated revolution in human self-perception. The distressing implication is that life is not in the future, it is in the present; it is not in some other circumstances, it is in those at hand; it is not to be sought after, it is already given. Obviously this cuts across the notions to which every man has attached his being. The one who seeks to escape his present situation as meaningless must certainly be outraged by the hint that the final meaning is to receive that very situation. Those who look to tomorrow to solve the riddle of living will surely feel affronted before the intimation that the ultimate solution is living the Now. This is the elemental scandal in the Jesus question.

The point needs to be underlined. If the self-understanding which broke into history surrounding the living and dying of one, Jesus, is to be designated by the term "Christ," then very evidently a radical eruption has occurred in history through a complete inversion of the Christ symbol. This is not just an addition to or an alteration of. The total image of life is disputed. In truth, it is literally turned upside down. That is, the scandal is cataclysmic and universal. Concisely, what we shall call the JESUS-CHRIST mortally assaults the EVERYMAN-CHRIST.

The JESUS-CHRIST fronts man with the awareness that there is no messiah and never will be one, and furthermore, that this very reality is the Messiah. This must not, however, be understood as an intellectual abstraction. It is rather a happening, that meets men in the midst of their living. Indeed the fronting is experienced as death itself. For to receive the JESUS-CHRIST is to put an end to my Christ quest; it is to surrender my very life stance; it means that I must die to my very self. Or better still, my self must die. The threat of the JESUS-CHRIST is now unmasked as the threat of death. The scandal, as experienced, is that I must choose to die.

The drama of this deciding unto death permeates the New Testament. This is certainly to be expected. For decision is a rudimentary component of the New Testament Christ happening and a necessary consequence of the Christ offense. Those seized by the scandal of the Jesus question could not avoid an answer. One way or the other they had to decide. Life decisions are always compelled by the disturbance of life modes. But the choice was not apprehended as just *another* choice. It was understood as the *elemental* one and this, precisely because of the above scandal was the ultimate assault upon the world of EVERYMAN. In short, the great and final divide of all human decisions is located in the strange New Testament question: Is Jesus the Christ?

The response demanded and the only one that could be demanded was a simple yea or nay. There is no possible third option; no middle ground; no perhaps. Not even a delay is thinkable. For not to decide here is still to decide. At any other point, several alternatives, in principle at least, are offered. Such is not the case here. The scandal is either embraced or it is rejected. Though repudiation has a thousand faces, yes, a thousand times a thousand times, all are but some form of re-entrenchment in the EVERYMAN-CHRIST. This extreme dimension becomes clearer when one remembers that for the New Testament people the Christ decision was transparently an election for or against life itself. The negative answer was at bottom a rejection of human existence as it is constituted. The acknowledgment of the scandal, on the other hand, is a full and free affirmation of the significance of the creaturehood of man. When the human situation is nakedly exposed there are but two choices: to affirm life or to negate it.

Perhaps it appears incredible that such fathomless deeps of man and history are caught up in so very concrete a decision. Yet this is exactly the way things are in this dimension of existence. As the search for meaning is always concrete, so necessarily is the offense to this meaning historically rooted. And therefore, the ensuing decision must likewise be grounded in the very particular. Though, at base, the New Testament men were de-

ciding about their own stance and destiny, yet because Jesus was the occasion of the question, externally it took the form of deciding about him: Is Jesus the Christ? What do you say? Is your CHRIST, JESUS-CHRIST? or the EVERYMAN-CHRIST?

One final concern before the summation. The JESUS-CHRIST-EVENT has been depicted at one and the same time as both death and life. This draws together the entire twist. It is unmistakably plain that the early Christians conceived of and experienced this happening as the very fullness of life. They sensed after themselves as the blind who now see, as the deaf who have been given to hear, the bound set free, the maimed made whole, the dead men who are alive. The death involved in encompassing the scandal was discovered to be life itself. There is no addition here, no subtle way out. Any addendum would be a cancellation of the event. The choice to give up our illusions and false hopes and hiding places is the death of choosing the scandal. This very death is life, they insisted. To die is to live. To use their figures, it is like being born all over again. It is like the healing of a mortal illness. It is like being forgiven a big lie at the heart of our being. It is like a resurrection from a tomb.

The dying to the life-quest becomes itself the very bread of life. Surrender of the demand for final truth becomes quite the truth about things. Capitulation to the secret that there is no way out, becomes the very door and way to being. This is the end of the road of self-understanding. There is no beyond it. There is no need. For one can now freely live in his negations, learn in his perpetual ignorance and walk in all his given creatureliness. In brief, the decision to die is at the same time an election to life. The JESUS-CHRIST is life abundant. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.

Now to the recapitulation: the JESUS-CHRIST is an historical event. It is a radical revolution in the interior history of men proceeding from an absolute reversal in human self-understanding. Originally occasioned by Jesus of Nazareth, it is first of all the experience of an offense. This offense is grounded in an actual disaffirmation of our creaturely phantasms which issues in a new possibility of living our bestowed existence as a great benefaction. It is secondly, the decision to receive the offense and embrace the ensuing possibility as our own. This entails a dying to ourselves as defined by our mirages, which very death is experienced as the very life we were mistakenly searching for. Such is the radical transfiguration of the JESUS-CHRIST-EVENT.

The early Christians' pronouncement of it contained an inseparable promise and demand. The demand is to die. That this very dying is life, is the promise.

## THE CHRISTIAN STORY

Our task is not finished. Any serious dialogue on the Christ symbol must of necessity consider the Christian story, so-called. In and through the JESUS-CHRIST-EVENT an historical community broke into time. The church and the event are actually but two sides of one historical occurrence. Those to whom the event happened constituted the church. Like every historical people the church forged a life-apologue or meaning story by which it communicated to itself and to others that the event which created it was rooted in ultimacy. What we have termed the Christian story became therefore, along with the event and the church, an integral component of the total historical complex.

The cosmic tale has a universal and definitive agency. Both the social body and the comprising individuals are contingent upon it. As insinuated above, it is the vehicle by which the interior history is transcendently grounded, comprehensively appropriated and significantly communicated. To say it again, it freights the universal dimension to self-understandings and life missions. In fact, all intentional being and doing, all self-conscious existence is finally interwoven with one or another cosmic-meaning drama.

Such stories are conspicuously penetrated by the relative and arbitrary: not in their inner meaning but in their form. Yet once the story is devised, there is a certain absolute quality about even the form. In principle, the detail could have been quite different at its creation. And any time thereafter, its basic intent



can be expressed in other ways. But once the original dramaturgy is complete, that production is the prototype. It remains prototypical as long as the historical community remains. The early Christians formulated their classical tale out of the relative stuff of their specific Hebrew memory, the unique world views of their time, and whatever figures emerged from the collective unconscious. It was a work of expansive conception and consummate artistry. Through it the church continued to grasp for themselves and transmit to others the finality of what had occurred in their midst. This is to say, it endured as irreplaceable.

The story is a strange metamorphic tale of two symbols: the cross and the empty tomb. These basic New Testament emblems pervade the drama from the beginning to the end. The truth of the matter is they play the stellar role. Uncommon and fantastic as it may sound, the leading character of the Christian story is none other than the biform symbol, cross and open sepulcher, indicating and embodying the reality of the crucifixion that is resurrection, the death that is life. To say it another way, the principle player is the meaning-word that man may dare to be fully human, living freely among the uncertainties, ambiguities and anxieties of creaturehood, in gratitude, concern and creativity. The hero, in brief, is not Jesus, but the JESUS-CHRIST-EVENT.

In brief synopsis, the story develops as a dramatic extravaganza in three sweeping acts executed on two stage levels. It opens on the upper stage representing the cosmic, universal, transcendent dimension of life. It moves next to the historical, temporal, human level on the lower stage. Finally, in the third act the movement returns once more to the cosmic gallery. Each of the three acts is a spectacle in itself. Yet all are bound together into one majestic movement by two transitional scenes between the acts.

The time and place of act one is the beginning of the beginnings. Exciting awesomeness is the overarching mood. The JESUS-CHRIST-EVENT, disguised as a most curious lamb which is alive though dead, is the principle figure on stage. Here, before the foundations of the world, a slain lamb is sitting very much alive on the very throne of thrones alongside the creator. Indeed the lamb is portrayed as the creator himself calling all things into being. Without him no thing that comes to be comes to be. Passing to the third and final act of the play, the scene is very much the same. It is again on the cosmic level with the slain lamb occupying stage center. The difference is that it is now the ending of the endings. All things have passed away. The lamb, alive-while-dead, is once more seated on the throne. This time he is playing the role of the unconditional judge presiding over the finale of history. In sober awe all things come forth to account and no thing is judged save by the judgment of the lamb.

Embracing the middle act are the two transitional scenes. Their theatric function is that of getting the lamb on and off the historical stage where the second act is performed. The entrance into temporality of the JESUS-CHRIST-EVENT figure cannot of course be like any other entry. Heralded by angelic hosts, he arrives born of a virgin. If the play were being composed today the advent might well have been by way of a space rocket fired out of nowhere. In this case, the lamb imagery conceivably would be replaced by that of a strange little creature from beyond the time-space continuum. The important point is that the cosmic figure invades history on a mighty mission. When the mission is accomplished he departs the temporal, not, of course, as others do, but through ascending in an effulgence of glory again to the upper level.

In the second act, the interest is in the cosmic mission. The central character is still the JESUS-CHRIST-EVENT. Camouflaged in the first and last act as the slain lamb, it is here disguised as a man. In this double concealment the cosmic figure submits to the ordeal of finitude. He meets and straightforwardly engages the twin forces of death and the devil: that is, the temptation to illusion and the anxiety of creatureliness which drives us into the clutches of illusion. He engages the forces of EVERYMAN-CHRIST and destroys their power by boldly with-

standing their subtlest wiles. He enters the very den of death and emerges from the grave the unchallenged conqueror. In a mighty invasion, the JESUS-CHRIST-EVENT has overcome the hosts of the foe on the plains of history, pushed to the fortified place and bound the strong man, leading humanity forth from its bondage and slavery unto the glorious freedom of life. The sign and power of the cross and empty tomb are engraved for all time upon the fact of history. Cosmic permission to live has been epiphanied. Mission accomplished, the lamb returns to that realm from whence he came, the manifest victor to rule as sovereign lord and only judge forever and forever. What a play!

It must be underscored that this drama is in no sense a web of metaphysical statements. Nor is it an aggregate of religious doctrines to be believed. It is a story. Its task is to hold before the reader, in a comprehensive, precise, and constraining fashion the stance of life. One is moved therefore, not to ask whether the dramatic images correspond to "objective realities," but whether the life meaning they embody corresponds to the way life comes to us as persons.

When it is received as the truth-story it is, the axial point is quite plain. Though the point is singular it peradventure ought to be put several ways. First of all, the JESUS-CHRIST is presented not as just a way of life, but the final and only way. The story announces both the cosmic permission and the cosmic requirement to live after this style. Second, it is clear in the play that the JESUS-CHRIST is the way real life has always been from the very beginning of human existence, and will always be to the very ending. Third, the JESUS-CHRIST is a removal of the false veils we have drawn over life as it is. It is in no wise a superimposition upon life. The transfiguration is a restoration, not a novelty. Lastly, the JESUS-CHRIST tells us nothing we do not somehow know. The meaning of being human is that we were constituted to be human. This is what we were given to be. This alone shall be our judge.

The compendium is this: the JESUS-CHRIST IS LORD in every sense of the word. Every man, it is plain, bows his knee to some life image. Before one or another self-understanding under the general canopy of the EVERYMAN-CHRIST, he utters the submissive word: My Lord. The early church was quite clear about this. She was also transparent concerning the location of her own obeisance and confession of allegiance. Her earliest creedal formula: JESUS-CHRIST IS LORD, is an abbreviation of the whole cosmic tale. It is at once a subjective decision and an objective state of affairs. The story of the cosmic Christ: his pre- and post-existence, his virgin birth and ascension to heaven, his historical life, death and resurrection, are all signs and symbols of this lordship.

In all of this the primitive church was calling upon herself and all men everywhere, to live boldly in the JESUS-CHRIST, confidently sure that this is the way things are, ever have been and ever will be. There is but one objective, everlasting unchanging life truth, namely, the living of life as a gift is the meaning of living life. Put it liturgically: the JESUS-CHRIST IS LORD.

## THE ESCHATOLOGICAL HERO

Intimately related to the Christian story yet not synonymous with it, is still another component of the Christ construct. It is the image created by the primitive Christians of a hero of faith or a cultic exemplar. The hero was first etched upon the common memory of the community. In time he became universally public as the central literary figure in the Four Gospels. One must not be misled here. This cultic man is not Jesus of Nazareth. Nor is he the cosmic figure sketched above. Neither is he simply a representation of what we have termed the JESUS-CHRIST happening. One must rather say that the Christian paragon is a masterful artistic combination of them all.

Every historical community has its cultic figures. They are the models of the corporate self-understanding in the collective imagination. Such representations inform the liturgical dramas through which the group recollects who it is. They are the

"universal" categories which provide the everyday common sense. They are the generalized other in the conscience that prompts and judges action. They are the master signs through which the active and passive emotions are usefully illuminated. In sum: the archetypal persons are the keys of concretion in the corporate worship dramas, the corporate life styles and the corporate practical wisdoms.

It is most understandable then, that the early church was inspired to create such a hero. His paradoxical nature has already been indicated. He eats and weeps and experiences deep struggles of the spirit. Yet he also withers trees with a glance, does disappearing feats and quite actually rises from the grave on page twenty-five or so of the record. Succinctly, the Christian hero is the JESUS-CHRIST-EVENT embodied at the same time in both the temporal Jesus and the cosmic lamb.

This complex of paradoxes needs a closer look. To begin with, the hero is a man of this world, plus or minus nothing. He was born and he died. In between, he is portrayed as experiencing life's gamut of joys and sorrows, failures and successes, knowns and unknowns. Furthermore, he struggles, as humans must, to assume his posture toward his creatureliness. The stance he embodies, however, is not that of the EVERYMAN. He elects to live entirely within the JESUS-CHRIST faith, deciding and acting only in the style of the death that is life. The Christian prototype, to employ a formula, is in the first instance, the historical-JESUS-CHRIST-man.

The other pole of the hero's individuality is likewise a fusion. In this case, the ingredients, like those in the Christian story, are the cosmic dimension and the JESUS-CHRIST-EVENT. This is the figure that stills storms, turns water to wine, casts out demons, and raises up dead men. He signifies the wholly other, the utterly absolute, being in itself. Use any symbol of ultimacy, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, he is it. At the same moment, he is the JESUS-CHRIST-EVENT that takes place in time. His own death and resurrection are presented as the master sign. The wonders he performs and the oracles he utters are likewise symbols of the Christ happening. Actually, his total existence is an unbroken nexus of signs pointing to crucifixion that is the resurrection. In terms of our schemata, the archetypal hero is the cosmic-JESUS-CHRIST-figure as well as the historical-JESUS-CHRIST-man.

The picture is still not complete. The whole emerges only after the polarities in the two formulae are totally amalgamated into one. A diagrammatic statement of this amalgamation would look something like this: the cosmic-historical-JESUS-CHRIST-man-figure. Authentic human existence and ultimate cosmic significance coalesce in the JESUS-CHRIST EVENT. Here is the bare skeleton on which was shaped the most remarkable personality in the literature of any people. The paradoxes are made to completely cohere in the characterization of that strange personage who moves through the New Testament Gospels. It is a work of consummate artistry. In one paragraph, he moves from the very human business of dispersing crowds and enjoying a moment alone to his stroll across the lake. Wonder-filling as this is, the reader is not surprised. There is no jarring. The player is exactly in character, so to speak.

In literary flesh and blood, the gospel hero is first and last a man of mission. Being and doing are consolidated in him. His single-minded vocation is exhibited in a two fold activity of living life genuinely, authentically—as a man of faith in the midst of the world—and announcing to all others the possibility of such living. This is patent in both poles of his individualization: cosmic and historical. To use our earlier figure, he walks freely out across the anxious, uncertain, ambiguous waters of life. At the same time, he beckons others to do likewise. On the temporal side, the same pattern is discernible. With utter intentionality, the hero lives as the free man. He humbly opens himself to what is given; gratefully receives himself in what is given; and benevolently involves himself on behalf of what is given. He is liberated to be thankful for life; to love this world of neighbors; to be

directed toward the future. This is to say, he is free to live life. And while he is busy living, he simultaneously declares to those about who have ears to hear the good news that they too can live in the freedom of the JESUS-CHRIST-EVENT.

Within the cultus, the name of the hero came to be Jesus Christ. This is frequently abbreviated just to Christ. And sometimes, perhaps most of the time, he is simply called Jesus. This is the Jesus of piety. To caution once more, he is not Jesus of Nazareth, but rather the Jesus of the holy literature, the Jesus of the liturgical experience, the Jesus of the common life. As such he is the most vividly alive, the most finally significant, the most always present personality in the existence of the cultus. There are, of course, a host of other companions who live in the collective memory. Jesus Christ is the primordial one. The many titles bestowed upon him are indicative of this: Lord of Lords, King of Kings, Son of Man, Son of God. No designation or mark of honor is too high or high enough to articulate his status for the people who bear his name. This raises a question about the adequacy of the term "cultic hero." The representational Jesus very obviously is the cultic or prototypal figure of the people who live in the CHRIST-EVENT. Yet the church knew him to be more: not just the cultic hero but the final or eschatological hero. That is, he represents the way things are for all men. He is the paragon of man as Man.

This eschatological hero is then the portraiture of what human living actually is. He is an unqualified delineation of the human style of life. He is a model of faith-filled living. A model is a design of the way things are. It is a construct of the manner in which things are understood to function. In dealing with subjects rather than objects, as in the case at hand, where the model is a personage, perhaps the "exemplar" would be a more fitting term. The Christ hero is a model or exemplar of what is going on where unmitigated human living is taking place.

The terms "ideal" and "example" have been intentionally avoided for fear of distracting connotations. To be sure, since a model is necessarily a totally unbroken and unfragmented representation, it might be labeled "ideal." But it is not ideal in the sense of disclosing some ought-world of precepts and virtues through which we can escape our humanity. It is not ideal in the sense of some moral goal toward which men strive for the sake of meaning and significance. All this would be merely a subtle form of the EVERYMAN-CHRIST, that builds illusions about the human situation in seeking for truth, perfection and peace.

The Jesus model is the JESUS-CHRIST made flesh. It is a dramaturgical embodiment of that life stance or posture. To follow in the steps of the representational Jesus is not to imitate his words or reproduce his deeds. It is to be and do as a free man in our concretion as he depicted this stance in the concretions of his role. It is to walk out across the uncertain, ambiguous, anxious deeps of my life in gratitude, humility and compassion, with the sure confidence that this very walking is the meaning of life. The Exemplar is an ever present indicative word in the memory of a people, that to live is to live in the Christ event, and an ever present imperative word that continually calls them to it. In this sense it guides their thoughts and deeds, their words and feelings. It is the context in which and out of which they forge their concrete actions.

The New Testament writers think of their Jesus hero as the pioneer who blazes the way; the elder brother who goes on before; the first fruit of a mighty harvest to be reaped. The followers then see themselves as the second wave of explorers, the younger brother, the latter harvest, yet as embodying the same life, traveling on the same way, participating in the same mission. As he lived his life as the meaning of his life, and announced the cosmic permission for all men thus to live, so the church understands that she can and must go and do likewise. As Luther said, the Christians are to be little Christs.

—Joseph W. Mathews, for the  
Corporate Ministry of the  
Christian Faith-and-Life Community

# Our European Roots



*The following is excerpted from a letter written by George Lewis, a former student in the College House, who is spending the current year in Europe in study and travel.*

Next Monday will celebrate the six months I've been gone from the States. Saturday will celebrate the six months from home. It has been the most worthwhile six months of my life. It has been the happiest period of my twenty years. Such an abundance of exciting ideas, people, places, and traditions have never stood so close to me before. In an area the size of one of our American states, objects of fascination are packed like sardines. The ideas of two or more thousands of years are here in their mutations and also in their originals. The eternal traits of human beings can be traced back to the dawn of history and the changing ones can be seen changing. Roots of our own civilization are everywhere to be seen. Influences of our life upon the Europeans can be seen. It is like the son is growing up and must take care of the mother who has given him birth and the best part of her being. But also like the son, America has much to learn from this wise and battle-torn continent. We have much to give, but we have also the opportunity of receiving lessons of two thousand years. Our short history simply doesn't afford the "Methuselic" understanding that is embodied in the cultures and philosophies of this continent.

I think history has become a living thing for me here. One can sit while reading the books of this land and see the wars, the revolutions, the constant struggles as living things that continue on into our own time. Never before have I thought of World War II as other than a disconnected thing which has had no effect on my life. I mean to say, that I am beginning to see the effects of this massive struggle on our own lives and especially on the lives of the people here. The war lives on, rather than having merely been recorded in history books like accounting figures. As a result, I find it necessary to read of it in order to know where I've come from, which world I was born into, where my subsequent obligations lie.

## CALENDAR OF ECUMENICAL STUDIES

(FEBRUARY - MAY)

### PARISH LAYMEN'S SEMINARS:

These week-end seminars bring together laymen from over the state for 44 hours of study and dialogue. The basic pattern of lecture, study, and seminar is pushed into life relevancy through serious conversation and the use of various art forms. Course offerings are taken from the core curriculum and advanced studies.

### LAIC THEOLOGICAL STUDIES:

Four courses will be offered this spring for laymen from Austin and the surrounding community. Meeting each Thursday evening for dinner, conversation, seminar, and lecture, participants in LTS can go through the entire core curriculum of the Community.

### PARISH MINISTERS' COLLOQUY:

Clergymen of different denominations come to Austin for three days each month over a four month period. Theological core courses are offered plus seminars and lectures attempting to share teaching methodology and to forge a relevant working image for a local congregation in the areas of worship, study, life together, and mission.

### MINISTERS' WIVES COLLOQUY:

Wives of ministers who have participated in the Community's program come together for three days when the IA segment of the studies is offered. Those returning for a second or third time take an advanced course. Conversations center on aspects of the role of the clergyman's wife as a free, responsible woman in the midst of the twentieth century world.

### CAMPUS MINISTERS' SYMPOSIUM:

This is an annual course, meeting every spring, which is open to campus ministers from all over the United States. Its purpose is to offer training in program planning and teaching methodology and to share the results of the Community's experimentation.

### SEMINAR FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS:

These weekends bring together around thirty students of high school age to study and reflect upon the meaning of being an emerging adult man or woman in today's world.

### PARISH LAYMEN'S SEMINARS

Course	Weekend
Seminar for High School students	Feb. 2-4
I A	Feb. 9-11
I A	Feb. 16-18
I B	Feb. 23-25
I A	March 2-4
II A	March 9-11
I A	March 16-18
Seminar for College students	March 23-25
Advanced Seminar for High School students	March 30-April 1
III-C	April 6-8
I A	May 4-6

### LAIC THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

.. (Thursday Evenings) ..

Spring Series ..... Feb. 15-April 5

### PARISH MINISTERS' COLLOQUY

The regular Parish Ministers' Colloquy will be held in the fall

Advanced Parish Ministers' Colloquy ..... Feb. 26-28

### PARISH MINISTERS' WIVES COLLOQUY

First Course and Advanced ... April 23-25

### CAMPUS MINISTERS' SYMPOSIUM

Symposium ..... April 15-18

Course numbers refer to the Community's unified curriculum. CS-IA (prerequisite for all courses) is "The Meaning of Human Existence." CS-IB is "The Modes of Human existence." CS II-A is "The Christian Movement in History." For information concerning any of the courses, write Director of Studies, 2503 Rio Grande, Austin, Texas.



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The yet incomplete Memorial Chapel is supported and maintained through memorial gifts to the Memorial Chapel fund. The following persons have been memorialized, through gifts by those whose names follow, since January 1, 1961.

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## Dear Everybody:

Christmas was not long ago and it is also coming again the day after tomorrow. Is time, then, cyclical . . . an endless round of repeated remembering from the cradle to the grave? Sometimes when the Faith we profess lies dormant at the feet of the faith we live by, the ticking of clock-time crowns out the anguished cries of pregnant-time struggling to give birth.

But when birthing time comes, time itself is filled full, history is changed, the space-time continuum becomes discontinuous upon the intrusion into its midst of that which can be defined neither by space nor time.

The eternal intrusion which was made known on that first *Christ-time* was christened "God-with-us" . . . . . also experienced as "within-us" and "without-us." And the unrepeatable event of the birthing of this One by the name of *Emanuel* has become the uniquely repeatable experience of a strange community in history which proclaims to all men in every age the same:

God so loved the world . . . . . therefore, you are accepted as you are, and nothing can separate you from the love of God as this is made known in and through the Christ-event in your life, which gracious activity is indescribable dying and burning all at the same time.

Time is not cyclical but it is *daily* and is to be *lived*. Don Warren and wife Beverly of our Corporate Ministry addressed recently a message to us all from the vortex of their experience which witnesses to their affirmation of the givenness of life and the call to glorify God by the living of life . . . this life . . . to the full:

"We are not fooled: We know that life is daily—or not at all

we know warmth and its opposite, indifference

we know the terror of emptiness and the nourishment of anticipation.

We know this and also more; that every moment is burdened

with the freedom to walk uprightly,

that the only peace we need is already here not day after tomorrow, but now in the midst of the present.

And therefore the joy of joys is not the possibility of getting out of this life, but of getting completely in it.

Let us then be human beings—alive in a living world daring always to be this and nothing less

Is not this what it means to serve and glorify God!"

And the congregation answered: Amen! Amen!

Peace,

*W. Jack Lewis*

for the Corporate Ministry  
of the Community

## Letter to Laymen

January, 1962

2503 Rio Grande, Austin 5, Texas  
Second class postage paid at  
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# Letter to Laymen



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Many reflective men and women today, acutely aware within themselves of a deep, uneasy, lonely emptiness which tranquilizers, diversions, and counsellors do not cast out, and sick of the illusions, pretension, fake roles and masks by which they hide from life as it is, are yearning for the possibility of raising, in the company of similarly aware people, the question of what life is all about.

Many reflective men and women today, forced to face the breakdown of authentic human relations in their marriages and homes, are becoming aware of their participation in the widespread estrangement and alienation in all social structures of our day, and are inwardly longing to find a context through which they can enter into an open dialogue with other awakened people about what it means to live genuinely as human beings before one another.

Many reflective men and women today, caught in the transition between two worlds, becoming increasingly aware of the inescapable moral ambiguities in their daily lives, and burdened by the pain of making necessary decisions in every complex life situation for which easy moral answers of the past are no longer adequate, are urgently seeking a chance to reflect creatively in depth upon the meaning of the moral life and upon the labyrinthine process of decision making.

Many reflective men and women today, inside and outside the Church, disturbed by the too easy answers which the Church offers to the ills and anxieties of life, and grieved by the apparent irrelevance of the Church to the actual life of twentieth century man, are searching with real importunity for a way to raise anew the question of the significance of the Christian gospel to the human situation in our age and an occasion to discover new ways to serve the Church in her mission in and to the world.

## parish laymen's seminars —

## THE LIFE OF COMMITMENT

Each year, more than five hundred laymen gather at the Laos House, Austin, Texas, for intensive study, reflection, and discussion. The Laos House is the program of the Christian Faith-and-Life Community directed toward the local parish. The concern of this thrust is theological study, the world in which we live, and the present state and possibilities of the Church on the local level.

Things happen. On these forty-four hour weekends known as "Parish Laymen's Seminars," things happen. No definitive categories exist to describe the experience that takes place during these hours. To speak of it, one can only paint a picture. Such a word painting is the narrative beginning on page two of this issue. It was written by Lois Boyd of Norman, Oklahoma, who recently participated in Course I A of the Parish Laymen's Seminar at Laos House.

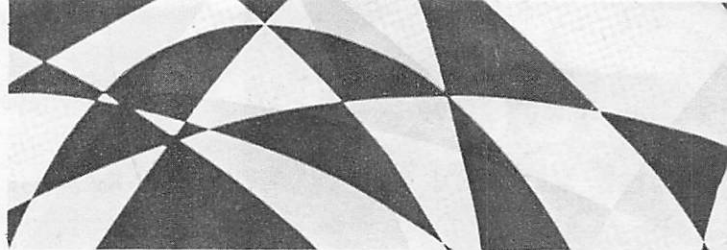
### PARISH LAYMEN'S SEMINARS

Course	Weekend
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III-C	April 6-8
I B	April 13-15
I A	May 4-6





## A STRANGE FORTY-FOUR HOURS



"In the beginning . . ." But I can't start at the beginning. There is no way to know where or how it all began.

And yet—if—IF—you could hear just one Word—

But wait! If you do hear that ONE WORD—which is really everything I have to say rolled into one thundering, crushing sound . . . If you hear that Word, you can never hear anything else except as it comes to you through that sound . . .

Begin at the beginning . . . What is a beginning? I'll just have to tell my story . . . This is *not* the beginning.

One time a car load of six of us went down to Austin, Texas, to a—Conference?—No, a Seminar?—Did some one tell us it was a "Spiritual Retreat"? I wasn't at all sure I wanted to go to one more "Spiritual Retreat." You know how this kind of thing can be—and besides I'd heard what they had down there was really pretty "way out" for most folks.

"Well—are you going or not?" And I said, "Oh sure. I'll go. Maybe I'll find out something that will help the church."

You see, I take the church pretty seriously. As a matter of fact, in those days I was pretty dedicated to it. (I hate to bring this up, but I have a suspicion that the church was a god to me at that time.) Part of the beginning of all this was somewhere in the words I'd heard through the church and so I was most anxious to help strengthen the church in any way I could. (If all this sounds pretty fuzzy to you—you're right! It is. That is the way I thought in those days. Of course, I had a lot more words for all this. I was not at all short of words, and I might add that I had some pretty fancy theological terms in my vocabulary. That was part of my problem. I had so *many words* but so few people wanted to hear what I had to say. I could talk very charmingly . . . and when I got through everyone seemed to say, "SO WHAT? That wasn't what I asked, you know." It's a lonely world!)

And *kookie*, if you know what I mean. Like that kookie part that hit us all when we finally got in that car and headed toward Austin.

We looked at a map and Someone said, "It is a nine hour drive down there."

Someone Else said, "It looks to be about four hundred miles, more or less. Somewhere around that, I'd guess."

All this was so pleasant and agreeable. It was not until we were coming back that we called all this into review again and found out that somehow things had gotten all changed around so that if today you ask Any One of Us about it We can't tell you anything! We can't be sure of the mileage or the time it takes to drive or even what highway to follow. (I said this is a kookie world and before I finish you'll see what I mean.)

To get back to the facts of my story . . . We were all riding along and we got to talking and He (the One sitting next to the Driver) said, "Why did all of you come on this trip?"

WHY? Now there's a stupid question. WHY?

Well . . . that did it! Opened the door to a whole flock of questions. Out they popped . . . "Say, I've been wondering. Just what is this thing we're going to anyway?" . . . What's it supposed to do to us? . . . Who else is going to be there? . . . Suppose—we turned to be the only people there! Can you imagine how silly we'll look if we drive all the way to Austin and no one else is there? . . . And while I think about it, who are these people that run it?

As a matter of fact, who are WE? Look around. We are three men and three women—but what are We doing here together? We don't even know each other. Then—

Some One said, "This is Austin." And so it was—so it was.

There was the Laos House and people coming down the steps

and a door opening and a voice saying, "Oh, you are the people from Oklahoma." And I said, "Norman." You know, you have just got to hang onto something like the name of your home town, when you have just made the frightening discovery that you don't know a ONE of the people you have just walked in the door with.

The moment passed . . . Things got just as normal as could be once more . . . It was like any other Conference. "Please fill in this card," and "We'll show you to your rooms." Things like that—only—"Wait," She (the One at the desk) said, "About your rooms—you say that not one of you is married to each other?" . . .

There was an awkward moment if I ever saw one! I really squirmed. What if She kept pushing this point until We had to say, "We not only aren't married to each other . . . we really don't know each other!" She could have kept asking questions that would have left us exposed right there. But She was kind and the moment passed . . .

There was the "busyness" of getting all settled. I relaxed and presently began to feel I was going to like this place. There was chit-chat and laughter, and the smell of food in the kitchen, and our first glimpses of that interesting old house, built in a far more elegant day than ours. We met people coming and going on the stairway and about that time I got to feeling pretty glad I'd come. (I must add, however, so you won't get the wrong impression—this was a fleeting emotion—this notion that we would probably have a "Mountain-Top Experience" out of all this. You see, they blast that kind of hope right out of you almost before you can get your suitcase unpacked.)

We met people coming and going on the stairs and I joined a group in the "parlor" enjoying a before dinner cup of coffee. (I knew we were still in "this world" when I saw all that coffee.)

A bell rang, the doors to the dining room were thrown open, dinner was ready . . . And from the moment we walked into that room with the polished tables, things started to get all kookie again!

Of course, I didn't notice at all at once . . . Things seemed just like any other meal. There was the blessing of the food, a bell rung by the hostess for the food to be brought from the kitchen, the food itself, so hot and delicious. ("We have a good cook here," One of Them said. All the time we were there we noticed that the food was very good, but at times it seemed a little odd; like the menu where we had a combination like steak and eggs scrambled with fresh tomatoes, for breakfast. And they kept serving cream cheese as a spread for our bread. These interesting little touches made our meals most delightful.)

The trouble with that first meal was—how could I enjoy that fine food (and by now I was really hungry) when they kept making such odd speeches? Here we all were, come together to spend the week-end and They stood behind their chairs and One of Them said, "We think of meal time here as a time when we can become *self-conscious*. It is a time when we remind ourselves of who and what we are." (Now, how does that sound for a welcoming speech) Didn't They realize that most of us were too self-conscious already? That was part of our problem. We'd like a chance to forget ourselves — just a little while — please—) The "Welcome Address" got worse! "We begin our meals here as quietly as possible so that we can listen to the reading of the words from Our Fathers in the Faith." (Would you believe anything could be so awful? Couldn't These People realize that this place was just crawling with strangers? How

(continued on page eight)



## THE VISION OF NO FUTURE



The annual Mid-Winter Retreat of the College House was held this year at Mount Wesley, the Methodist encampment near Kerrville, Texas, during the weekend of February 2-3, 1962. Planned and executed entirely by students of the College House, the retreat included four major addresses focussing on the contemporary mood of the American college student of today. These talks, written by Keith Stanford, Carol Darrell, Dottie Adams, and Meg Godbold—all of whom were resident students of the College House this fall—appear on the following six pages:

### THE CONTEMPORARY DILEMMA

BY KEITH STANFORD

I can recall very clearly as a young boy hearing my grandmother telling stories about our family during the early depression. She told of great cattle deals, of money borrowed on little more than grit and goodwill, of large herds range fattened and resold, of fast bargains and fat profit. In this part of the telling of the tales there was always a memory of work and gaiety and getting rich. The men worked, and the women watched, and were content. Then she talked about when cattle prices dropped out the bottom and cattle were left in the pastures, not worth the price of rounding up. The men no longer went out. They climbed up on corral fences and talked and chewed tobacco and waited.

As it is always with a good myth, it does not matter at all that the old stories were probably as much fabrication as fact. It was enough that the stories symbolized for us the way things were, and then, the way things changed. And in all the versions I ever heard there was always the central theme: There was a time when the men worked; then, somehow, they worked no more. In attempting to assess the mood of the student community as I experience it, I feel often, the same sense of bankruptcy, this time a vague, crippling spiritual disruption, but still very like the old in its essential point: Those who worked before now sit and talk and wait.

In attempting to explore this phenomenon, I find that most of my serious thoughts center around two rather broad philosophical questions. The first has to do with questions such as "Do I have a notion of what, if anything, is essential about me?" "What kind of a person am I?" Or, simply, "Who am I?" The second concerns vocation, taken in the broadest sense. "What I am going to do?" "What relationship must I have with my world?" Briefly, "What place can I take in the world?" Now obviously it is necessary to raise these two questions through specific concrete categories. I have drawn on two which I feel competent to explore. These categories provide me with pegs on which to hang what I feel is the tone of the student community.

I think the first question, that of "Who am I?", can be dealt with through an aspect of the general category of sexuality. We are born into life with that pronounced and unmistakable Gallic "difference"; beyond that a very great deal is painfully uncertain. For a long time I was of the opinion that drastic confusion over sexual roles and the accompanying personality distortions were rather isolated, limited to the underside, twilight areas. But to observe closely, to decide for oneself, leads, I am afraid, to a quite different and quite a bit more disturbing conclusion. Severe sexual aberration, to be blunt, appears to be increasing alarmingly. Alongside the increase in serious external manifestations of extreme sexual insecurity there seems to be a correlated apprehensiveness, a pervasive sense of sexual inadequacy among supposedly "normal" students. This latter is astonishingly widespread, as I believe I can indicate.

The most obvious tip-off that under the surfaces something rather disturbing is taking place is the curious and painful self-consciousness—one sits in a carefully prescribed fashion (ankle-on-knee for a boy), one holds a cigarette a certain way, carries books a certain way and on and on. There is apparently a very widespread common necessity felt that one must again and again play out these masculinity or femininity pageants. There are, to be sure, other signs. One need only observe the strong shock impact among students of the slang phrases that designate aberrant sexuality: pansy, fruit, dike, queer. Even the clinical terms elicit an inward, (perhaps outward) wince. The reaction to the terminology and to discussion which involves it is significant. One sneers scornfully, one laughs, or one keeps nervously silent. That which threatens must be creatively absorbed or else struck down; in student society the conventional reaction is invariably the latter. These fragmentary tell-tales point, I think, to a deeper dislocation. That we do not clearly know who we are as sexual beings is eloquent testimony that we do not know ourselves as selves. We are compelled to answer timorously or not at all to the question of "What does it feel like to know yourself as a whole being?"

The second category, in the broadest sense, is that of vocation. In a world where involvement with work is imperative, I want to know what

work I can do. And further, I want to know what work I can do that will permit me to retain my sense of identity. Invariably the response falls somewhere between two limits. By far the most common is as follows: I want to know where I can expend my energy, where I can draw out of myself all my creative resources. This much may be considered idly. But when the question is thwarted, turned away unanswered, it acquires teeth. Creative vigor turned inside out is an instrument of suicide. Every person carries within himself the instinctive knowledge that to release his creative productivity is inextricably bound up with being human, with expressing one's humanity. To deny this creative urgency is to deny in a very real sense one's humanity. So we want to know—"How can I deliver up out of myself this insistent need to work?" I can settle the matter by throwing myself on the bosom of the organization. The army or General Electric or the "Y" or the faculty of the University of Texas will surely harbor me and permit me to have what I know I must have—the release of my vital energy. And indeed the prospects appear hopeful. But look closely. What I want is to bend closely over my job, to tinker and adjust and rearrange. But the essential distance between me and my job must be maintained. My humanity disappears at the instant I cease being very, very close to my job and become synonymous with it.

The second limit is also curious. In a way the limit is a response to the threat of loss of self that arises in the first possibility. Where before I ran the danger of being swallowed up by the world, I now become determined to engage myself in work that is sufficiently remote to leave my essential self unscathed; but, ironically, the self is lost because of the very drive to preserve it. The cynicism and languorous indifference that follows is scarcely preferable, if at all, to the mechanical inhumanity that marks the man who has become one with his work.

A very touchy paradox has developed. The choice here is between becoming a robot or an uprooted plant.

These two confusions—that I am radically unsure of who I am and that I cannot devise a life stance that permits me to retain my uniqueness at the same time to create and to participate—are unaccountably puzzling and powerful elements of the contemporary student mood.

Our time cries out and the young sit and talk and wait.

### THE PARALYZED MAN

BY CAROL DARRELL

In one of Hemingway's best short stories, "A Clean Well-Lighted Place," one of his characters gives a paraphrase of the Lord's prayer which exemplifies the nothingness of life...

Our nada who art in nada, nada be Thy name.

Thy kingdom nada, thy will be nada, in nada as it is

in nada. Give us this nada our daily nada and lead us

not into nada but deliver us from nada. Hail nothing full

of nothing, nothing is with thee.

and then T. S. Eliot intrudes upon us with his

Do I dare

Disturb the universe?

In a minute there is time

For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.

For I have known them all already, known them all:—

Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons,

I have measured out my life with coffee spoons

I know the voices dying with a dying fall

Beneath the music from a farther room.

So how should I presume?

or to hear Dostoevsky's song of life—

it is just in that cold, abominable half despair, half belief,

in that conscious burying oneself alive for grief in the

underworld for forty years, in that acutely recognized and

yet partly doubtful hopelessness of one's position, in that

hell of unsatisfied desires turned inward, in that fever of oscil-

lations, of resolutions determined forever and repented of again

a minute later... it is in that hell of despair I live.

and so it is that from many mediums of expression such as painting, music or literature there is ample evidence that this is an age of despair

...or that the dark cloak of gloom still covers us...but today's despair is not that which settles like a constant ever-heavy fog...no, it is sharp, pointed, more like the spasms of anguish which tear at us when we stop to think about what's happening in the world or in such an insignificant thing as when we realize that our "How do you do?" don't really require an answer and that aloneness is the Great Reality. Certainly in such an age...in such a period of history when there is no extension of time for which one can plan, life does seem to come as meaningless and futile or as the Preacher puts it

Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had spent in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

And to realize that our work is in vain...to see the future as only the present...or...to see the present time as the handwriting on the wall which says "this is all that's left...any moment now there will no longer be a place or time for you"...no longer any place or time...such a message unnerves us and causes us to grab on to life with one of two responses. The response which says "*damn right life doesn't have meaning...I knew it all along*"...or the one of "*but there's got to be a future...life's got to have meaning...and if not, then I'll create my own meaning...*" or to say it another way: one can choose to be the *passivist* or one can choose to be the *activist*; or to put it more graphically: one can choose to be the man in paralytic motion who moves yet never goes anywhere; or one can choose to be the man in circular motion who goes round and round and round...

What about this man, though, who responds by saying, "hell, I knew there wasn't anything to all this business of living." What does this man do who believes all of life is just "striving after wind..." Perhaps one can have a clearer picture of him if he is observed in his three major roles or poses which are "The Piecemeal Man"... "The Undertaker"... or "The Man of Wisdom."

This first man...the *Piecemeal Man*...is perhaps the most obvious...at least he imposes his belief that life is really meaningless on all his activities and wants others to know that he lives in terms of futility. He expresses this by his constant engagement in activities which he would agree are "for the birds." I mean, as if he knows that this lawsuit fund isn't going to really solve the problem...or that Student Party doesn't really have the top students on campus...or that petitions never result in any action...and so on goes his list at the end of which he will say "...I know all this...but it's something to do." Thus, this *Piecemeal Man* sees all his activities as engagements merely for the moment...he would never participate for any length of time in any activity because he moves in terms of and operates on the principle that nothing's worth doing too long.

However, usually he's the type that every leader likes to have in his organization at least for awhile...because he always seems to have such good suggestions for improvement. Why, it's only a matter of minutes before he can analyze quite clearly the problems existing in an organization and somehow one gets the excited feeling that here's a person who can really help...but then this same person who was so apt with his suggestions for improvement, uses his conversations at the meal table and other places to pick to shreds each organization on campus and thus, over a period of time the picture emerges of a person who involves himself in activities only because they provide fuel for his contempt of life and he can strike out with his doctrine or nihilism.

Or, maybe this man...who doles out his life in pieces...is sometimes caught between rebellion and a sense of its futility. Since he is clear that life has cheated him...that his trust in a future has been betrayed...his deepest impulse is to rebel and, yet, instantly he sees the futility of his rebellion and so often he feels stretched out tight between the two poles of rebellion and futility and cannot quite decide which style of life to choose...and the idea of having to choose leaves him so paralyzed that one sees him in a sort of static motion, shifting as the wind blows.

And it is in this posture that life oozes from him with drops of his blood in one spot...then in another...without any pattern.

This lack of orchestration even permeates his conversations. He responds readily to discussions but doesn't begin them. And in conversations he shifts easily from one subject to another, during which you might notice him drumming his fingers on the table while someone else is trying to get his undivided attention, or sometimes he may be singing to himself or humming a tune while another is trying to talk with him. And as for his dressing apparel, well, it doesn't indicate in any extraordinary way that he is a piecemeal man except that he will wear the conventional clothes of the day and generally gives the appearance of being the normal...awake...and intelligent young college student who seems to be involved in most everything...but upon reflection...it is easily seen how dangerous this character is because he has basically lost confidence in himself, resulting from a conviction that life is really insignificant and that we are all "men striving after wind."

Thus, at the root of all his behavior is his belief that he doesn't have the power to really affect what is bound to happen...and because he disbelieves his power to change things, all he can do is commit a number of accidental, inconsistent acts.

But then the paralyzed man of today may not play the role of the *Piecemeal Man*. He may have chosen to be the *Undertaker* or more graphically, *The Mortician*. This is the man who nourishes the ideas...he's the one who encourages introspection and constantly reminds us of

our psychological disorders. This man understands himself as having a great ability of being able to confront others...as a matter of fact, we might call him in the College House, "The Great Confronter." In his conversations he toys around with the terms such as "ambiguity," "complexity," "participation," "fullness of life" and all these terms are used to create in his listeners his own paralysis, for he knows all of creation is lifeless, and for him to give birth is to give death. Or, perhaps, this is the one who spreads death through his benedictions or witness which are always those of doom. Of course, the way he gets away with this is by pretending that he is preparing you for the inevitable and thus, giving you courage to live but actually he builds a picture of life so gruesome that his audience cannot help but be overawed by the horror of daily existence.

Or he may be the person who sleeps through his classes, and this is one way he expresses his belief that life is meaningless or that life is void...or as he would say it, that life is dead, life meaning that "our worship services are dead...there is no life to our conversations...people are not enthusiastic any more." He has all sorts of expressions for describing the world as one vast graveyard and he sees his job as constantly reminding people that they are dead. Yet he doesn't do this in an enabling way...in a manner which would give them the possibility to take up their graves and walk...no, because if he were to speak in such a way, then soon his job would be over. There would be no need for an undertaker if people never died. So, this man has to keep bringing death.

Or, maybe this is the man who spreads his gloom through his own neurotic catharsis with other people. It may be with one person in particular...a psychiatrist for instance...or someone over at the Testing and Counseling Center. If so, then this fellow would rarely miss one of his appointments...and he would never end this relationship of his own accord...He delights in being told how sick he is. His trip to his doctor is the "underscoring" of his impotence, or his reasons for giving up, because, well, after all how can one believe in oneself when he is so sick. How can one make responsible decisions when he is so driven by neurotic impulses, and so this fellow's life is lived in terms of that once a week trip.

Or maybe he's the guy who isn't particular about who he talks to, he just gives detailed analyses of his neuroses to anyone who will listen. Maybe it comes out in the great amount of time he spends in bull sessions, because he loves talking about other people and in such a way that you know that he's really talking about himself, as when he reads a book, or hears a joke, or sees a movie. Whatever he hears and perceives, he does all only in relation to the label he has placed on the world as a sick, sick society, and this fellow simply cannot move beyond the limits of this boxed conception.

Usually this man is aware that he has a disease, but his disease is one which is contagious, and he is more than willing to spread it, even if it is in so simple a way as constantly reminding others about his broken relationships, or the difficulty he has in relating to another in the College House. For instance, just notice his conversation, everything centers on the "acute problems" of living, on the pain of being involved in life; notice his posture in his movements! He talks with his head somewhat tucked in and his eyes lowered, as though he were somewhat ashamed of his own existence or his insignificance. When he sits, it is in that slouchy way that as children we were told it would cause us to have hunchbacks. His clothes are usually unpressed, and he gives an over-all appearance of not caring how he looks, which means that his hair looks like it hasn't been combed or cut for quite a while. He is the picture of a fellow who has really been broken by life, and this helps this man, The Undertaker, sell his product, which is death, because his passivity, his apathy and his sloppy approach to life seem to be the easiest way out today, and his psychological gimmicks appeal to us since this fad is so much a part of our entire way of living in the mid-twentieth century. Yes, this man, the Undertaker, knows that he is living in the midst of dead and dying people and that since he can see no future, life is really dead to the possibility of hope or purpose and thus, the only way, seemingly, to live is to nourish upon and feed the deadness around him.

Now we have a picture of "The Piecemeal Man" and "The Undertaker" which brings us to the last role, that of the "Man of Wisdom." Often one has difficulty distinguishing as to whether this is merely a reflective man or a paralyzed man. He lives in such a way that others suspect him of being paralyzed, yet he talks about this with such clarity and understanding that he leaves other (as well as himself) with the belief that life really presents no other alternative than to choose the role of the philosopher. Of the three types, this man sees himself as the most aware, the most conscious or as he might want to say, the most mature. In the Community, he breaks in upon our images as the one who can speak at length on any proposed topic. Others are often amazed at his infinite insight and he is aware he has them on bended knees before his great wisdom. Certainly the image he uses to live by is that of Socrates or any of the other philosophers, and some of his favorite reading material is taken from the thoughts of these great men. In lectures he picks up easily the most important points made because later he will use them as a means of procuring and maintaining his image, and because he is attentive to all that is said (when he can afford to be the listener without hurting his image). He does know a great deal, as a matter of fact, he's a vast storehouse of knowledge, and others remark



about his apparent ability to remain calm and logical in the midst of so much confusion and chaos. While he smiles appreciably (although somewhat condescendingly) at their remarks, and continues, his "hands folded in contemplation" posture.

But what's really happened with this man is that he has kept an ace up his sleeve. He doesn't talk to others about life because he's involved in it, but simply because he has the ability to clean intellectually the mainstreams of thought around him. He has pushed life outside of him; actually, he has let our friend, the Undertaker, drain his system. And he stands in life as something of an embalmed man. He is in life, but doing nothing; he is well-preserved but already stale; and has assumed the posture of a mere spectator. Or perhaps this man leads a life of privacy or isolation; personal relationships of depth or intimacy he avoids and to others he always remains somewhat a mystery, and this mysterious atmosphere of his helps in pushing other to maintain something of a respectful distance.

Or maybe he's the one who engages in conversation, usually initiating it, such is and always has been the role of the philosopher. He may also be the most argumentative person around and always has the discussion well under his control. Anything that's said, he can either approve or refute, and it seems neither response really involves him in heated discussion, he never raises his voice, but always keeps that cool and deliberate tone which is so essential to his being and through which he keeps all contacts on a superficial level. It is also this very coolness of approach to life that enables him to grab hold of the strings or to be the manipulator that he is; and since he can manipulate so easily, he somehow feels that he must be a great deal more clever than others, although for the purpose of his role, he must make his cleverness appear to be simply wisdom from a person who's "been through it all."

Usually the mannerisms of the man of Wisdom are easily detectable because he does them so deliberately. His coffee cup is one of his major means of procuring his mood of intellectual intensity. At the meal table, he will usually speak with his coffee cup suspended midway between his lips and the table, staring into the cup as though receiving some form of ancient wisdom. He caresses the cup as though it were the dearest thing to him and even this is done with cool deliberateness. Or if he doesn't use the coffee cup, maybe it's his cigarette. When listening he takes these long, long drags and as he spills out his line, he exhales slowly often watching his own smoke rings as though gleaning bits of truth from them. Yes, in the Community his image is preserved through the use of his coffee cup and his cigarette. As for appearance, he will either dress in a suit and tie, or in the most casual apparel possible. He will choose one of these two types depending on whether he sees himself as the mature man of wisdom or the young, sophisticated, intellectual man of wisdom. This man walks deliberately and usually seems to be much taller than he is; he walks with pride (or one might call it conceit) because he knows that he has in himself all the abilities and qualities needed for a man to live in this time; but the ironical thing is that, due to his underlying belief that life is insignificant, he has lost the capacity to apply these abilities and qualities.

But he has no fear about not being able to be a man of action because in our pseudosophisticated attitudes most people have placed this man at the top of the totem pole. Everyone admires a person who can with this cautious coolness stand outside of life and issue his forceful, high-sounding, pedagogical words of wisdom and therefore, this person has found his role, and can rest in its security, and others can note how his popularity gives birth to a college house full of prophets and wise men.

And now the common current which runs through each of these roles—*The Piecemeal Man... The Undertaker... and the Man of Wisdom*, must be held in focus. Basically they are all persons who have decided that life is ultimately unimportant and that since the future has been cut off, to have purpose or plans is pointless. The paralyzed man, who may be found in any of the three roles, has essentially lost the nerve to live in the reality he sees—a reality which has no meaning in and of itself. He has imposed the strait-jacket of fear upon his own pre-set freedom and is afraid to move out of his static position. He may respond by saying, "let what will come come... I don't care any longer"... or by choosing to wallow in the muck and meaninglessness and enjoy his paralysis; or he may choose to stand outside the process as though he could separate himself from life. All three responses are indications of inertia, apathy, and emotional lifelessness of his own volition. And yet this man is clear as to why he chose one of these particular roles. He knew he could not meet all the responsibilities of life, and that each responsibility only mirrored the futility of his own existence and so in the face of the terror of existence he faced it by turning his back on it. Each role is basically an expression of one—the paralyzed man.

## THE ACTIVIST MAN

BY DOTTIE ADAMS

The man I am about to describe might be called the activist. At first glance he might look a little like the main character in this fable:

Once upon a time a little bear ran around in circles.

(This was not unusual, for at that time all little bears ran around in circles. This was just the proper thing for little bears to do.)

The little bear was running around in circles.

Now when running around in circles you have lots of time to think. The little bear started to think, because he had lots of time. (Just running around in circles and all.)

He began to think about how hungry he was.

Just then a stork flew over.

He saw the little bear running around in circles, so he landed in a tree near the little bear that was running around in circles.

He hopped down from the tree and over to where the little bear was running around in circles.

All this running around in circles and watching the bear running around in circles made lots of time for both of them.

Soon the stork said: What is your name?

Then the bear forgot himself and stopped running around in circles and said:

I don't know, I never took the time to ask because I was running around in circles. You sure do miss a lot, running around in circles. What is your name?

Then just to be a proper bear he started running around in circles again.

The stork then said: Why don't you stop? Said the bear: I don't know.

Said the stork: Why? Said the bear: Oh, I don't know that either. It really is funny that I don't know how to do anything except run around in circles, and it is easy to tell that frankly, I am expert in this.

The stork said: Don't you ever think? Yes, said the bear, once I thought how hungry I was.

Well, why did you not do anything about it? said the stork.

I am a proper bear, doing the proper thing to do, the bear replied.

How do you know that eating is not the proper thing to do, or thinking or sleeping? retorted the stork.

Yes, said the bear, the puzzle that was stored up in him for so long was beginning to show through. How do I know?

(Reprinted from *Motive* magazine, May, 1961.)

The somewhat exaggerated activity in this story is characteristic of the Activist Man. By activism I mean the assumption that the more one is acting the more one is alive. This man gets a pseudo and temporary sense of aliveness by being in a hurry, as though being busy is a proof of one's importance. Chaucer has a sly and astute comment about this type, represented in the merchant in the "Canterbury Tales," "Methinks he seemed busier than he was."

In trying to escape from self-awareness, to forget our isolation, the meaninglessness, we have found many little ways of proving that life, after all, is not meaningless. Why, aren't our lives just bubbling over with activity? I mean, we really get out and accomplish something in this world.

The man I am describing belongs to the important organizations, reads the right books, can appreciate good music and art. He might go in and talk with professors or even members of the Collegium. He attends the cultural entertainment movies at Batts Hall, extra lectures, and so on. He even pickets and "stands in" and likes minority groups. He is quite intelligent and doesn't want you to forget it. Therefore, he uses impressive terms and drops the right names.

But perhaps, the most outstanding characteristic is that he is quite able to stand off and look at all that happens in this world, especially to those around him. And he is always prepared to pull the psychological tools out of his little black bag and start dissecting. Then he can describe the complexes, the Freudian slips, and the real reason for such-and-such a person's behavior.

There are a few more remarks which might be made in regard to this man. In the midst of all his great undertakings in which he leaves his mark on the world, he forgets that there are no victorious causes. And in regard to art, good books, his lucidity about life, he does not see, he has only the pater of appreciation, he does not really love, he is not really moved. He does not go out and tear down his house and throw away his ugly possessions or storm the Bastille. He is too wise for that.

In regard to the intellectual guise of this man, he can readily be recognized because he is careful to carry about the right authors, the ones who are being read this week or this month. Or at least he keeps on hand copies of the illustrious initials—D.H., T.S., W.H., E.E.

However, in the midst of all his learning there is indifference, an aloofness maintained. Most knowledge is an intellectualization and has little relation to his personal existence. You receive the feeling while talking to this man that he could just as easily argue the other point of view from the one he is expounding, that he desires to communicate simply in order to reassure himself. This purely intellectual effort is only concerned with discovering the truth, but not concerned or troubled to communicate it.

This man's laughter has an unnatural sound to it, as though this is not a real part of him. Such laughter, which is often expressed in the raucous guffaw, may have the function of a simple release of tension, like alcohol or sexual stimulation; but, again like sex or drinking, when engaged in for escapist reasons, this kind of laughter leaves one as lonely and unrelated to himself afterwards as before.

Arriving at the greatest good by introspection left no time for little



things such as kisses, squeezes, and smiles. He has not allowed himself the luxury of human relations. They might lead him too far. Real relationships require openness and risks, and while the conscious fear is that of not being loved, the real, though usually unconscious fear is that of loving. But if to love means to commit one's self, there is not much possibility if there is no self.

This man is able to keep every intruder at a distance, from the topic of the self, whereas outwardly he is a "real man." This respectable citizen recognized as "Real Man, Father, and Champion Bowler" may have plunged into life, perhaps into the distractions of great undertakings. He has become a restless spirit which leaves only too clear a trace of its actual presence. Or, he may seek forgetfulness in sensuality, perhaps debauchery, but he really doesn't escape. Or perhaps this man who has hated the church because he has seen men escaping there, will choose to be noble in his activity and become a pillar in the church. However, after a while the thought may break through: Why does this man have to keep busy?

In trying to see what lies below the surface actions of the Activist, we might receive the feeling expressed by T. S. Eliot in his poem:

We are the hollow men  
We are the stuffed men  
Leaning together  
Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!

Shape without form, shade without color,  
Paralyzed force gesture without motion...

or as W. H. Auden expresses it:

Alone... alone... alone...

Deep within each of us there lies the dread of being alone in the world. Loneliness is such a painful threat to many persons that they have little conception of any positive value of solitude. As Rollo May says, "They suffer from the fear of finding themselves alone, and so they don't find themselves at all. However, in our culture it is permissible to say you are lonely, for that is a way of admitting that it is not good to be alone. And it is permissible to want to be alone temporarily to 'get away from it all.' But if one mentioned at a party that he liked to be alone, not for a rest or an escape, but for its own joys, people would think that something was vaguely wrong. And if a person is alone very much of the time, people tend to think of him as a failure, for it is inconceivable to them that he would choose to be alone."

"This fear of being alone lies behind the great need of people in our society to get invited places, or if they invite someone else, to have the other accept." The pressure to keep "dated up" goes way beyond such realistic motives as the pressure and warmth people get in each other's company, the enrichment of feelings, ideas, and experiences, or the sheer pleasure of relaxation.

"It seems that this fear of being alone derives much of its terror from our anxiety lest we lose our awareness of ourselves." If people contemplate being alone for long periods of time, without anyone to talk to or any noisy radio or blaring Hi-Fi, they generally are afraid that they would be at "loose ends," would lose the boundaries for themselves, would have nothing to bump up against, nothing by which to orient themselves.

Isn't it true that while standing in the herd, we sense our inner hollowness and are afraid that if we did not have our regular associates around us, our daily program and routine of work, if we should forget what time it is, that we would feel, though in an inarticulate way, some threat like that which one experiences on the brink of psychosis. When our customary ways of orienting ourselves are threatened, and we are without other selves around, we are thrown back on inner resources and inner strength, and this is what we do not have.

And so in his activism, as Kierkegaard wrote nearly a hundred years ago, "one does everything possible by way of diversions and the Janizary music of loud-voiced enterprises to keep lonely thoughts away, just as in the forests of America they keep away wild beasts by torches, by yells, by the sound of cymbals."

Man temporarily loses his loneliness; but it is at the price of giving up his existence as an identity in his own right. And he renounces the one thing that would help, the development of his own inner resources, strength and sense of direction, and using this as a basis for meaningful relations with others.

"The 'stuffed men' are bound to become more lonely no matter how much they lean together"; for hollow people have no base from which to learn to love." (Rollo May)

## THE NEW POSSIBILITY

BY MEG GODBOLD

We of the post-modern age have been forced into the present. Ours is not the vision of some past generations and times. Ours is no longer the vision of our own future glorification or of a discernible purpose with regard to ourselves and the whole world of cosmological and human history, ever coming more and more into fulfillment, in which purpose each man might participate and in the culmination of which we would find our significance and fulfillment as a part of that on-going purpose. Instead, we can now understand it to be that we cannot justify the

existence we have been given. History is without an eternal meaning that is apparent to us, without a discernible order of historical purpose which was already existing and into which we were born. We understand that we are forced into what comes to us between conception and death, and we can no longer feel that all will be well and made good because there is something that will fulfill us beyond this. The projection of hopes, expectations, and motives beyond what is given to us and what we may give in life is an anticipation and hope, sometimes a frantic, desperate hope, for which post-modern man can find no valid basis. The meaning of his life must be the living of it, as it is here given.

Further, we find that technical development has allowed man's unlove to intensify the shadow that has always been in the mind's eye of a man as he thinks of his future; for now that shadow is, in part, cast by a mushroom cloud.

With regard to fate, the past is hardly a point of anxiety; it is only, perhaps, a point of guilt, or excuse, a point of insight, or a point of escape. What we know most poignantly is that we cannot confidently anticipate what the future might allow—not only with regard to the question of whether or not mankind will have a future, but in the sense that we can hardly venture to say, should there be a future, what it will be like. In short, and my main point here, we have been forced into the present; and with each moment that we continue to be granted life and mankind history, there will continue to be the urgency of the present time we are given and the strange possibility that is born of such urgency. For precisely because this is so, we must find how to live vitally and authentically here if we are ever to live vitally and authentically at all. Whether we assume it or not, this possibility is already ours.

In an essay entitled "As Much Truth as One Can Bear," James Baldwin speaks of "nostalgia for the loss of innocence, as opposed to an ironical apprehension of what such nostalgia means." In discussing the reflection of this nostalgia in the works of post-World War I American writers, Baldwin says, "One hears, it seems to me, in the work of all American novelists... songs of the plains, the memory of a virgin continent, mysteriously despoiled, though all dreams were to have become possible here. This did not happen. And the panic, then, to which I have referred comes out of the fact that we are now confronting the awful question of whether or not all our dreams have failed. How have we managed to become what we have, in fact, become? And if we are, as, indeed, we seem to be, so empty and so desperate, what are we to do about it? How shall we put ourselves in touch with reality?"

W. H. Auden expresses it this way:

Alone, alone, about a dreadful wood  
Of conscious evil runs a lost mankind,  
Dreading to find its Father lest it find  
The Goodness it has dreaded is not good:  
Alone, alone, about our dreadful wood.

Continuing with Baldwin, "It is the American way of looking on the world, as a place to be corrected, and in which innocence is inexplicably lost... It is the sorrow of Gatsby, who searches for the green light, which continually recedes before him." But here is where Baldwin goes beyond nostalgia and offers us a word of possibility: "He (Gatsby) never understands that the green light is there precisely in order to recede. We have all, always lived in a world in which dreams betray, and are betrayed, where love dies, or more unbearably fails to die, and where innocence must die, if we are ever to begin that journey toward greater innocence called wisdom."

It would hardly be a venture to say that a man's essential significance, condition, and place in the universe and in the stream of human history and cosmological events is any different than it was in the time of Christ, or Copernicus, or John Wesley, or Dag Hammarskjöld. It is, instead, our view of man's significance, *raison d'être*, reason or justification for existence, and our view of man's condition that has changed. And however uncomfortable the intensity and directness of the burning light may be, we may rejoice in that illumination which has come through man's perception, investigation and ordering of reality outside of the familiar human realm, i.e., through science—also through historical experience, through attempting to understand how past ages could have interpreted experience and existence the way they did. Yes, we may rejoice in it. Not as a light giving full or final clarity, but as a light dispelling futile hope and anticipations. More specifically, is not much of our reaction to this historical disillusionment not only anxiety about our fate and justification for being (i.e., meaning, purpose), but also somehow feeling we have been let down, that there must be more. Is not this a historical letting down, a historical disillusionment, and can we not be free from the problem of nostalgia, from the historical process of disillusionment? If our understanding at all approaches adequacy, has not this always been the case? Has not a man always been given his life, and has it not always been required of him, and has not a man's future always been uncertain, and have not dreams always been betrayed?

We feel at times some strange reaction to the understandings of previous times, not infrequently bestowing courtesy to them with some subtle air of superiority, e.g., toward mideival conceptions of man in the universe and toward nineteenth-century ideas concerning the meaning of death. Yet, at the same time, we find ourselves bound to the same longing for clarity, meaning, and fulfillment and the same anxieties, essentially, that were known to the men or these ages—without the insights that have since been revealed. If we assume with Paul Tillich

that these same anxieties, anxieties of fate and death, guilt and condemnation, and emptiness and meaninglessness, are ontological, i.e., if we assume that they are of the most essential nature of man, may we not, in the very least, be free from the *process* whereby innocence has been lost, free from the process whereby men's dreams have been betrayed in the course of history—which betrayal, I suggest, is significantly at the root of our disappointment, disappointment even to bitterness at times, our feeling that we have been let down. For some of us rather than having been born into the post-modern understanding the process of disillusionment may have extended over only a short span of time—from adolescence to young adulthood. It is likely that we were born into a situation of ambivalence with regard to the word that there is no future. Nonetheless, for certain of us, the directness and intensity of that word now offer no possibility for forgetting it. Yet, is it that we have been let down? Have we not cause for rejoicing, we who, at least in academic circles, claim pursuit of truth, of things as they are? For through this disillusionment has not there come a more nearly valid understanding of who we are and what we may validly anticipate and hope for? We have been given the ironical and strange possibility for vitality, accomplishment, and authenticity that is born of demand and urgency. D. H. Lawrence points to the same sort of irony and possibility with his "three strange angels" in "Song of a Man Who Has Come Through."

What is the knocking?  
What is the knocking at the door in the night?  
It is somebody wants to do us harm.

No, no, it is the three strange angels.  
Admit them, admit them.

In this we may truly know ourselves to be sons and creatures of God, not denying what we have been given and in courage acknowledging what we are not. As sons and creatures of God we may know ourselves to be finite expressions of the eternal and on-going process of being itself, for it has always been this way. The God of our dreams is dead, but the God of our being is as ever. In this we may respond with Job, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away: blessed be the name of the Lord." In the urgency and fulness of the present time we may express with e.e. cummings:

i thank You God for most this amazing  
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees  
and a blue true dream of sky: and for everything  
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,  
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth  
day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay  
great happening illimitably earth:

how should tasting touching hearing seeing  
breathing any — lifted from the no  
of all nothing — human merely being  
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and  
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

At this point I am again reminded of something James Baldwin has said: "I am a preacher's son. I beg you to remember the proper name of that troubling tree in Eden: it is 'the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.' What is meant by the 'masculine sensibility' (as Henry James puts it) is the ability to eat the fruit of that tree, and live. What is meant by the 'human condition' is that, indeed, one has no choice: eat, or die. And we are slowly discovering that there are many ways to die."

Ours is the problem of people who must live in the present time, which is the only time we have and is the only time of which we are sure. Yet we must also live as people who seriously regard the future and its probabilities and possibilities as we may be able to estimate them. One might ask in the face of the uncertainty of it all and in the face of the loss of innocence, in which one feels a sense of arbitrariness as to what one does, "Why bother with regarding the future? Why not be solely immediate, grasping and going all the way with the thing of the moment? With the word that there is no future, isn't our former regard of the future made invalid and possibly futile?"

In the first place, society and culture are not set up that way. Participation and contribution in community and culture require that we assume regard for the future, that we estimate it, that we plan keeping our estimations in mind, and that we attempt to influence it as we find the opportunity and capability to do this.

Secondly, with regard to the question of whether effort which regards the future is valid, let us observe two different ways of regarding the future in what we do and let us observe the difference between them. On one hand we might channel our efforts in accord with our estimates of what the future might allow, hardly ever genuinely facing the possibility that the culmination of our efforts, e.g., our study, may never come to pass. The whole reason for our efforts would lie in their culmination, in their desired, anticipated influence, contribution, effectualness.

On the other hand, when we are aware of the uncertainty of fulfillment, yet as a point of authenticity engage ourselves this way, this requires courage and this requires love of life, even in its uncertainty and unclarity; and this love of life means other people and it means respect for our own self as a person. This is the difference: realization of the uncertainty, yet the assumption of courage and energy for life.

Oh, yes, since we here cannot forget the unrelenting uncertainty of the future, it would be far easier for us to be carelessly free, with a "what for?" attitude, engaging ourselves, disengaging ourselves, randomly shifting about, shuffling hither and thither, every once in a while, as Matthew Arnold puts it, "running into the street with some idea or half idea." With no really sustained, directed effort, concentration, study, observation, how could our ideas be much more than half ideas, ourselves ineffectual, and our effort to contribute anything more than every once in a while running into the street? Ideas which have behind them the study and concentration that are necessary for adequate perspective and maturation require regard for the future in the sense of direction of efforts.

This points to another aspect, which would seem to be of great significance if we are to adequately examine the attitude which asks the question "what for?" That is the fact that one does not ask the question "what for?" out of context of consequences. We do not give up reasonable regard for the future for immediate living without consequences, without having to assume an alternative. And I suggest that the alternative to reasonable regard for the future assures consequences which are far less desirable than even the demand for performance in the face of uncertainty of fulfillment. The consequences of withdrawal from authentic effort, even when that effort is long-range, is to lose one's vitality, is to negate one's potential *per se*, is to lose one's sense, so to speak, of becoming a man. For it is not so much the culmination of one's efforts that is personally the most life-giving, the most vital. It is, rather, the *sense of becoming*, when it is significantly and justifiably felt, that is the most vital—the sense of becoming a man. In discussing Henry James' novel *The Ambassadors*, Baldwin asks, "What is the moral dilemma of Lambert Strether if not that, at the midnight hour, he realizes that he has, somehow, inexplicably, failed his manhood: that the 'masculine sensibility,' as James puts it, has failed in him? This 'masculine sensibility,' does not refer to erotic activity but to the responsibility that men must take upon themselves of facing and reordering reality."

We have considered the question of courage in the face of the uncertainty of the future. Now let us consider two other important aspects which seem to me to be relevant to a man's becoming a man, realizing his "masculine sensibility." These are: what a man might be like who could know and embody very fully what it is to be human, and who at the same time could get something done, could be a man of effort, accomplishment, and contribution.

Let us recall what we have come to know through our own experience of living, in our observations, in our study and discussions. We have come to know that manner of thinking and living in which an individual knows very profoundly what it is to experience one's humanity—to have varieties of feeling and experience, to know the measure of time one is given, to encounter the depths of another human being, to know spontaneous joy, to know limitation—and yet which individual, in all of the fullness of his depth of feeling and in all of his possible keen perception of the world as it goes on about himself, has not found the courage or known the sustained effort required to be a contributing, effectual, accomplishing part of the world.

On the other hand, we have come to know aspects of one sort of man of accomplishment. Although this man of accomplishment may be proficient intellectually, or may have significantly contributed to his community, or although in one way or another he may have led his fellows, nevertheless—sometimes through a subdued yet uneasy fear which has never quite broken through to thoroughly making itself known—he has managed to remain, in the last honest analysis, inhuman. Nose to the grindstone, he dare not look over his shoulder, lest he discover a dimension of life in which he might experience grief at the ignorance of another rather than condescending amusement, in which he might need to take on humility or courage in order to cast off an attitude or a whole manner of feeling, thinking, living, and assume a new one, because the old manner would have become inadequate or meaningless. Nose to the grindstone he dare not look over his shoulder lest he discover a dimension of life in which the most soul-rending and trying honesty, involvement, and the most responsible sort of articulateness and care for fine aspects is required, lest he discover a dimension which embodies arbitrariness yet decision and demands, indiscernible purpose yet reliable consequences, greatest joy yet pain, soul-lifting accomplishment yet the cognizance that this is but little compared to what there is yet to be done. Nose to the grindstone, he dare not look over his shoulder lest he discover a dimension of life in which no critical method, no intellectual criterion, no prototypic image of himself, no ordered concept of what society and people are like can finally let him know, what in any given encounter or insight will be required of him, what he must say, what he must do, what is best for one he meets at depth.

In the former instance we have knowledge and perception of the dimension of being human, and in the latter instance we have the man who knows and engages in the dynamics of effort and accomplishment.



As contradistinctions, I suggest that the situation of the inhuman man of accomplishment is a meaningless, barren, one-sided situation, and that the former condition, when it does not incorporate attributes of effort and accomplishment, is a condition of impotence, lack of effectualness where there could be contribution, lack of vitality where there could be rigor brought to bear upon one's perception and experience.

We have seen the extremes, and in a man's becoming a man, I suggest that these two are drawn together so that the man who realizing his "masculine sensibility," in the sense of Henry James, is a person who knows fully the dimension of being human and at the same time engages in the dynamics of effort, contribution, and accomplishment.

There are those of us who have assumed an acute awareness of authenticity and vitality, at least in part, come from contribution to whatever realms we may be able to influence. Those of us who have been granted the time, opportunity, and potential for contribution must be acutely aware, however, that the requisites are extremely rigorous. In the dimension of human encounter, time and genuine concern are required, as well as daring to meet others at depth. It means allowing ourselves concern which may mean involvement to the point of uncomfortable openness. It means not shrinking away from situations, if we deem them worthwhile in the first place, because they are too complicated.

With regard to engagement in community or an even broader society, or in the cultural process, we must realize that half ideas or ideas which have not been born of and have not matured through sustained, rigorous observation and study will hardly be a contribution, in the strictest and finest sense of the word. For in order to be a contribution these ideas must address, offer elucidation, and offer real possibility. Nor would ideas of an incompetent person be acceptable to the academic community, in which ideas of incompetence are not long listened to and do not long survive. That is, we must realize what we are up against by way of criteria and competition when we at the College House talk about responsible action, being historical people, and creating culture. We must do this *as well as* realize what is at stake in our own lives and in culture if we and men everywhere do not assume the task of creative effort and contribution. T. S. Eliot reminds us that

Between the idea  
And the reality . . .  
Between the conception  
And the creation . . .  
Falls the Shadow.

I would say that the Shadow is part of what we experience as finiteness and limitation. Yet we need not intensify the Shadow which is part of our being human by what is not necessarily characteristic of each of us, i.e., we need not intensify the Shadow by minimizing the importance of or failing to pursue and embody competence in some area of the human order. For while we are men, upon whom the Shadow falls, each of us has been granted membership in that historical community of beings which climbs mountains, probes space, paints masterpieces, writes poetry, engages in research, builds nations, composes symphonies.

For us gathered here, the problem in our being human and at the same time being individuals of competence and authentic style is not so much a problem of external opportunities and circumstances as it is the problem of ourselves—the problem of what perceptive, vision, effort, and courage we can call forth to embody competence and authentic style.

With regard to perspective, we are called to more than merely turning in upon ourselves, which turning in, when it becomes an overwhelming preoccupation distorts and limits perspective. For perspective must include insight and knowledge far beyond ourselves. With regard to perspective, we are called to adequate knowledge, much of it factual. We are called to keen insight into the realm of human affairs and human accomplishment as well as cognizance of human limitations. It is necessary that we work as much as is possible, unbiased, pursuing true judgment without working out of, from the beginning, ulterior motives and preconceptions—political, religious, academic, administrative. Towards whatever direction we decide we must later channel our efforts, we are called first, to all possible true judgment and to adequate, comprehensive, and undistorted perspective. How easy it is to let ourselves fail at this calling for adequate perspective—through fear of disillusionment, through letting ourselves stagnate in an association with a limited community (although ideally the members of such a community would not allow one another to assume a limited viewpoint), through failure to pursue the necessary knowledge and insight, through self-centered preoccupations. In short, in all our endeavor we are called to adequate knowledge as to what has been and is being done, what is at stake, and what is required.

With regard to vision, someone has said that the accomplishments of a man are according to what he genuinely sees possible for himself and for other men. Vision means, then, adequate perspective and a bit more. It means, beyond this, insight as to what *can* be done.

Next, of course, we must call forth and embody courageous effort. How widespread are what George Hinkley, the circulation director for the Reporter, has called "the facts of procrastination and the laws of inertia." Yet there have been men of accomplishment and vitality in all generations who have defied the facts of procrastination and the laws of inertia to a remarkable degree. All dynamic systems, mechanical, biological or otherwise, are energy systems—high-energy systems, moderate, or low; and we are called to discover what it is to be an energy system. Paul Tillich has said that vitality is directly proportional to intentionality. Yet

most often it is not by sheer force of will alone that we overcome laws of inertia and reverse the facts of procrastination. It is when we can see ourselves as "this man," or at any rate can find no reason why we should not be "this man." And then there is the passion for life, the intense desire *to be*, the intense desire to realize one's "masculine sensibility," the intense desire to become a man. We who are in this room have been freed from the necessity of night and day seeking relief from our physiological needs for food, shelter, warmth. We are called and are free to shape our own style with the opportunity, potential, and imperatives as we can see for ourselves, i.e., with what medium for life we have been given. Moreover, we are free to create a style that is our own. Yet we are called to embody a style that is created with regard for more than uniqueness and for more than display.

Finally, let us go back to D. H. Lawrence. Let ours be the "Son of a Man Who Has Come Through:"

Not I, not I, but the wind that blows through me!  
A fine wind is blowing the new direction of Time.  
If only I let it bear me, carry me, if only it carry me!  
If only I am sensitive, subtle, oh, delicate, a winged gift!

If only, most lovely of all, I yield myself and am borrowed  
By the fine, fine wind that takes its course through the chaos of the world.  
Like a fine, and exquisite chisel, a wedge-blade inserted:  
If only I am keen and hard like the sheer tip of a wedge  
Driven by invisible blows,  
The rock will split, we shall come at the wonder, we shall find the  
Hesperides.

Oh, for the wonder that bubbles into my soul,  
I would be a good fountain, a good well-head,  
Would blur no whisper, spoil no expression.

What is the knocking?  
What is the knocking at the door in the night?  
It is somebody wants to do us harm.

No, no, it is the three strange angels.  
Admit them, admit them.

## See What You See — Know What You Know:

(continued from page two)

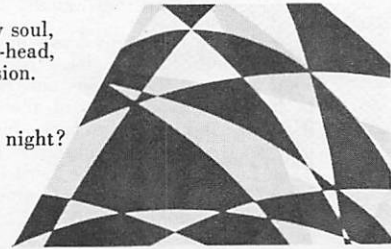
did they think we'd ever get acquainted with each other if we sat with our mouths shut listening to a "Word from Our Fathers!"

Well, I won't go on with this. You get the point. Oh, one other thing—One of Them did say they took their responsibility to us very seriously. I got the feeling when he said it as if it were a life or death concern with Him. As it turned out, I was right about this.

From here on, I find it hard to continue. I know you want to know just what we did that week-end. As One of Them said, "You have just 44 hours here to see what you see and know what you know." How did we spend those 44 hours? Well, someone handed us our schedules (isn't it ever so?) and the rhythm began.

Lectures, discussions (that's the term They used, but you've probably never been in their kind of discussion. We listened to the lectures, put in some hours in STUDY—then They asked us questions—not ordinary questions—but Those Questions. No matter how hard you tried, you simply couldn't give a "right" answer. So many questions everywhere—I still find some of them sticking around me even yet.)

Well, as I was about to say . . . It went on . . . eating, snacking, drinking coffee, talking, silence, soul shattering silences, some they They called "Daily Office" (I would have said Corporate Worship, I think. I must say—this was no monastery. *It was no monastery.* Do you know, they just skipped that Worship deal the night we talked too late and were all tired out? No, it was no monastery!) But there were bells ringing and sleep, (I know there was sleep because I could hear that blasted bell so loud when the clock said "6:30". There had to have been sleep or that bell could never have sounded so loud otherwise.) So, that's the way it was. The thing that may get you—and I hesitate to say it—is we drove clear to Austin for this kind of thing!



In one way you could say it was a retreat all right. We were cut off from the world . . . Only there were some things that couldn't be shut out. Like some of the things People brought in with them. The things they said—like That One who finally just leaned way over on that table and screamed at us, "I am lonely—Lonely—LONELY! There is only one person in all the world I can talk to—OH! God! Is this going on forever?" These aren't his exact words, but this is what He said. It was frighteningly sad—he was dying, you know, right there in the midst of all that talk about LIFE. Do you know what I did when I heard Him? I laughed right out loud at all that screaming . . . I am that kind of person, you know . . .

I took notes on the lectures They gave—but I find I really have very little to tell about what They said because there was so little content to it. Most of it you have probably heard somewhere before—ONLY—it sounded different, the way They said it. AND—They kept repeating it in so many ways—acting it all out. ONLY—it wasn't acting, at all—it was LIVING!

"Come on," They shouted at us, "You can LIVE." They shouted this at us in a lot of ways—poems, a movie, and those noisy pictures that came alive in that room and spoke to us. ("What would you say to this picture?" They asked . . .) There was that wine bottle They placed beside the fruit and grain in an artistic setting in the center area of the tables where we ate our meals. And all that serious conversation during our meals . . . All the time They were calling out the same message . . . over and over . . . "Come on—You can do it—You have Cosmic Permission to LIVE!" But we didn't know and we didn't see.

They spoke to us of God, and sin, and Grace (the most beautiful words about Grace) and love and creation and man (and They spelled it with a little m and a big M, so much about man—Man). I kept listening and I felt that back of all that theological language there was just one word . . . ONE WORD . . . we were surrounded by it, and crushed under it, and raised up by it . . . and still we didn't hear it.

Well, Sunday afternoon came. We finished lunch and it was over. We stood in the front hall of the Laos House visiting with Them just as if we didn't have all that distance to go home. Somehow starting for home didn't seem very important. So we talked and laughed with Them. After a while we walked out the door, down those steps and started for the trip home.

I remember how good the afternoon sunlight and soft Texas air felt on my face. I took a deep breath and realized that we hadn't been out of that house for a whole week-end. The air was sweet—Life was good—and—I KNEW IT WAS SO! Every cotton-pickin' thing They had told us was SO. LIFE . . . THE CHRIST-EVENT . . . FREEDOM . . . COSMIC PERMISSION TO LIVE . . . EVERYTHING . . . IT WAS ALL THERE . . . IT WAS THE WORD!

What word? Oh, that Word. Well, why didn't you say so? What is so wonderful about that little, old word. Haven't I heard it all my life?

We got in the car, the wheels started to roll—and the dialogue began, all of us trying to talk at once—and it was in the midst of Us—LIFE—

Such conversation—all about "what I saw . . . and "what I know" . . . and "what do you think They . . . ? (the Living Ones we now thought of as Our Fathers in the Faith) meant by . . ." Everything we said was so full of meaning because, you see, We had known each other ever since our Lives began . . .

Only our Lives were so very new . . . and birth is such a delicate, fragile thing—and violent—and personal. But good! Only the newly Alive can know how good!

How can you describe birth? Know if it is happening to you?

Could you say, "And suddenly there was a multitude of the otherwise.) So, that's the way it was. The thing that may get heavenly hosts, praising God . . . ?"

Or maybe you might say, "A butterfly bursts out of his ugly, brown cocoon and the warm air begins to dry his wings—soft,

gauzy wings, much too fragile to hold the heavy load of that air—beautifully pigmented wings fluttering in the sunlight." At what moment did this butterfly come alive? Is this his birth or would you say it is a renewal of life? What is this butterfly?

What can you say about birth? Hasn't everything already been said? "A baby rips through the placenta and tears through the birth canal and lies naked and bloody and limp under a glaring artificial light . . ." This is being born . . . He gasps and cries—"a prayer is a cry . . . a groan . . ." Oh God! Can LIFE be so wonderful?

We sat at that table that night in a cafe somewhere outside Ft. Worth, Texas. We ordered a meal—and we laughed. We ate and drank and talked and laughed. And all around that table the "birthing" was happening. Oh, I tell you, you knew it was there and you were part of it!

"How did you know?" You ask. "What was it really like?" How shall I tell you?

I sat at that table eating my food—very *self-consciously* eating my food. ("Are you on some kind of steak kick?" One asked me. "We had steak for breakfast, you know." There was laughter all around me. Each of Us was so conscious of Self with that new awareness that is part of this LIFE I'm describing.)

I ate my steak and I wondered how it was going to seem to live with only THAT GOD—the jealous ONLY GOD . . . The sin of polytheism creeps so slowly into your life that you are hardly aware that it is there . . . All my little gods were falling and the ONE GOD was shouting at ME, "I AM . . . GOD!"

That's the way it was. We sat there ministering to Each Other and witnessing to the Word. Little snatches of our conversation still come back to Me.

"How could I have lain a cripple beside that pool for so long? But He said I can LIVE. I CAN LIVE!"

Do you know who I'm like? I'm like the one in that boat. I've tried walking on that water. Can't you just hear Him say, "What's the matter? Did you lose your nerve?" . . . Maybe when there's only one of Me—I can do it!"

The banquet ended . . . and we were on our way again. We rounded a curve in the highway and the sky-line of Fort Worth hit us like a look at fairy-land. Every tall building was outlined in lovely, orangy lights—so breath-takingly beautiful—the night sky of Fort Worth, Texas.

We rode on into the night . . . The angels' song became louder, clearer, truer, more joyful . . . the delicate new wings of the butterfly began to unfold in the warm air . . . the freshly born One was all clean and throbbing with the newness of LIFE.

Slowly I ran my hand over that shelf where all the idols had stood and I thought, "How can I stand for it to be so bare?" . . . stripped of everything, right there at the very center of my being. But in the bareness I found there was room for the ONE WORD . . . There was room for freedom—room to LIVE!

How long was the night? How far was the journey? How did it end? I really can't say. In one way it was just an uneventful trip down to Austin. All sorts of things might have happened—we could have run out of gasoline in the middle of nowhere, or missed the highway home, or gotten completely off the road. We could have had an accident—or quarreled—or—Well, you know how a trip can be. Yet absolutely none of these things happened to us. We arrived safely home. When we asked our families at breakfast the next morning, "What's news?" they said, "Why, good heavens, how can there be so much news? You were only gone three days." And so it was . . . so it was.

How did it end? I can't say how it ended any more than I can say how it began.

Oh, sure, the angels' song faded into the night . . . The butterfly sailed away on golden wings to meet the sunrise . . . the New Born is growing tall and thin and gawky these days . . . We have not been able to hold on to any of this . . . nothing can be kept . . . not really.

But the WORD is there . . . we all know it is . . . just there . . . forever and FOREVER . . . Amen . . . AMEN!



# PROMINENT CHURCH BOARD AIDS EXPERIMENT

THE FOREMOST CONCERN of the Christian Faith-and-Life Community is that the Church be enabled to catch up with and lead a world in which God has given a larger measure of newness than was given to any former age. The mission of the awakened churchman is that the Church learn to minister to a world in which the scope of change itself is the new dimension of reality.

It is a world in which we are clear as never before about the irreversibility of learning; what is once brought into human experience is thenceforward a part of life, taking its place in the history of the race, almost immediately to be compounded with further knowledge and wisdom. It is the age of fullness. The world alters as we walk in its midst. Hence, the time of experiment.

The most clear recent delineation of the willingness to experiment that is increasing among churchmen is to be found in Robert W. Spike's book, *To Be A Man*. Spike talks and writes at the very growing edge of life, and his name is familiar to people in and out of the church. This latest book, about the styles of life for today's Christian, is a demonstration of his sentinel thinking surpassing even his former challenging treatises such as the widely discussed *In But Not of the World*. The Christian Faith-and-Life Community is fortunate to have him as a member of its national board.

"One of the deepest concerns in Christendom," he writes, "is the development of crucial experimental centers where the communication of the gospel can be tested in new ways that are relevant to a new time. I consider the Christian Faith-and-Life Community to be the foremost laboratory of this kind that we have in this country."

Spike believes that the "rigidities that have prevented the kind of support the Community ought to enjoy are rapidly changing, but the experimentation that is needed cannot wait on the slow dissolving of barriers."

The Community is extremely grateful for the recent attention given to its financial needs by Spike's own denomination, the New United Church of Christ (formed by the merger of the Congregational and the Evangelical and Reformed Churches). In February, the Community received a contribution of \$1,000 from the Program Development

Budget of the denomination's Board For Homeland Ministries.

SUCH A GIFT plays an important part not only in the immediate needs of the Community, but in the long range plans. Readers of *Letter To Laymen* are aware of the hope that the Community will ultimately find its support among small and medium, but regular contributions from a large constituency of donors. This constituency is slowly increasing, but a wide gap remains that must be bridged by the individuals, groups, foundations, civic clubs, and others who are either blessed with greater means or who, because of corporate benevolence, are capable of providing a larger contribution.

Support from the United Church of Christ, although it is not a long term commitment, represents a significant advance toward financial stability. It is a symbol of the kind of concern expressed by Bishop James K. Mathews of the Boston Area of the Methodist Church who writes: "The Community is a bold venture arising from within the churches to help the church speak more effectively to people and their problems in this twentieth century world. Many of us have come to feel that this community is doing the very best job of this sort to be found anywhere in our country."

What is the minimum that this job entails? It involves working out the strategies for providing the laity with a genuine theological education in depth, adequate to their ministry in the new world of change. It involves specialized service to the Church through research relating to the essential activities of the local congregation such as corporate worship, corporate study, and corporate living. It involves an exploration of the ways and means through which a local congregation may exercise an authentic and effective corporate ministry in every aspect of the culture of which it is a part. In its ten years, the Community has accumulated experience which it shares with congregations, campuses, denominations, lay centers and others. The minimum job has already given birth to additional experiments and to the vision that the work has only begun.

For such men as Robert Spike, and for the expanding openness to experiment he represents on behalf of all alert churchmen today, we are grateful to God.

## Dear Everybody:


The only way I can write these days is into a little machine or over a long distance telephone wire. Here I am in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, where thirty-one inches of snow fell yesterday. It's beautiful to a Texan but it really snafued transportation.

I am speaking six times here to the faculty and students of Augustana College (Lutheran); from here I jump to the Methodists at Wesley College in Grand Forks, North Dakota; then swing back to the Baptists at the University of Minnesota. This is typical of trips made by our corporate ministry in recent weeks to Oregon, South Carolina, Iowa, Colorado, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, Missouri and New England. Meanwhile in Austin, our various programs for students, parish laymen and clergymen are going full blast.

Great things are happening in every phase of our work. The staff is doing extensive and creative writing these days, new publications are in the offing, designed to be rifle shots rather than shot gun blasts. Also plans for the Institute of Contextual Ethics are moving ahead on schedule. We must add more staff for training and readying this new thrust. Funds must be secured and here you can help in more ways than one (if you get my meaning).

We simply and solely must depend on friends like you for support as you are able. This is our Tenth Anniversary Year and everything points to an exceptional year from every standpoint. Keep us in your prayers, help financially to the best of your ability (we're fighting a \$21,000 budget gap at the moment), and participate in some of our week ends for laymen this spring if you can. Call on us when we may be of service.

Peace,

  
for the Corporate Ministry  
of the Community

## Letter to Laymen

February, 1962

2503 Rio Grande, Austin 5, Texas  
Second class postage paid at  
Austin, Texas

# Letter to Laymen

art  
and  
conversation



new images  
of  
human possibility

## THE RADICAL DEMAND TODAY

We are living in a new age. It is a time of radical and comprehensive revolution. In a manner of speaking, Western Civilization has reached an end. Our total world view is undergoing transmutation affecting every part, as well as the whole, of the human enterprise of civilization. Not only has Ptolemaic cosmology of the Middle Ages vanished, but Newton's once modern model of the world as a great machine has dramatically collapsed. The expanding universe of Dr. Einstein is now penetrating every concept of life and image of history. Man is launching forth on a brand new venture.

This historical crisis is not basically theoretical or abstract. On the contrary, what is happening to us is very practical, very concrete. It is at once thoroughly personal and utterly social. Furthermore, the center of the revolution is located not in the political or economic facets of the civilizing adventure, but in the cultural dimension. "Culture" here means the common sense, the common symbols, and the common life-style of a people. Precisely because it is in these areas of our life where the present upheaval becomes manifest, the center of gravity of the whole social body has been shaken. And therefore, every sensitive and reflective individual on the street is deeply involved. Of this he is aware, however unevenly this awareness may be distributed among men.

Our common man is certainly frightened by the new world about him, but cynics to the contrary, he is also excited. He is acutely experiencing his universe as complex, impersonal, mysterious, routine, paradoxical, tragic, capricious, and so on. This is frightening indeed. Yet the same individual is raising anew and in depth the question of what it means to be a real human being in the midst of this. Underneath the superficial readings, the reflective every day person is not really trying to ignore, dismiss and escape the new world and its demands. Rather, he is asking for practical images, symbols and moral patterns which will illuminate this new age and enable him to participate creatively and as a genuine person, in the forging of the new responses, personal and social, that the age requires. This need of the "average" man brings us to the artist and his work.

## THE ROLE OF ART

Art is human. It is necessarily a part of human life in both its individualization and socialization. It is not limited to special groups such as the leisure class or the intellectual strata. It is an essential part of life for all men. However unequal the exposure of men may be to significant art or the capacity of men to be significantly present to art, no one can or does live without it. Here are unveiled two very basic questions: Is the art we live before significant? And how does one live significantly before art?

Let us turn first to the question of whether the art to which one is exposed is good or bad, true or false, adequate or inadequate. For our present purposes, three issues are raised: Integrity, relevance and utility. Does

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## the autonomous individual

I feel that in our present situation our physiological needs are satisfied, our safety needs are satisfied, and our love needs are beginning to be satisfied, and it is the *esteem needs* that we are working on. And from esteem come the trappings of esteem, the status symbols of esteem. People like you. It is important to be liked because if people don't hold you in esteem you worry about your love needs, you worry about your safety needs, and then, if your safety needs are impaired, your physiological needs come out—and these are stronger. So, I would say that we have reached the point in culture where perhaps a few individuals, unhappily too few, are beginning to ask "from whence cometh this esteem?" or, paraphrasing it, "Am I not by a rat hole here, pouring esteem down it, and looking for it and never getting it for the simple reason that it is a sort of a false esteem?" The esteem of the populace one day can be the discouragement of the populace the next. So, if this is false esteem and what we would call neurotic esteem, what esteem am I interested in? Well, maybe my own *self-esteem* and a realistic appraisal of the *sources* of self-esteem. What is more, it is necessary to maintain self-esteem or correct gaps in it as reality dictates. This is not an easy thing to do. But I would call this highest level of functioning of the human self *actualization*. By self-actualization (simple term, big name), the human being becomes at least partially all the things that he could become. He reaches and develops to the maximum. Now this is sort of ridiculous. He cannot develop beyond the maximum and I sometimes wonder where the educators got the idea of the "over-achievers" because people never over-achieve. They achieve what they achieve. They can't over-achieve beyond their ability because the very fact that they achieve it signifies that they can do it.

I find that for college students today the physiological, safety, and love needs have been satisfied to a certain degree. Certainly by "love" I don't mean romantic love. I mean their relationships with family and close associates are satisfied. Of course, the person who does actualizes himself really surprises himself; this is because there is no limit to human knowledge, no limit to human achievement, no limit to what human being can dream up. And as long as they can dream about it, it is possible. And you say "no"; it has to be done on the drawing boards. I will tell you, colleagues and friends, that science permits much more latitude than the graduate student or his professors think. Now you say "impossible," but the very fact that you say "impossible" shows that a limitation is already imposed upon you by origin and environment. How do you know it is impossible? Listen to Buck Rogers. This was really phantasy, wasn't it? But just how fantastic was it, in view of the accomplishments of the last two years. And what is important in the cultural change, is that although you and I to a certain extent are bound by our rigidities, saying "no, it can't take place," the children are perfectly willing to accept the fact that a man will land on the moon and see nothing fantastic in that. And if I relate to some children in New York that it took me six hours to come to New York, they will say, "What is the matter, did you walk?" "It is obvious that planes can go 600 miles per hour, and you should have made it in three, and what is the matter, why doesn't it go faster?" These miracles, then, that we have are perfectly feasible in the minds of the younger generation; the only thing that they will ask is why did people wait so long to think of it? It is obviously the most natural thing in the world to have taken place.

Well, this, then, brings me down to *what price conformity*, or why risk it? There is no doubt about it that as long as you conform you risk very little. On the other hand, like everything in life having its price, the price you pay may be worth it for some people and may not be worth it for others. But you pay a price, and I am accustomed to differentiate the categories *maladjustment* vs. *adjustment* on the basis of whether or not the person agrees to pay the price. I mean this seriously.

*The autonomous individual* is not the neurotic or the maladjusted. *The autonomous individual* is the fellow who very calculatingly decides where he is going to place his money; he recognizes, for example, that everyone likes this moving picture and he accepts their right to it. All he asks is that they don't bother him and force him to like or dislike it or see it. On the other hand, if he intends to read a certain book within the confines of certain structures he doesn't bother anyone else, he doesn't intend to be bothered. He may look at culture, and let us remember now that the autonomous individual is not a skeptic or a cynic about culture. He knows that human beings have frailties and he recognizes that he, too, has frailties. This does not mean to say that he lets the masses pass by and says, "I have nothing to do with them." Rather, he is the individual who is capable of turning the masses off at times and pursuing things that he is interested in, not neurotically interested in, but genuinely interested in and capable of pursuing. I come across many college students who, I feel, are neurotically interested in psychology and in art, etc. I really wonder how creatively interested they are. I find out that they are taking this because (they really don't like it) it is a good job in art, or a good job in chemistry, and it is a good thing to have a degree and then, of course, going to college is a part and parcel of conformity.

I'll bring up an analogy now for a moment, in terms of mental health. What about this autonomous individual and mental health? Thirty years ago if somebody said human beings will live to sixty-five and seventy, they would say this is absolutely silly. Now scientists say that people will live to eighty-five in about another thirty years, and those people who are fortunate to be born about this time have a very good chance of living to eighty-five. Well, the argument is, of course, that they live till eighty but they really don't live, they just linger on. And that is not so. That doesn't necessarily have to be so. People at sixty-five and seventy are not burned out and they can be extremely productive; but the culture dictates that at sixty-five you should retire and the evidence points up that the more retirement at this age, unless you are used to retiring beforehand, the more heart trouble. This is quite interesting because you have to be prepared for this. You have to be prepared for retirement. Now, the same concepts go into the mentally healthy individual, the so-called *autonomous individual*. This is an individual who has mastered some of his own insecurities, who recognizes his limitations, and who is not afraid to take a flight into new ideas. The outstanding characteristic of this individual is that he is creative, and this is not just to say that he paints pictures and girls, or composes music. He is creative in many, many ways and most important. *He takes failure as a part of life*. So, if you follow the axiom that there is no learning in success, this is certainly true. You only learn from failures. You never learn from success. You find out that this is an individual who will go through a great deal of failure and learn from each one. Now, this may be just in carrying on chemistry experiments or in struggling with philosophies of life until he finds one that fits, but these are the individuals that we call the autonomous individuals. Where does autonomy stop and oddballism begin? Of course, the fore-runners of any movement are usually the odd balls. They are there, but they are playing it in a new key. I think that the important aspect is how much the person's thinking or work contributes to the common pool of knowledge for human betterment. But I think that some individuals who think of these things creatively, who go against the tide are the ones who are true to the concept of the *autonomous individual*. For them the culture is important and they respect it? They conform with certain other prerequisites of the culture, maybe its dietary habits, maybe in its housing habits, maybe in its clothing and the only place they don't conform is in thought. This they do conform to a certain degree, but little essence of I think differently and I support the difference is the difference between the *autonomous individual* and the totally conforming. I want to point out that when we get what I call neurotic non-conformity, I don't call it autonomous because it usually occurs in a very open manner, in dress, in speech, in living habitat—this does not make a person a real individual. It is a neurotic and somewhat maladjusted attempt to say "you see I am really different... I have to wear a toga although I don't even know the symbolism of the toga. I will wear it because I really want to be different." This is different from the individual who does not blatantly go unannounced with the sign that he is different. But he very carefully is different and is secure in his difference. How many individuals like this can we produce? Unfortunately, very few. But such individuals are willing to think about things, are willing to let their imagination run wild for awhile, but then to reel it in and examine it in the light of reality and possibility. There is one danger in this. I am always reading about people who went off

(continued on page 7)



## Prologue

*Mathews narrating over scenes from the film which are actual photographs of the unbelievable atrocities committed in the German concentration camps by the Nazis during World War II.*

**MATHEWS:** Ladies and gentlemen, you are viewing some scenes from the Stanley Kramer film play, "Judgment at Nuremberg," written by Abbe Mann. We are all most uncomfortably aware of what these views depict. But we must not close our eyes to what we see here. These are the actual photographs of what occurred. We are the times in which they happened. However painful, however revolting, however unbearable, we must not turn away. Never!

You see now some of the players in the motion picture. They are the principals in one of the Nuremberg war-guilt trials. Spencer Tracy is the Chief Justice from Maine. The American colonel, played by Richard Widmark, is the senior prosecuting attorney. Maximilian Schell, Herr Rolfe, is the German defense lawyer. Perhaps this particular trial is the most sobering of them all. For the defendants in the dock are none other than the German Minister of Justice during the war, along with three of his high court judges. In these hands rested the matters of national law and justice during the tragic years.

Those who execute this case are charged, on behalf of all of civilization, with the somber task of sorting out moral standards adequate to the German crimes; the responsibility of ascertaining from the complex evidence the real focus of guilt; and the weighty burden of measuring the kind and scope of judgment. Indeed, one might say that upon these rest the heavy assignment of reformulating for our time the basic issues relative to moral conduct in general.

There is a growing urgency in our time, among people of all stations and walks of life, concerning the lost art of serious conversation. It seems to me that our individual and collective destinies are somehow tied up with the recovery of this art. When one thinks of the dire need of our time for new social patterns in and through which we can understand and deal with our common problems and the broad issues of history afresh; when one thinks of the deeply felt need for new styles of individual life through which we can forge in a fresh and vital fashion our responses to what happens in our everyday given existence, it seems imperative that individuals seek out other individuals who together take, or rather make, the time and the effort necessary to talk seriously about our times and living in it.

Those of us gathered here are concerned with such serious conversation. We have all seen the film play, "Judgment at Nuremberg." We intend now to talk about it, to soberly and seriously share with one another the way that it spoke to us. It is also our single concern that those of you who are listening may, in one way or another, participate in our dialogue and, indeed, carry it on with your friends and neighbors in the days to come.

## Introduction

**Mathews:** Now, gentlemen, as we move to think about this movie, "Judgment at Nuremberg," I would like to insist that we do not try to say in some direct or objective fashion what this play is about, but that we rather direct our attention to the way in which the movie spoke to us, addressed our everyday situation, touched our own historical circumstances. I want to begin by calling upon us to think on these atrocity scenes that were just presented. My first question to you is simply: What did they say to you?

# PROVOCATION

## TELEVISION SERIES

popular art forms

art form: the motion picture  
art piece: "judgment at nuremberg"

**Pierce:** Well, Joe, I don't see how anybody can look at this kind of film and not be sickened, not be nauseated.

**Bryant:** I too felt nauseated when I looked at the scenes. But something else came over me. It was a sense of dread, the sense of fear when we saw the court scene that followed. This made it frighteningly clear that someone has to step up before the great judgment of civilization itself and take responsibility for what was going on here.

**Lewis:** The question that hit me hard was: How could it happen? Who's responsible?

**Cozart:** Yes, especially when you think that the German people who allowed it to happen were average people, just like us. The little people of the world who love their wives and children, who go about trying to operate on the sympathy for the world. The good people of the world.

**Pierce:** I would certainly hate to be in the judge's shoes in this...

**Cozart:** But that's just the point! We are in the judge's shoes, just by the fact that we are alive. We have to make, at every moment of life, human judgments without three good reasons up our sleeve to prove that what we decide is right.

**Mathews:** I'd like to underline that. As I looked at the film, I could not get away from the fact that, whether I liked it or not, I was that judge. That actually I, personally, had to take a moral attitude toward what happened there and arrive at some kind of moral decision.

**Bryant:** But isn't it still true that the average—to use Bill's term—just the normal person going about his everyday life,—who has his own little world, his family, his business, his neighborhood—sees this as about all the responsibility he can handle. If he can just be a good, law-abiding citizen, then he doesn't see any necessity to interfere, to look at what is going on outside of this little world of his. He knows that there's a government. That there are laws and that somebody is supposed to enforce these. He's got enough to worry about, however. And he doesn't turn his attention toward being responsible for this. It's almost that he escapes and hides by just looking at his own little world, not thinking about anything beyond this.

**Mathews:** In the light of the impressions that you've shared thus far, I am taken by the fact that you are not only emotionally repulsed but you have immediately raised the moral issues of our time. Another interesting point is that you've already taken a stance of some sort. If I heard you correctly, you suggested that just everyday human sympathy, or humanity, or love with the face-to-face neighbor, is not enough in dealing with these complex historical problems. Nor is the idea of what one might refer to as "general good will." This forces us, then, to approach these issues in a different kind of context that involves the social structures themselves. Now I have another clip of film that I would like to have you see. We will continue our conversation from there.





## Part One

*The film clip focuses on Herr Rolfe, the German lawyer for the defense portrayed by Maximilian Schell. In the crowded courtroom, presided over by Judge Haywood, he is making an initial statement outlining the web of his argument. The German judges on trial are seen in the background. The camera finally rests on Ernst Janning, chief justice during the Nazi rule, played by Burt Lancaster.*

**Rolfe:** The avowed purpose of this tribunal is broader than the visiting of retribution on a few men. It is dedicated to the reconstruction of the Temple of Justice... It is dedicated to finding a code of justice the whole world will be responsible to... How will this code be established? It will be established in a clear honest evaluation of the responsibilities for the crimes in the indictment stated by the prosecution. In the words of the great American jurist, Oliver Wendall Holmes, "This responsibility will not be found only in documents that no one contests or denies... It will be found in considerations of a political or social nature. It will be found, most of all, in the character of men." What is the character of Ernst Janning?... If Ernst Janning is to be found guilty, certain implications must arise. A judge does not make the laws; he carries out the laws of his country. The statement, "My country, right or wrong," was expressed by a great American patriot. It is no less true for a German patriot. Should Ernst Janning have carried out the laws of his country? Or should he have refused to carry them out and become a traitor? This is the crux of the issue at the bottom of this trial. The defense is as dedicated to finding responsibility as is the prosecution. For it is not only Ernst Janning who is on trial here... It is the German people.

**Haywood:** The tribunal will recess until further notification.

**Mathews:** You have seen here Herr Rolfe, the defense attorney for the Germans. You have also seen at last one of the four judges who are now defending their actions during the war. It is very interesting that the defense of these men is based upon the principle of obedience to the state.

**Cozart:** No! I don't think it is. I think it's based on something more than just obedience to the state or to the law of the land. I think he's doing something other in that courtroom than just upholding this. He's trying to leave something for the German people—a shred of dignity, perhaps, with which they can face the future. Because if the German people are discredited in this courtroom, then they lose the right forever to rule themselves.

**Mathews:** You're hinting that there's some hidden principle here—other than simple obedience to the state.

**Bryant:** Yes, Bill, I too think that he is doing the very job that you say that he's doing—trying to uphold the dignity of the German people. But he understands that to uphold the dignity of these people, is to show that they knew, and still know, that to have a society means that you have laws of society. And if you have laws in a society to take

care of all the people, then all of the people have to be obedient to these laws. Without this, you don't have anything at all. It seems to me that this is why the appeal of this defense attorney is so crucial in the case. It is why, in one sense, that it threatens all of us. Because he's utterly clear that you do not have any kind of a social order except you have laws; and you have to demand obedience to those laws, particularly of government officials. This you just can't get away from.

**Mathews:** So then, you say duty to nation is the basic operating principle in morality.

**Lewis:** No, you cannot escape the fact that six million Jews were exterminated in this situation.

**Pierce:** I want to underscore this. As a matter of fact, you remember one of the German judges who was on trial was described in the motion picture as a German who just did what he was told. He obeyed the laws of the land. He went about just doing what a "good" German does and he was being tried.

**Cozart:** Yes! there was another judge in the courtroom who wasn't even described as a good German. He was called a fanatic, a bigot! A man so consumed with the sickness of his own inner poison that he was almost psychotic. Yet he obeyed the law.

**Bryant:** You can call him a fanatic, but you have to see that the fanaticism was directed towards being a good, loyal citizen. Sometimes we call men who have this kind of zeal "patriots." I insist you have to see that obedience to the laws of your state as a government official is necessary.

**Lewis:** Bob, you have to face a fact—a historical, documented, unalterable fact—that six million human beings were destroyed because men were obeying the laws of their state. Now there's something here that's rotten. It's intolerable!

**Bryant:** But I think we have a tendency to sort of make this look like some kind of perversion in the German character that they just go around blindly obeying laws. If you look to the film, you know that, in the midst of this trial, one of the American judges made this the whole crux of his understanding of the case. You *do* have to hold officials responsible for being obedient to their government.

**Mathews:** If you don't mind, this is a good place to show the next clip which dramatizes this dimension of the issue.



## Part Two

*The scene is in the office of General Merrin charged with responsibilities relative to the defense of Europe. The general is in conversation with Colonel Lawson, the American prosecuting attorney, about the trial in the light of the urgency of the first Berlin crisis.*

**Lawson:** You know damn well what I'm going to do.

**Merrin:** I know what you want to do. You'd like to recommend they put them behind bars and throw away the key. You know what's going on here now!

**Lawson:** Yeah. I know what's going on.

**Merrin:** Tad, you're an Army man. You know what we're up against. The others may not; but you do. I'll tell you the truth. I don't know what's going to happen if they fire on one of those planes... I don't know what's going to happen. But I do know this! If Berlin goes, Germany goes; if Germany goes, Europe goes. That's the way things stand... that's the way they stand.

**Lawson:** Look, Matt, I'm going to go the limit! And not you, not the Pentagon, not God on his throne is going to make me...

**Merrin:** Who do you think you're talking to? Who the hell do you think you're talking to? When you were marching into Dachau with those troops, I was there too! You think I'll ever forget it? Now look, I'm not your commanding officer. I can't influence your decision. I don't want to. But I want to give this to you and I want to give it to you straight. We need the help of the German people and you don't get the help of the German people by sentencing their leaders to stiff prison sentences. Tad, the thing to do is survive, isn't it? Survive as best we can, but survive.

**Lawson:** Just for laughs, Matt. What was the war all about? What was it about?

**Mathews:** Here you have one of the intentional or fateful ironies of history. Precisely at the time this trial was going on, the first Berlin crisis and the airlift occurred. The man who left the room, in the film clip, was Colonel Lawson, the American prosecutor. Wait just a minute, Mr. Pierce. I want to restate what I have heard up to now. We seem to feel that there is validity in the whole principle of obedience to the state. Yet we find ourselves uncomfortable with this. Now, Mr. Pierce.

**Pierce:** Well, I was just going to say, here is the one that I very much identify with, the prosecuting attorney. I suppose it's because he zeroes in on what, for me, is the prime question. As he goes out that door, in his response to the general, he's saying in effect that when such atrocities happen, when basic humanity has been violated, something has got to be done. Not just some general idea of obedience or highminded principle of justice is to be formulated. When these things become your first consideration, you're missing the basic point. The prosecutor is saying like this: You've got to get down to the who, what, when, where and how—find the persons who were directly involved in this sort of violation of life.

**Mathews:** But are you not really insisting, along with Bill, that there is another dimension of morality, another quality or principle, involved here?

**Lewis:** Yes, I think he is! And, Joe, it's important to remember that even the defense attorney, this fellow Herr Rolfe played so sensitively by Maximilian Schell, said, after his viewing of the atrocity films, "These are terrible. This is shocking!" He said, "As a German I am ashamed to say that this ever could have taken place in our country." And again he said, "Not in a thousand years will these be erased from our memory, not in a thousand."

**Pierce:** My contention is that the general is simply advocating the same thing that these German judges are being tried for. And in advocating that, if you take it to its ultimate extent, you finally wind up with the same thing that we saw at the beginning of our program—the atrocities.

**Cozart:** I agree! And what for me was the very high point of the picture clearly disclosed this principle of humanity as higher than the law of the land. The scene was where the German Justice, Ernst Janning played by Burt Lancaster, rose and broke his silence in the courtroom, destroying all the chances he ever had of clearing his name, by saying, "How can we say that we were not aware of what was going on? How can we say that we didn't know that in the night our neighbors were being torn out of their homes and taken to Dachau? How can we say that we didn't know that freight trains rolled through our villages, filled with children, on their way to the ovens?" This man, it seems to me,

in standing and facing his own guilt, in taking responsibility for what he had done, revealed that he stood before a larger principle than being obedient to the state—namely, humanness.

**Mathews:** Are not several of you trying to make a case for the fact that most people, whether aware of it or not, operate with another ethical quality or principle along with, at least, the principle of obedience to the state?

**Pierce:** Yes. And here in Cozart's statement, you have a German judge, the chief one, supporting the case of the American prosecutor. This is strange, isn't it?

**Mathews:** I'm glad that you mentioned the judge. Another clip from the film that I have in mind, bringing him to the fore. Before we see it, however, I want to get a hold of your last statements. We have said that life is a matter of being loyal to the nation, of obeying the laws which are the structures of the nation. Yet there is—I will call it "something else" for the moment—something else operating. However, it isn't as if the two points could be merged into some common principle. It is rather that they have a polar relationship and hence there will always be conflict and tension between them. Would you agree that this is generally what you meant, Pierce?

**Pierce:** Yes.

**Mathews:** All right, let's look at the clip of the judge.



### Part Three

*The setting here is in the judges' chambers after the prosecution and defense have concluded their argument. The tribunal of three American judges, Ives, Norris and Chief Justice Haywood, interpreted by Spencer Tracy, are discussing the case in preparation of the verdict.*

**Norris:** What do you think, Dan?

**Ives:** Dan, we've been going over these points all day! If it isn't clear now... aren't you going to look at these precedents? Aren't you interested at all?

**Haywood:** Yes, I'm interested, Curtiss... You were speaking of crimes against humanity. You were saying that the defendants were not responsible for their acts... I'd like you to explain that to me.

**Haywood:** Maybe... but all I've heard is a lot of legalistic doubletalk and rationalizations. You know, Curtiss, when I first became a judge I—I knew there were certain people in town I wasn't supposed to touch. I knew that if I was to remain a judge this was so... But how in God's name do you expect me to look the other way at the murder of six million people?!

**Norris:** Oh, I'm sure he didn't mean that, Dan... There is...

**Ives:** (overlapping) I'm not asking you to look the other way at them! I'm asking you what good is it going to do to pursue this policy?!

**Haywood:** Curtiss, you were saying that the men were not re-



sponsible for their acts. You're going to have to explain that to me. You're going to have to explain it very carefully.

*Mathews:* This scene is in the judges' chambers right after all of the evidence has been piled up and sorted. Now the three judges are attempting to arrive at the decision they must hand out.

*Lewis:* This is the scene really that I have been waiting for. It puts the situation so clearly. The judge says, "You're going to have to explain to me very carefully how it is that six million people can be murdered—crimes against humanity—and people still not be held responsible." This is the question. And it's clear!

*Mathews:* All right then. Here is the judge who now, I suspect, sees the whole problem of the tension between obedience to the state and some other quality—humanity, call it what you will. Now in the midst of this, he has to engage in the burdensome enterprise of making a moral decision, of forming a moral judgment. What I am interested in is how you think he went about doing this—that is, arriving at his verdict?

*Cozart:* It seems to me that the judge felt that all men are a part of a great human adventure that's larger than just the fact of our being Americans or Germans, or anything else. That all of us, just by being men, have inside of ourselves, let's say, a moral conscience—a capacity for being horrified by brutality and cruelty in life. This conscience, of course, is embodied in laws that operate in culture, protecting individuals against the brutality of their world.

*Mathews:* Are you making a case, Cozart, for some kind of innate principle?

*Cozart:* No, it's not just innate. It's what the judge calls the "civilized conscience." It depends on the social dimension of life, but it is deeply internalized in us as individuals.

*Mathews:* We are loyal to our nation and we are loyal to civilization. You can't reduce either one of these into the other. You have spelled out even more clearly the ambiguity here.

*Pierce:* Yes, but we have not emphasized sufficiently the other side of the complexity. I mean the part that Bob underemphasizes: the civilizing principle. The fact that a man lives before both these principles and must, finally, here decide as a single individual means that he has to assume full responsibility for his decision. In doing that, he assumes responsibility for his whole nation in whatever it decides to do. This other principle is what demands real decision and responsibility and accounting.

*Lewis:* Yes! Yes! If I have heard you right, Pierce, you said that structures are utterly necessary if there's to be order, if there's to be justice, and so on. We must have structures to live. Now, did I not also hear you say that, when you're really confronted with that which cuts over against humanity, then as the embodiment of the very civilizing principle, you must say "No" to the law that perpetrates such deeds?

*Pierce:* Yes. It seems to me that the judge in the movie actually based his decision on that. He based his decision on the civilizing side of the ambiguity.

*Mathews:* Are you saying that the judge, like anybody else, was caught in the dilemma of the well being of his nation and what you call the "civilizing" or human principle?

*Pierce:* Right.

*Cozart:* Right. And it seems to me that, because of this struggle between the two, all the judgments that we make better be made in a spirit of humbleness. For we never decide, once and for all, what the course of history is going to be.

*Pierce:* But that doesn't negate responsibility or the individual in his responsibility.

*Cozart:* No, I didn't mean that.

## Epilogue

*Mathews:* I'm sorry, but we're running out of time. And now I would like to try to draw this together. It's very complex. Perhaps in our day, the luxury of simplicity is no longer afforded to us. I think the effort must be made, however. Now, see what you think of this. Are we saying that involved in any moral judgment is the principle of obedience to some structure: the nation, the home, a party, or some organization. Yet along with this is a concern for what we called the "great human adventure" or the civilizing process itself. A man must then make his decision between these two poles. Then, Joe, you have said that each man, alone in the concrete situation, has to create his moral act and be accountable for it, blaming it not on civilization or the state or any other thing or person. Then to pull in your last insight, Bill, he must always hold his decision in a spirit of humility. This is to say, perhaps, that he does not pretend, in a final sense, that everybody or anybody else ought to have done as he did, or that even tomorrow he would make his decision the same way.

I am suggesting that this film is really calling upon us and all who see it to be, what a friend of mine one time called, a man of moral fibre. To put it another way: the iron man who is aware of the context by which he makes his ethical choice and is really willing to expose his act to the eye of his neighbor. If we would hold to this, our posture or stance in life could be described something like this: We expect you—the whole world—to expect to find us always being aware of the demand to be loyal to our nation and the demand to be a part of the civilizing enterprise; we expect you and the whole world to expect to find us always living in this ambiguity, willing to risk making our own decisions, being accountable for whatever consequences; we would expect you and the whole world to expect us, in forging these judgments, operating in the kind of humility that keeps us open to the possibilities the tomorrows will surely bring.

*The concluding clip shows the scene in the courtroom when the gavel of Judge Haywood signals the close of the presentation of the case.*

**Haywood:** The testimony has been received in the case. Final arguments have been heard. There remains nothing now but the task of the tribunal to render its decision. The tribunal will recess until further notification.

*The announcer then, over scenes of a bombed out German city articulates the credits.*

*Announcer:* PROVOCATION was produced at the NBC Television Studios in New York under the supervision of Compass Productions. Tonight's discussion was on the theme: "The Necessity to Decide." Participants were Joseph W. Mathews, Joseph Pierce, Robert Bryant, William Cozart and W. Jack Lewis, under the direction of the Institute of Cultural Affairs, Austin, Texas.

This dialogue was based upon the film play, "Judgment at Nuremberg," produced and directed by Stanley Kramer and written by Abby Mann. A transcript of the dialogue on this important motion picture is available by writing The Institute of Cultural Affairs, Austin, Texas.



the artist speak honestly about the human situation in his time? Does his work deal importantly and compellingly with the basic and actual human needs and concerns of his world? Does it call forth in the viewer the kind of images that will enable him more adequately to forge his responses to the real world about him? To speak of art in this fashion, is to insist that art has a vital functional role in culture and society. Indeed, we are seeing today that art is very utilitarian in the rich and fresh sense of genuinely contributing to the inner workings of the great civilizing venture of man.

Such a view insists that art is not a sophisticated capstone that is added to society when the basic tasks are done. It is rather an essential ingredient of society that affects the whole and every part, at every moment. Furthermore, it follows that the role of art is not an escape valve for the sophisticate at the end of an era, as many are wont to think. Its most crucial hour is at the beginning of a new age when new images are required. Indeed the very function of art is to question and destroy old, false, inadequate images and to prompt and create new authentic and useful models for practical human response. The everyday reflective man of our time is crying, as we have seen, for exactly this kind of assistance.

Perhaps this is the clue to the interest in art that our age is experiencing which in depth and scope and variety has no equal in all history. In brief, there is emerging in the new world a fresh understanding of the function and place of art in civilization. To fulfill her role today, however, art may need an ally: serious conversation. This brings us to the third focus of the PROVOCATION series. (see page three)

### THE PLACE OF SERIOUS CONVERSATION

Serious conversation itself might well be considered an art. Not simply in the sense of a skill—it surely is that—but in the sense of an art form. Be that as it may, it seems clear that it is an essential catalytic agent to the art form in our day. The contention is that art, the indispensable midwife to the new man in the new world, is itself in need of a midwife if it is effectively to fulfill its role in accomplishing significant psychological and social change.

The man of today, amidst his fears and bewilderments, wants to be a self-conscious historical being. He senses that history is made as well as experienced and latently, at least, he yearns so to participate in it. This is to suggest that behind and in the midst of the twentieth century man's more observable struggles, is the problem of intentionality. He is no longer content to be simply a passive victim of the impressions that play upon his inner history. He insists on being self-consciously present to those images and engaging in a dialogue with them. This means that he must become intentional about art. The question of PROVOCATION is: How can the man in the street learn to become intentional about the art that speaks to him in such a fashion that creative action ensues?

Serious conversation is the means whereby one becomes self-consciously attentive in depth to the manner in which he is affected by a work of art and the means whereby he is enabled to carry on his own dialogue with the art object. This in turn both prompts and directs decisive and creative action in the midst of the civilizing process.

Authentic dialogue in relation to art, is not primarily an educational endeavor in the sense of accumulating information, though of course this may happen in the midst of it. The art object and the way it speaks to the individuals conversing supplies the content. The serious conversation, where mind meets mind in reflection upon a common object and experience, enables one to articulate the impressions made upon him and to draw them together for himself into a more or less comprehensive complex. This model is then brought to bear upon his inner and outer historical situation in such a fashion that new practical insights, meanings and strategies emerge, which both motivate and direct his activity. To say this another way, serious conversation does not intrude ideas or images, but awakens the latent ones that are already present, and occasions the birth of new ones. In and through this process, social change is initiated. Art plus dialogue equals intentional involvement in history.

To sum up: new and imaginative human responses to life are urgently required by the new world about us. The art of the times injects into this situation new images of human possibility. Serious conversation enables the individual to clarify these images in such a fashion that fresh and imaginative responses can be forged.

A pilot television presentation utilizing this approach to serious conversation and art has been made by the Community (a transcript of which is on page three) in cooperation with a New York television production company and movie producer Stanley Kramer (see "Dear Everybody" on page eight).

(continued from page two)

to Tibet and there after thirty years of meditation finally pounded out a philosophy of life of which they will sell me for a buck and a half. I don't buy this. I have bought one or two just to see what would happen and I could pound it out in five minutes and don't have to live in a cave for thirty years to do this. Or maybe the effect of living in the cave has done this. I think really that there is a delay factor, you see, where people are not ready yet to grapple with the problems of the world, and when they are ready they will grapple. You can't help but grapple. The important thing is to grapple and grow and this, then, is what I would say characterizes the *autonomous individual*. The person who is willing to grapple and not to be cynical about the great mass of human beings who won't understand him, who will mock him, and who really will impede his progress. The essence here is that change, unless it is culturally approved change, like a cosmetic change in an automobile, is scaring. People are just as scared today of the unknown as they were in the witch burning days of Salem. It is just the fact that it is a different type of thing they are afraid of, but they are still afraid. And the person who can master enough of his fears as not to be afraid, I suppose, will be the person who, in my criteria, will be the one who will be the person we will call the mentally healthy individual. He will be living in the culture, getting along with it, but not necessarily being a slave to it.

(Dr. Iscoe is a member of the faculty of the Psychology Department at the University of Texas. His insights on "The Autonomous Individual" are abridged from a recent address given to the students of the College House of the Community.)





County Judge C. L. Ray, Jr., of Marshall, second from left, looks over Community literature with Railroad Commissioner Bill Murray, following luncheon. At left, W. Jack Lewis. Right: Joe Pierce of the Corporate Ministry.

In Dallas and East Texas:

### COMMISSIONER BILL MURRAY HELPS ACQUAINT TEXANS WITH COMMUNITY'S PROGRAMS

FURTHER EFFORTS to extend the economic growth of the Christian Faith-and-Life Community were made in February and March as special meetings were held in Dallas and three East Texas cities arranged by local persons who acted as luncheon and dinner hosts. William J. Murray, Jr., Chairman of the Texas Railroad Commission and a charter member of the Community's Board of Directors, presided at the meetings which afforded the opportunity for W. Jack Lewis and Joe Pierce of the corporate ministry to acquaint the many persons in attendance with the programs of research and training conducted by the Community.

The plan of holding such gatherings around the state was conceived some five years ago. Since that time, luncheons and dinners have been held in most areas of the state. Until this year, concentrated efforts had not been made to develop a constituency in the East Texas section.

Attorney Henry W. Strasburger, a long time friend of the Community, convened the Dallas meeting. Acting as host of a luncheon in Lufkin was the publisher of the Lufkin News, W. R. Beaumier. In Longview, County Judge Earl Sharp was host of a dinner attended by sixty prominent persons of that area. At the Marshall luncheon, County Judge C. L. Ray, Jr., convened a similar meeting.

Through such gatherings and by personal interviews, it is the long range intention of the Community to acquaint every responsible citizen in the state with the programs conducted by the Community. This method of extending information about the work, and thus developing a broad constituency over a large geographical area, has been considered the keystone of the grassroots approach that must be taken by a new, pioneering organization.

The plan is based upon the rather uncomplex but sound advice of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., a man who is himself approached to support many causes. He writes, "The conviction only grows upon me that giving ought to be entered into in the same careful way as investing...that it

should be tested by the same intelligent standards. Whether we expect dividends in dollars or in human betterment, we need to be sure that the gift or the investment is a wise one, and therefore should know all about it. People give either because they believe the cause is a worthy one and will pay dividends in human betterment, or because a sense of duty impels them. In either event, you must give them the facts on which to justify a favorable decision."

AT THE MEETINGS, Railroad Commissioner Murray presides over a discussion designed to do precisely what Mr. Rockefeller goes on to require: "When a solicitor comes to you and lays on your heart the responsibility that rests so heavily on his; when his earnestness gives convincing evidence of how seriously interested he is; when he makes it clear that he knows you are no less anxious to do your duty in the matter than he is, that you are as conscientious, that he feels sure all you need is to realize the importance of the enterprise and the urgency of the need in order to lead you to do your full share in meeting it—he has made you his friend and has brought you to think of giving not as a duty but as a privilege."

This is the spirit and intention of the soliciting of funds carried on by the Community. We believe it is this approach that may account for the statewide esteem the Community increasingly enjoys. In its decade of growth, the Community has weathered many crises; and, because of the experimental nature of its work, undoubtedly will face a number of future crises. But it will continue to operate on the basis of presenting its cause to prospective supporters in the mood of both Commissioner Murray and Mr. Rockefeller: "Never think you need to apologize for asking someone to give, anymore than as though you were giving him an opportunity to participate in a high-grade investment. The duty of giving is as much his as the duty of asking is yours. Whether or not he should give to that particular enterprise and if so, how much, is for him alone to decide."

## Dear Everybody:

This issue carries the transcript of our recent video-taped pilot program entitled: PROVOCATION. And thereby hangs a tale:

This proposed TV series may offer the Christian Faith-and-Life Community one possible step toward self-support, a rather rare phenomena among organizations supported by primarily philanthropic gifts. Also, it may not have this possibility.

Since the Community staff utilizes many types of art forms in various facets of the programs, the quality of television fare could be greatly enriched if a series of art-form television programs could be produced by the Christian Faith-and-Life Community. Gordon Wynne of Compass Productions in New York urged us to begin at once to produce a pilot program that might be marketed both with the motion picture and television industries. Five of our staff flew to New York, permission was secured to use film clips from Stanley Kramer's new film, "Judgment at Nuremberg," and, after three days and nights, we went to N.B.C. Studios, used the "Today" set, and put on video-tape the dialogue we had worked out.

February passed, the video-tape was edited a couple of times, formats were worked and reworked by our staff to set forth a projected series of thirteen television shows. Then one day in March, Mary and I were prospecting for gold on Main Street in Houston when we were offered a free flight to San Francisco. We decided to go at once and combined goldrushing and seminary speaking for a week in San Francisco and had a reunion with a dozen College House alumni.

We made arrangements for a meeting with Stanley Kramer in Hollywood. Joe Mathews and Joe Pierce met us there and we were his guests for luncheon at the restaurant at Universal Studios.

Since 1954, Stanley Kramer has produced and directed some amazing films. His "Judgment at Nuremberg" is today being released across the world. You long-time readers of *Letter to Laymen* may remember our television discussion of "On the Beach" in March, 1960. After talking with Kramer at length, he urged us to show our pilot video-tape to his representatives in New York, and to tell them he was very interested."

We must await developments. Meanwhile "back at the ranch" the corporate ministry is hard at work in every phase of the teaching program, bent on the mission of declaring by every uedia of communication the WORD OF POSSIBILITY in today's world.

*W. Jack Lewis*  
for the Corporate Ministry  
of the Community

*Letter to Laymen*

March, 1962

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# Letter to Laymen



journal of the  
CHRISTIAN  
FAITH-AND-LIFE  
COMMUNITY

volume 8 number 7

## A REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

By this time information has reached most of the readers of **Letter to Laymen** concerning the specially called meeting of the Board of Directors on Friday, April 13, 1962. At that meeting, resignations were accepted from Joseph W. Mathews, Joseph A. Slicker, Joseph L. Pierce, Donald R. Warren, David M. McCleskey, L. Thurston Barnett, William R. Cozart, and Allan R. Brockway (on study leave this year, 1961-62).

This was a lengthy meeting, one in which all concerned were heard, and in which all issues presented were thoroughly discussed. It is my belief that the twenty-one Board members present engaged in their task with genuine Christian seriousness. The issue before the Board was the acceptance of the resignations which had been presented to the Executive Director. The background and context were complex.

For many months, it had been clear to the members of the staff and the Board that extensive alterations in the program and the staff would be necessary before next fall. The important issues involved were as follows: the matter of financial support for a large staff; the lines of authority for decisions about the program; the internal organization of the Community; the emphasis and style of mission; the problem of internal communication; the understanding reliance within the corporate ministry.

In the midst of the struggle over these issues an impasse was reached, and a division became apparent. Those directly involved felt that resignations were the necessary and responsible action. The Board, after hearing from everyone who wished to speak, and after careful deliberation of the possible alternatives, confirmed the acceptance of the resignations.

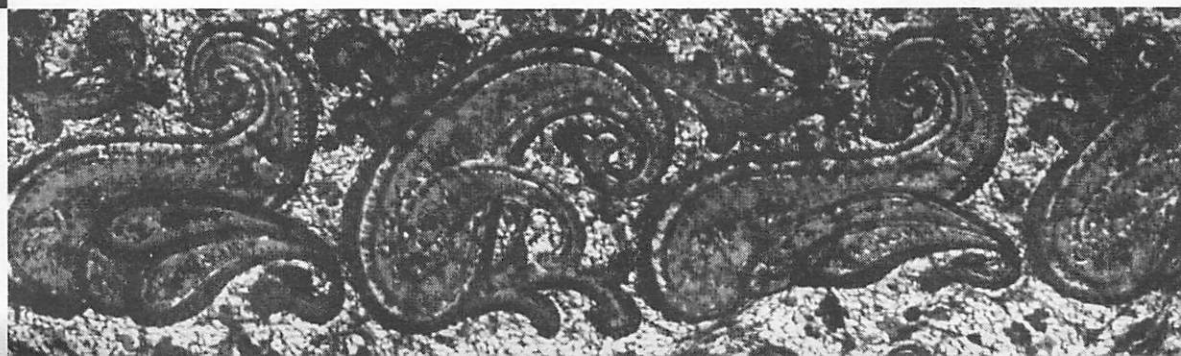
Such an action does not represent a judgment of right or wrong upon any of those involved. It acknowledges the desire within the former staff to move in different directions toward one common goal. Those who are leaving are now in the midst of finding ways to work together for the renewal of the Church along the lines they see as most appropriate. The action of the Board affirms the continuing ministry of the Christian Faith-and-Life Community under the direction of W. Jack Lewis, Robert R. Bryant, James W. Wagener, William H. Smith, and Doris G. Neal.

On Monday, May 14, the continuing staff and those departing met at the Laos House with the members of the Board for dinner and a Ritual of Separation. This was a significant evening as we participated in worship through the use of the Daily Office of the Community. Robert Bryant, Joseph Pierce and Russell Roberson gave the Words of Witness in the service. Jack Lewis was the Liturgist. Joseph Mathews, who had to be in the east this day, sent a message which was read to the group.

The decision of the men involved and the action of the Board are now accomplished. All of us are ready to move ahead with renewed effort and dedication.

*Glen E. Lewis*

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## ON DOGMAS AND LUMBERYARDS...

Reports on happenings within the Community have been much in the news recently. *Christian Century*, *The Texas Observer*, *The Dallas Morning News*, the *Houston Chronicle* and numerous other newspapers, magazines and church bulletins have given coverage to the staff changes. In the May 4 issue of *Time* a general story on the work of the Community was carried. Each editor has received his information and given his interpretation through a particular viewpoint. It is the judgment of the staff that there has been keen analysis and careful reporting, but there has also been inaccuracy and distortion.

Letters have been received from across the nation in response to the *Time* story. This article was in process prior to the April 13 meeting of the Board of Directors. The reporter's primary interest was directed toward the College House phase of the Community program. Because of the extensive coverage and because the article spoke directly about the theological content of our work, the telegram on this page was sent to refute the implications of the *Time* interpretation.

The telegram addresses itself to the statement, "They hear... the traditional dogmas of the Virgin Birth, Resurrection and Holy Trinity dismissed as so much deadwood in the lumberyard of faith." This is a clever piece of writing imagery, but it totally distorts the facts. Many laymen who have participated in studies at Laus House wrote to the Editor protesting. One of these letters was carried in the Letters to the Editor in the May 18 issue. For reasons unknown to us, the telegram has not yet appeared in the magazine.

One other almost humorous distortion referred to Picasso's

*continued on page 8*

MAY 7, 1962

TO: THE EDITORS OF TIME  
TIME AND LIFE BUILDING  
ROCKEFELLER CENTER  
NEW YORK 20, NEW YORK

AN EMPHATIC "NO" TO THE IMPLICATIONS OF YOUR STATEMENT THAT WE DISMISS TRADITIONAL DOGMAS--VIRGIN BIRTH, RESURRECTION, HOLY TRINITY, ET CETERA,--AS DEADWOOD. EXACTLY THE OPPOSITE. TOO MANY TWENTIETH CENTURY MEN FIND THE WORD OF THE CHURCH BURIED IN STERILE CLICHES AND WOODEN ABSTRACTIONS. A MAJOR PART OF OUR TASK IS TO RECOVER FROM THE DISCARD PILE THE INCISIVE LIFE RELEVANCE OF THE STORY AND SYMBOLS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH, THUS MAKING CLEAR TO MEN OF THIS AGE, THE LIFE POSSIBILITY AND ULTIMATE CHOICE CONFRONTING EVERY MAN.

SIGNED:

W. JACK LEWIS, FOR THE  
CORPORATE MINISTRY OF THE  
CHRISTIAN FAITH-AND-LIFE COMMUNITY

## BEYOND THE DECISION / A REPORT FROM THE CORPORATE MINISTRY

BEYOND THE DECISION and action of Friday, April 13, (see page one), lies the future. The future addresses us as a question, requiring the commitment of life in concrete word and deed. Let it be known emphatically: The Corporate Ministry of the Christian Faith-and-Life Community moves forward in its mission: *renewal within the Church for renewal within culture.*

BEYOND THE DECISION, the fulfillment of the scheduled programs for the year 1961-1962 has been accomplished. On May 11, the traditional Feast of the Endings at the College House marked the end of our tenth year. More than one hundred and fifty people were present to hear the Reverend G. Richard Wheatcroft, rector of St. Francis Episcopal Church in Houston, incisively delineate the continuing mission of the Church as related to the urgency of contemporary culture. At this time announcement was made of the ten students chosen from this year's College House participants to serve as Advanced Fellows in next year's program.

BEYOND THE DECISION, tentative plans have been formed for an experimental curriculum in the College House during the academic year 1962-1963. This leads the way for a basic curriculum of the Community which engages in a more direct dialogue between theology and culture. Two eight-week courses which center on Christian faith and ethics will alternate with two courses dealing with the understanding of man and society manifested in the disciplines of the arts and sciences, and embodied in our common culture and sub-cultures. The four courses essentially form one unit, holding faith and life together.

Since the day when the name of "Christian Faith-and-Life Community" was chosen by intuition and intention, the inescapable binding together, the polar unity of faith/life, has been a fundamental foundation of the Community self-understanding. Theologizing that detaches itself from the culture and the real life of man is esoteric and irrelevant. It is un-Christian, in that it avoids the reality of the Incarnation. On the other hand, knowledge through human experience and education which detaches itself from the ultimate concern of man, is equally unrelated in its partiality and superficiality. It avoids the final reality of the mystery of Being which incessantly forces upon every man the question of origin and destiny, the question of faith and God.

BEYOND THE DECISION, Parish Laymen's Seminars will be resumed in the fall. In addition to the continuance of the core courses which are essential in lay theological education, experimental research seminars concerning a Christian style of life in family and vocation will be scheduled. Re-entry into the full pulsating life of one world is an imperative demand upon the man of the Church in our time. The urgency of this call is being experienced most directly at the point of family and job. A fresh grasp of the meaning of the marriage covenant, together with a rediscovery of the possibilities for unity, order and mission within the family are being demanded. The meaning of vocation can no longer be contained within the limited scope of a man's occupation. A new comprehensive understanding which embraces the totality

of an individual life is yet to be forged. Responsibility for all of the dimensions of existence is being laid upon every person who has become conscious of his neighbor, who is aware of his own power to act in bringing love/justice into the structures of society. "To be a Christian now means... that through the mediation and the pioneering faith of Jesus Christ a man has become wholly human, has been called into membership in the society of universal being, and has accepted the fact that amidst the totality of existence he is not exempt from the human lot."<sup>1</sup>

BEYOND THE DECISION, dates for the fall meetings of the Parish Ministers' Colloquy have been set: October 1-3, November 5-7, December 3-5, 1962, and January 7-9, 1963. Registrations have been requested by pastors from over the state who are deeply concerned about their own role of minister, and about the seriousness of the ministry of the local church to the individual and the community. The ferment of new wine is in the Church. Trivial Christian education and banal forms of worship are being radically exposed. Easy satisfaction with numerical, financial and organizational success patterns is waning. Clergy and laity alike sense the emerging edge of a new corporateness which would bring an end to the subtle and mutual undermining of the foundations of their confidence. It has become increasingly clear that the layman is the man who is called out from the world to be sent into the world. The clergyman is the man called to be the pastor and the pedagogue of the layman, thus leading him to his encounter in the world through the sacramental and educational life of the Church. Liturgical and theological renewal is even now opening the door to new avenues of participation in the symbols of faith and worship. The Church of Jesus Christ is called into being *in* the world. It is *in* the world that the Church must speak the Word. It is *in* the world that the Church must hear the Word that is being spoken. She is concerned neither for her territory nor for her status in the world. "The only way in which the Church can defend her own territory is by fighting not for it but for the salvation of the world. Otherwise the Church becomes a 'religiosis society' which fights in its own interest and thereby ceases at once to be the Church of God and of the world. And so the first demand which is made of those who belong to God's Church is not that they should be something in themselves, not that they should, for example, set up some religious organization or that they should lead lives of piety, but that they shall be witnesses to Jesus Christ before the world. It is for this task that the Holy Spirit equips those to whom He gives Himself."<sup>2</sup>

Now is the time, beyond decision, for creative discovery and movement in history. "Freedom from the past, openness for the future—that is the essence of human existence."<sup>3</sup>

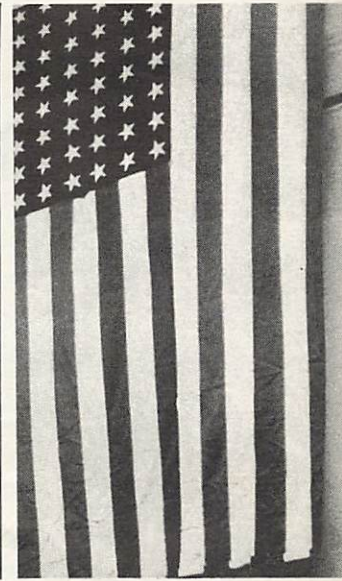
<sup>1</sup>H. Richard Niebuhr, *Radical Monotheism and Western Culture*, Harper & Brothers, 1960.

<sup>2</sup>Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, The Macmillan Company, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>Rudolf Bultmann, *Primitive Christianity*, Meridian Books, 1957.



# THE LOST AMERICAN



This address was delivered by Dr. Robert Divine on April 17, to the Campus Ministers Symposium. Dr. Divine is Assistant Professor of History at The University of Texas. He is the author of **American Foreign Policy: A Documentary History**.

*WHERE ARE WE NOW AND WHERE ARE WE HEADED?* This is the insistent question being raised in American life today. The question is not always spelled out so nakedly. More often it is posed in polite and polished phrases. You hear people ask, "What are our goals as a nation? What is our mission in the world? What are we fighting for in the cold war?" I think the very raising of these questions is our decree for an answer.

We are people drifting in an alien and hostile world with no conception of our ultimate destination. We are searching desperately and (so far) unsuccessfully for our identity as a nation. One of the curious forms the search has taken is the penchant for adjectives to qualify the word, "American." Thus we read of the "ugly American," the "vanishing American," the "sick American," and on television a few months ago, "the fat American." I'd want to add one more adjective to that list, "the lost American."

My thesis is that today the American feels lost in a world he did not make and does not like. The symptoms of this national dilemma are apparent in every aspect of our national life. You see it in the fear that stalks through our land, the fear of the bomb, the thousands of Americans burrowing into the ground, the fear of our neighbor (he may be Negro, or Jewish, Communist or Bircher, pacifist or warmonger), the fear of conformity which leads to rebellion against society—most recently in the 1950's in the beatnik phase. This fear is corroding away the essence of American life, destroying our self-confidence, our sense of community, and our precious heritage of moderation and common sense. This fear gives birth to hysteria which becomes a second symptom of our lostness. Americans of the 1960's have become hysterical over the dangers of Communism, identifying all evil or expected evil as emanating from Moscow. Thus the radical right labels liberals and intellectuals as "pinkos," renounces urban renewal, floridation of water, and even mental health programs as "red," demands the rewriting of school textbooks in order to brainwash the next generation with the pure water of one hundred per cent Americanism. Extremism breeds extremism. The radical right is leading many Americans to the equally foolish conclusion that the super-patriots are the only source of all our domestic ills. It would be very nice if the situation were that simple.

The results of the withering cross-fire of charges and counter-charges are rapidly destroying genuine political con-

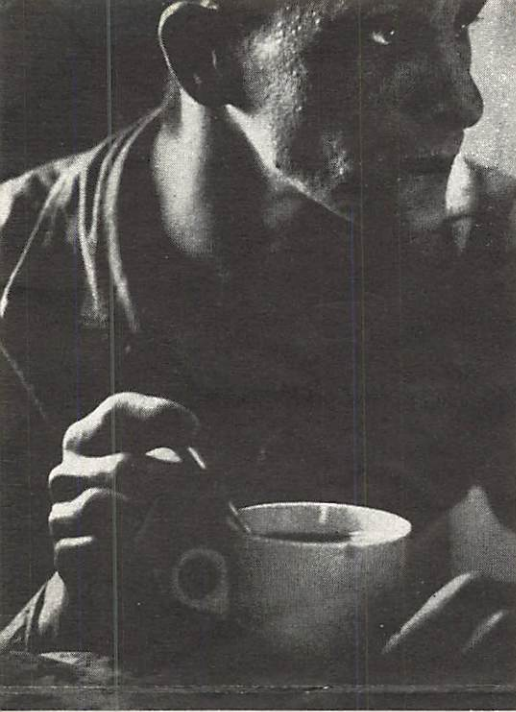
versation in this country. There seems to be an aggression's law of debate. Wild accusations drown out discussion.

Yet another symptom of our lostness can be seen in our national hunger for the good old days of the nineteenth century. Bewildered by the complex, confusing, and often tragic events of our own times, Americans yearn for the simpler days of a bygone era. They glorify the red-blooded Americans of the frontier, the captains of industry who amassed great fortunes in the late nineteenth century, or the heroes of the Civil War who fought and died for simple unambiguous ideals. I think that's why cowboys and gunmen thunder across our television screen night after night, and why books on the Civil War appear in a never ending stream. I understand now there are three divisions in publishing—fiction, non-fiction, and the Civil War.

Unable to face reality, Americans retreat into a dream world of the past. Fear, hysteria, hunger—these are the negative symptoms of our disease. There is, I submit, in all this one hopeful sign. In our lostness, we are suddenly open to new possibilities, new solutions, and new departures. Searching for a way out of the contemporary maze, some Americans are beginning to look to the future, rather than to the past, to the road ahead rather than the road behind. They are searching not for magic formulas but for knowledge, and what is vastly more important, for understanding. Thus, the gnawing dissatisfaction that characterizes the American mood today has healthy aspects. I have been describing our situation as lost Americans. It is relatively easy to list the symptoms. We are confronted with still more difficult questions. How did we get lost? How can we find ourselves again? I want to address myself to the first question tonight, for it lies in the province of the historian. I will leave the vastly more complex second question to your deliberation. I think the answer lies locked deep inside each one of you. All I can do is offer a few clues which may help you in your quest.

Sometime in the last one hundred years, the United States passed through a great divide, a watershed that marked an apparent change in the character of American life. Historians disagree on the precise moment of this shift. Some see the change occurring as early as the Civil War; others as late as the decade of the roaring twenties. Most historians tend to agree with Henry Steele Commager who identifies the 1890's as the great watershed dividing the old America





from the new. Until that decade the United States was predominantly an agrarian country, or in current terminology—an under-developed nation. For nearly three centuries Americans have been exploiting the vast resources of a continent, living on the land close to nature. It evolved a crude materialistic culture, characterized by rugged individualism and almost a total lack of sophistication. In a phrase, "Americans are simple, provincial, and hard working."

But by the 1890's dynamic changes were taking place. Agriculture was giving way to industry, but not easily or peacefully. The 1890's was a decade of great ferment, of the Populous rebellion, of the farmers' last stand against the march of industry. Also in that decade the frontier process was giving way to the rise of city. We have been so imbued with the great folk myth of the Western movement that American historians, and, I think, the American people have missed the even greater folk movement—people from the frontier and from the countryside into the city—the great urban migration that began in the nineteenth century and is continuing on in our own time.

Finally, in that decade the old simplicity was giving way to a new complexity. America was entering more than a new century. She was approaching a whole new era in her existence. This transition proved to be a painful process. Since the 1890's, Americans created a radically new culture which has been superimposed on top of the old. This dual culture has been the source of much of the tension and unrest in the twentieth century American life. On the one hand, we affirm the old Puritan ethic of hard work, frugality, and individualism. At the same time we are people dedicated to leisure, unprecedented consumer spending, and togetherness. We affirm individualism in an age of conformity. We exalt thrift in an age of the credit card. We champion hard work in an age of mass leisure. The widening gap between our professed values and our actual behavior has produced a national feeling of guilt. We are slowly realizing that we suffer from a form of cultural schizophrenia. The source of our malady lies in the revolutionary changes that have taken place in the last one hundred years. In the mid-nineteenth century, the United States was a land of small farmers and merchants. People lived on the land or in a small town. In 1850, the largest city had a population of one million. As a nation we pursued a policy of conscious isolation, abstaining from political involvement in the world arena.

Then the industrial and technological revolution swept over the nation. Great factories must import. People swelled into the cities to tend the new machines. A surplus of products led to a search for new markets overseas, to inescapable involvement in world affairs. Economic transformation created problems which neither the individual nor the state could deal with: great monopolies like Standard Oil, vast slums in our urban centers, increasing economic insecurity of the laboring force. Only the federal government could deal with these consequences of industrial growth. The result then was a rapid increase in the size of the government and the creation of a federal bureaucracy which began to touch every aspect of American life. Reformers played their part in the change. The progressive movement of the New Deal spearheaded the shift of power to Washington. The welfare state was not the creation of a few radical politicians. It was the inevitable consequence of the industrial revolution. Every nation which has undergone this industrial transformation must face the same problem. These historical forces—industrialization, urbanization, bureaucratic growth—are what transformed the old America into the new.

And I think their greatest impact was not on the surface of American life—the cities, industry, and the government, but rather on the inner depths. They wrought profound alterations in the American character which has not yet been fully assimilated. I think until we understand these changes we will remain lost Americans.

I would select three basic traits which characterize the nineteenth century American—optimism, idealism, and individualism. All have their sources in the simpler America of a bygone day. All have been under attack in the new industrial America. Today the distinctive traits are very different. Optimism has given way to pessimism. Idealism has been transformed into realism. And individualism has been overwhelmed with an obsession for security.

I'd like to show briefly how these came about, for unless we understand these changes, we cannot come to grips with our dilemma. Optimism is perhaps the most distinctive nineteenth century American trait. It began with the first colonists who arrived from Europe. You had to be an optimist to leave a settled life in Europe to brave the unknown perils of a new continent. Early Americans were people who trusted in the future. That trust paid off for them. Isolated clearings became prosperous farms. Crossroads became great cities. The thirteen small colonies became the nucleus of a great nation. Down through the nineteenth century the American experience was one of progress—of dream becoming reality.

Thus, the Americans became the world's greatest optimists, but in the twentieth century the experience has been quite different. Though the material growth of the nation continued, a series of catastrophes destroyed the old optimism and gave rise to disillusion. The First World War briefly shattered the American dream of world peace. If this was not a profound experience for America, it was perhaps only a harbinger of the future. It was, indeed a profound experience for Europe. For Europe was never the same after 1914. For the United States the crash in 1929 and the resulting Great Depression of the 1930's proved to be a much more traumatic experience. Progress gave way to grinding poverty. And in the richest land in the world hunger and unemployment suddenly became realities experienced by millions. And then came the Second World War, the bitter struggle against Fascism which ended not in peace but ushered in the thin perils of our time: cold war and the nuclear age. How can one continue to be an optimist in a world poised on the brink



of destruction in a world where two powerful antagonists face each other with weapons destructive enough to wipe out all civilization?

A second closely related trait of the nineteenth century was "idealism." At that time Americans lived in the future, not in the present. Where the objective observer saw half-cleared forests or a collection of primitive shanties, the Americans saw green fields and a shining city. In the midst of the grim surroundings they built a great nation. Americans kept their mind's eye on what they would ultimately achieve. They were pursuing the American dream. The early manufacturer saw a great factory, not his ugly workshop. The pioneer educator saw a magnificent campus, not a rude backwoods college. Aspiring politicians saw democracy at work, not the greedy buying of votes, the balancing of economic interests, the unbelievable consumption of hard cider that marked nineteenth century elections. Then in the twentieth century the dream was finally achieved. A bright, glittering America finally emerged with only one fault. The dream had become a nightmare. The shining cities were filled with slums and juvenile delinquents. Thus, we hear of the decay today of the urban core. The green fields produced crops in such great abundance that they rotted away in government warehouses. The great universities became vocational institutes. Young men and women struggled to gain a job certificate known as the bachelor's degree which they thought naturally insured them with executive status and ranch houses filled with the latest gadgets and security for the declining years. The greatest tragedy that life can offer came to the American people. *They fulfilled their ideals only to find them corrupt.* Without any new goals to urge them on, they were confronted with the grim reality they had created. They became realists, desperately trying to convince themselves that their reality formed a rich and satisfying existence. The nineteenth century Americans were in the process of becoming. Now we have arrived. We're not sure that our destination is the utopia we once longed for.

A third trait of the nineteenth century Americans was "individualism." This was always the most vaunted and boasted aspect of the American character. And in a nation on the make, the individual could feel free. On the frontier farm he could see his own labor transform the environment as what was once a wilderness became a piece of civilized land. In the business office he could build a new enterprise from nothing. A man like John D. Rockefeller could enter the oil industry in 1864 as a small operator and emerge fifteen years later as the owner of the Standard Oil Company and controlling ninety-five percent of the oil production of the nation. In politics he could create enduring political traditions, swing elections and play a formative role in the nation's growth. In every aspect of life, men influenced their own destiny and the destiny of their country.

Rugged individualism was no myth in the nineteenth century. Horatio Alger was the reality of that day, but in the twentieth century the old patterns no longer held true. In the midst of depression, a man who had spent his life building a business saw it crumbling in the twinkling of an eye. The modern factory workers saw their skills—hence the sources of their livelihood and (what's more important, perhaps) the source of their dignity—made obsolete through automation. The perils of the nuclear age made individual efforts seem meaningless. All that one did, all that one possessed could be erased in one blinding flash.

The new age of the twentieth century destroyed individualism and bred in its place an obsessive concern for security. The universe had changed from a friendly, plastic world which man could mold by his own efforts into a terrifying impersonal creation which threatened to destroy him at every

turn. Americans responded by building up defenses, ranging from fallout shelters to other-directed behavior; from seniority systems to social security. A nation of builders became a nation of conservers. The object of life was not to build a better world, but to preserve the status quo. Americans who once worshiped innovation above all else now feared change above all else.

I may have overdrawn some of these changes in the American character. Perhaps they are not as sweeping as I may have portrayed them. I suppose optimism still lingers on; idealism can still be discerned; and the individualism has not completely died out. But these old values are on the wane as the national temper has moved in the opposite directions. And thus we feel lost. We keep telling each other that our values are rooted in optimism, idealism, and individualism, but our behavior indicates that we act out of pessimism, realism, and insecurity.

This cultural ambivalence has had profound effects on all aspects of contemporary American life and nowhere more disastrously than in the political arena. The growing conservative mood that is building up in the United States reflects the change in values. Genuine liberalism flourishes on optimism, idealism, and individualism. The true liberal, whatever his virtues or faults, is above all else a believer in the future and man's power to shape his own destiny. The conservative, on the other hand, looks to the past, trying to protect and conserve what has built up over the centuries of human existence. Both political philosophies are valid. Neither one should ever become a label, an epitaph, or a curse. A nation is stable when it has a reasonable balance between them over a period of time. The liberal wants to improve what is bad; the conservative wants to retain that which is good. Each then protects the other from his excesses.

But for a stable political system to exist, both liberals and conservatives must agree on what is good and what is bad. There must be a basic cultural consensus. The tragedy facing American life today is the breakdown of such a consensus. Once before in this nation, man could not agree on basic values. At that time one group affirmed free labor, the supremacy of industry, and a centralized government. The other championed slavery, the supremacy of agriculture, and state sovereignty. We are all aware of the result—the Civil War. To the old question that still puzzles historians, "What caused the Civil War?" I would give, perhaps, the oversimplified answer—the irrepressible clash of values. And I fear that a similar situation may be developing today. Extremists are beginning to talk, not to each other, but past each other, as Northern abolitionists and Southern fire-eaters did in the eighteenth century. One side sees the good society as one in which all people are economically secure, in which nationalism gives way to a genuine world political community. The other looks forward to a society in which each man is free to gain as much wealth as his talents permit in a world which the United States would completely dominate. No rational political dialogue is possible in the face of these conflicting views.





idealist who sees nothing but evil around him and yearns for a brave new world, I offer a word of caution. Before you begin your crusade to ban the bomb or eradicate all poverty and unite the world into a super-state, ask yourself one question. Will the new world you seek be any better? Will removing the bomb overcome the certainty of death? Will destroying poverty end all misery? Will a world state end all tensions and violence and wars? It might just breed civil wars at a horrible level. Before you begin playing God, you might well ask yourself what your own qualifications are for the role.

Finally, there is the future. You must understand the simple fact that it is given to no human being to see what lies ahead. Yet we are surrounded with prophets who make their claim. One tells that we can solve all our problems, all our dilemmas by federal aid. Another sees the return of all power to the states and individuals as the only road to salvation. And another claims that our grandchildren will live under communism. All, I submit, are false prophets. The future will be made up of millions and millions of small decisions that each one of us will make in our lifetimes. There is no simple formula; there is no magic incantation. Each of us must face every situation as it arises, and make our decisions upon the basis of knowledge, intuition, and faith. Probably none of us will ever make such crucial decisions as whether or not to drop the bomb or sign a declaration of surrender to the Soviet Union, and yet we all bring some influence to bear upon what happens tomorrow. We must be responsible. We must become aware of the complexities of life in the twentieth century. We must understand ourselves and our age. We must have the courage to act. Most of all, we must decide whether we will act out of optimism or pessimism, out of idealism or realism, out of individualism or insecurity. The choice, hence the future, lies with each one of us.

### END

*Ben McAdams, a first year fellow in the College House, was the recently-announced winner of the Lucas Poetry Writing Contest, a competition open to all students in the Division of Arts and Sciences of The University of Texas. Ben is a junior art major, and his home is in Huntsville, Texas. He formerly attended Sam Houston State College where as a member of Kappa Pi, a national honorary art fraternity, he exhibited regularly. Letter to Laymen is pleased to print his winning poem.*

in an embrace of sky that kills by cold  
that inflames faceless marble must we sing?  
the sky is severed from the trees. their bleeding  
stains white cliffs incised with streams.

young springs  
comb out their winter reminiscences  
and lay them on the sunning rocks to dry  
beneath the covers april lifts a leaf  
between the crippled waters runs the sky  
between the ice of was and shall lies life  
conceived consumed and born within a tomb,  
shall waning warmth so waste in plunging graves  
it cannot see the sepulchre in bloom?

unliving sculptures stand in timeless arms  
how brilliantly the dying fire performs.

All that is left is invective, charges and countercharges, smears and innuendoes, hatred and violence. I don't know how many of you saw the program on CBS television called, "The Great Challenge," where they talked about the general problem of the United States and the Soviet Union. It was supposed to be a rational discussion, but it ended up finally in an attack between the soft and the hard line in international affairs, the audience taking sides, cheering men on to rather extreme and irresponsible statements, charges, invective—not rational discussion.

When a growing group of Americans tell us the United States is not and never has been a democracy we're moving perilously close to the point of political breakdown. Khrushchev may realize that he will never have to bury the American people. Our danger is that we'll bury ourselves. Torn between the values of the old and the new America, we may never resolve them and thus fade rapidly from the forefront of history through a process of internal disintegration.

I've been dealing here, then, with our losses. I'd like to close on a somewhat more optimistic note. I suggested in the beginning I had no simple solutions to the complex problems I've been describing. Indeed, I have no simple solutions to any simple problems if you want to raise those either, but I do have a few positive suggestions to offer. They deal with the past, and the present and the future.

First, I suggest we stop romanticizing the past. It is quite true that each generation tries to glorify the preceding era as the golden age, but today we have gone far beyond our predecessors in this respect. We must realize that the nineteenth century, as good as it may appear to some twentieth century Americans, was never a utopia. This golden age was an age of slavery where one man owned another body and soul. It was an age which witnessed the Civil War. We'll cut through the sentimental fog which has grown up around that conflict to recognize that it was a war in which nearly a million Americans died at the hands of other Americans. It was an age of economic exploitation; a time when men worked from fourteen to sixteen hours a day for starvation wages; when whole families lived in a single room without heat or sanitary facilities; when men were whipped and women branded for crimes which we would consider of minor importance. Our past is of great value to us, but not when we view it from distorted visions of superpatriots. We study history because it tells us who we are, where we have been, and where we may be headed. Our heritage tells us the road we have traveled. If we try to recapture the past, try to make the past our destination, we will be doomed to frustration. I think Thomas Wolfe summed it all up in the title of his book, *You Can't Go Home Again*. Today, I think millions of Americans want to go home to the womb of the nineteenth century.

Secondly, I think we must accept the present. There is simply no way to escape the realities of our own day. We cannot do away with giant corporations or with labor unions. We cannot do away with nuclear weapons or with the cold war. We cannot do away with communism or the Soviet Union. We may not like these things. They may threaten our welfare and our very existence, but they are part of the givenness of life and we must accept them. If we seek to escape either by opium or alcohol or sheer apathy and withdrawal, we are rejecting life. But above all else, we must stop passing judgment on the world as it exists. In our supreme arrogance, do we have the right to curse God and condemn the world he has created? To the dreamer and the



## LAOS HOUSE HOST TO CAMPUS MINISTERS

"Weary with pushing cookies and determined to preach the Word." This situation, encompassing both frustration and confidence, provides a clue to the mood of the campus ministry today.

The third annual Campus Ministers' Symposium, held at the Laos House, April 15-18, bore witness to the fact that we are now in a period of radical transition. A new image of the campus ministry is emerging; one which has shifted its center of value from breadth to depth.

Sixteen campus workers representing ten states, one foreign country and six denominations participated in the four day Symposium. The course of study, led by Robert Bryant, William Smith, and James Wagener of the corporate ministry, polarized the theologizing and ministering aspects of the campus minister's task. The theological study was based upon Community Studies I-A, "The Meaning of Human Existence." The study on Ministry grappled with the task of re-structuring, i.e., what does our theological clarity say to us about the structures of our campus programs? The possibilities for emerging new structures were shared by participants and staff.

The Symposium was host to two guest lecturers. Dr. Robert Divine, Associate Professor of History at The University of Texas, focused his insights on how we have reached our present cultural situation by his analysis of "The Lost American." (See article elsewhere in this issue.)

The Reverend Edwin Shaw spoke of "The Mission and Structure of the Wesley Foundation at The University of Texas." As a staff member of the Foundation he has helped forge one of the foremost student programs in the nation. The key to Mr. Shaw's presentation was his statement that "We now know that we cannot be all things to all people." Listing the many basic operative images that could underlie the work of a foundation, he pointed out that ambivalence at this point was surely disastrous. A foundation must be committed to one manageable and relevant image. Only then can the staff achieve the freedom to move creatively with any continuity. The speaker described the "Guild of Lay Theologians," an example of how students can responsibly covenant together to carry on theological study at depth, and shared with the group the possible direction for future experiments.

## PARTICIPANTS

Joan J. Bott, State University of Iowa.....Iowa City, Iowa  
James O. Cansler, University of  
N. Carolina.....Chapel Hill, N. C.  
James Neal Cavener, Iowa State University.....Ames, Iowa  
Helen Gray Crotwell, Winthrop College.....Rock Hill, S. C.  
Max Hale, Auburn University.....Auburn, Ala.  
Jack Harrison, Michigan State.....East Lansing, Mich.  
Robert C. Hastings, Central Mich. Univ.....Mt. Pleasant, Mich.  
Ralph Hays, University of Nebraska.....Lincoln, Nebraska  
Paula McPherson, Canterbury Association  
University of Texas.....Austin, Texas  
James A. Martin, University of Missouri.....Columbia, Mo.  
Edward F. Moore, Iowa State University.....Ames, Iowa  
Jane Savage, Miami University.....Oxford, Ohio  
George Utech, Texas Lutheran College.....Seguin, Texas  
Richard Wangen, Brazil.....St. Paul, Minn.  
George R. West, Iowa State University.....Ames, Iowa  
W. E. Thomas, Jr., Southwest Texas State.....San Marcos, Texas

## HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS RETURN

Out of our own concern and in response to many promptings from both clergy and parents, the Corporate Ministry this year launched a new venture: week-end seminars for high school students. As reported in previous issues of *Letter to Laymen*, we have been host to two groups of students who participated in CS IA week-ends.

The week-end of March 30-April 1 found the staff working with a returning group of twenty-seven of these persons in the CS IB portion of the curriculum. The basic seminar papers for this course are from Bonhoeffer and Kierkegaard. Staff participants were impressed with the openness, maturity, and willingness to deal with basic life questions which the participants exhibited.

In addition to the regular art form discussion, the seminar viewed and discussed Tennessee Williams' movie, *Sweet Bird of Youth*. The analysis of this powerful expression enabled the group to move beyond any abstracting they were tempted to do. To talk about God, Christ, sin, grace, and faith in terms of the life of Chance Wayne as unfolded before them on the screen offered the occasion to be quite particular about the meanings they were giving to these difficult words.



## AN EXCHANGE OF INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

For the past three years the Christian Faith-and-Life Community has sponsored an International Visitor Intern Program which has brought a total of fourteen young men and women from abroad to participate in its corporate worship, study, life, and mission. The Community arranges for passage from their homes in Europe or the Near East to Austin and provides them with room, board, health-accident insurance, and an allowance for incidental expenses while they are engaged in the theological studies of the College House. In return these interns, or "IVIP's" as the Program title has been abbreviated, share responsibility for the domestic work of the Community. During their stay they have the opportunity to travel in the vicinity of Austin, to be in the homes of American people, to live in an American university environment, to come to know American students, and to master the English language.

The five young people pictured above are the present group of IVIP's, and will complete their year here in June. They are Mieke Van't Spijker from Dordrecht, Holland; Erika Pfundt from Göttingen, Germany; Totsuo Yoshizawa from Tokyo, Japan; Annemarie Salzmänn from Köln, Germany; and Gisela Fennel from Göttingen, Germany. They will remain in Austin until mid-July when they begin a tour of the United States. Their present plans are to travel up the West Coast, across the Northern section of the country, and to arrive in New York City to board ship September 1 for the return trip to Europe.

The end of the summer will also bring the departure of one of the members of the College House to participate in a similar program sponsored by the Ecumenical Institute at the Chateau de Bossey near Geneva, Switzerland. Janet Nelson, a senior psychology major from El Paso, will graduate from The University of Texas in summer school and leave immediately for Bossey where she will work until February as a Blue Angel, the equivalent of the Community's IVIP's. Following her stay there she plans to work elsewhere for several months, and then to spend the summer traveling through Europe. She will return to the United States in September, 1963, to enter graduate school in social work.

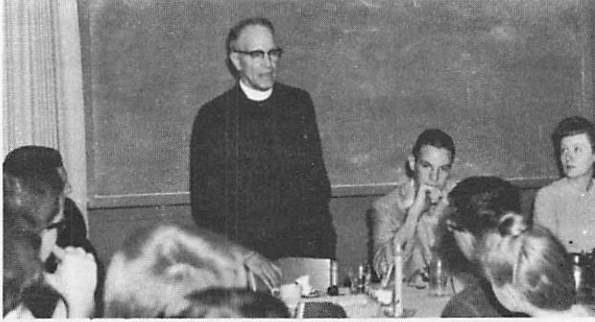


JANET NELSON

## FIRST NON-RESIDENT COLLEGE SEMINAR HELD

On March 23 twenty students, representing ten colleges and universities of Texas and Oklahoma, met at the Laos House to become participants in the first college week-end seminar for non-residents. In the past the Community's work with college students has been limited to the residential tutorial program, the College House. This week-end seminar was the first effort to complement this through a week-end open to students from other campuses.

Community Studies IA comprised the basic curriculum. The table conversations dealt with the students' sensitivity to the rapidly changing world they find themselves in, the vocation of being authentic students in the college or university setting, and the possibility for creative involvement in shaping the mission of the academic community responsibly. A movie and art form were also used.



DR. THEODORE MATSON

### RECENT VISITORS

During past weeks many visitors from various reaches of the world have found their way to the Community. Some, because of close schedules, stayed only briefly; others were able to remain longer. The following are representative of our recent sojourners.

DR. HANS JASCHIM MARGULL, Department of Evangelism, World Council of Churches, Geneva, Switzerland, shared his concerns with the Collegium.

Representative of the world church was REV. AKIRA NISHIHARA, a minister of the United Church of Christ in Japan from Tokyo. Aki participated in both the College House and Laos House programs.

Among the campus ministers who have come our way, in addition to those present for the Campus Ministers' Symposium this spring, was REV. JOHN A. RUSSELL, Director of the Wesley Foundation at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts. John and his family were here for a week-end seminar.

From the denominational boards and agencies have come REV. E. I. ABENDROTH, Area Secretary, Board of Christian Education, The United Presbyterian Church, from Overland Park, Kansas. From Cleveland, Ohio came REV. GERALD J. JUD, General Secretary, Division of Evangelism and Research, United Church of Christ. The Anglican communion was represented by MISS EMMA LOU BENIGNUS, Associate Secretary, Adult Division, Department of Christian Education, National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Greenwich, Connecticut.

Pastors of various denominational families have been our guests. Among these were REV. H. A. TILLINGHAST, JR., a Methodist, from San Rafael, California, and REV. DON BEISWENGER, a Presbyterian pastor from Creston, Iowa.

DR. THEODORE MATSON, Executive Director of the Board of American Missions of the Augustana Lutheran Church, in Austin recently for the Lutheran Evangelism Conference of the Southwest, was the speaker for the Friday Night Discourse at the College House.

The church, he said, must once again direct her life toward the world. Dr. Matson observed that many of the programs of the church which were begun for the purpose of carrying the Word into the life of the world are now being used solely for the building up of the membership of the church as an institution.

Friendship Press published his book, *Edge of the Edge*, which sets forth the church's responsibility, in April of last year.

Since the resignation of eight Collegium members (see page one), some interested friends have inquired about the possibility of sending words or gifts expressing their appreciation for past relationships to these men during their time of service at the Christian Faith-and-Life Community. Such notes or gifts will reach any or all of these eight men if sent to "Appreciation Fund—Christian Faith-and-Life Community," c/o Dr. John Douglas, 4620 Crestway Drive, Austin 3, Texas.

on dogmas  
and  
lumberyards  
continued  
from page 2

renowned painting, "Guernica," as the basis for many theological lectures, and said it appears in the halls and in every teacher's home! The facts are that there is one copy in the Community which hangs in Laos House, only one teacher has the painting in his home, and no theological lectures are given about the painting. This particular piece of contemporary art provides the context for a creative art-form discussion in one of the Laymen's Seminars. Out of these conversations, rich discoveries of human concern and need, both individual and corporate, have emerged.

The *Time* story and the other news coverage has placed the work of the Community before the eyes of the public. We are engaged in a particular task on behalf of the Church and world. From its beginning this has been a pioneering, experimental center. Our starting point is our stance of faith within the Church of Jesus Christ. Everything we do is exposed to the world. Participation in seminars for laymen and clergymen is open to all who share with us concern for faith/life.

## Letter to Laymen

Chaplain & Mrs. Gene Marshall  
5th Msl Bn 55th Artg  
Olathe NAF Station  
Kansas

April, 1962

2503 Rio Grande, Austin 5, Texas  
Second class postage paid at  
Austin, Texas

## Dear Everybody:

Elsewhere in this issue our response to *Time's* May 4 account of the Christian Faith-and-Life Community is expressed. 'Nuff said!

The burden of this column today is to bid adieu to several members of our staff. Through the past ten years, many outstanding men and women have come and gone, leaving behind their unique contributions to this pioneering program of lay-training in behalf of all Christian denominations. First there was Charles Roberts, now an Episcopal clergyman in Taylor, Texas; then Mildred Hudgins, former Methodist missionary to Japan, came to help inaugurate our work with women students and served faithfully for five years, now heading the Department of Religion at Randolph Macon Women's College in Virginia. Harry S. Wise taught for one year and is now with Ex-Students Association of The University of Texas; John Lee Smith, Southern Baptist minister, came to the staff twice for a year each before returning to Yale for his PhD. Elaine Lubbers was with us one semester before going on to Richmond, Virginia, to be one of the editors of the *Covenant Curriculum* of the Presbyterian Church, U. S.

Now, after the manner of collegiate coaching staffs, Joe Mathews, Joe Pierce and Joe Slicker are leaving to carry on their life and mission in a new location yet to be decided. It is our understanding that with them will go their younger associates Don Warren, Thurston Barnett, David McCleskey and Bill Cozart. Allan Brockway, on leave at Chicago, has resigned and may possibly join the departing group. Whether they will work in one center or in close geographical proximity is not known as of this writing.

In any event, we certainly want to acknowledge the tireless service and contributions rendered by each and all of these who are leaving, together with their families who have been so much a part of this pioneering enterprise. We lift up our intercessions daily for those who are leaving and ask yours for both those who depart and those who remain.

We open ourselves anew to your criticism, suggestions, counsel. We count ourselves your servants, providing a practical laboratory of "applied Christianity," complementing the work of seminary, local church and campus ministry, concentrating on the deepening dialogue between theology and culture so that men of faith may indeed become men of mission in this exciting new world which the Giver of all things now gives to this generation. Our aim is not to be "men pleasers" but rather to be faithful to the One who has set us in this place and given us the task which was that of our fathers before us and will be that of our children after us, namely: "Ecclesia semper reformanda," the Church always reforming, for the sake of declaring the Good news of God's love through Jesus the Christ to a waiting, expectant world.

Peace!

*H. Jack Lewis*

for the continuing  
Corporate Ministry



# Letter to Laymen



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To begin with, these abstractions, "social action" and "cultural analysis" have no very precise referents. There is not a school of "social action" opinion. There is no "cultural analysis" party. Who in his right mind would allow himself to be so scandalously described? No battle lines have been drawn, nor even any consistent lines of debate. The word "tension" is certainly too strong a term to describe the polarity that exists between two different orientations of the relationship between Christian faith and society. We would be in better shape if there were some strong tension here, or a recognition of the underlying inconsistencies that now characterize so much of our popular writing and program about the faith and witness, renewal of the church and culture.

Therefore, the intent of this paper must be the uncovering and raising of some of these inconsistencies. It will be much more a highlighting of existing confusion than a marshalling of arguments on two sides of well defined positions.

A brief historical perspective is necessary in order to understand what the issues are today.

## SUFFUSED PIETY TO SOCIAL RELEVANCE

The turn of this century saw the churches largely and comfortably identified with the "good" personal and family life. They were aware of but puzzled by the developing social crisis which technology and critical scientific thought were producing. In this atmosphere of suffused piety, such men as Walter Rauschenbusch, Shailer Matthews, Washington Gladden and Edward Judson began the task of trying to relate the gospel to the social, political and economic structures of a new society. With new tools of Biblical scholarship they sought to overlay the expectations of the New Testament for the redeemed life upon the struggling twisting inequities of an aggressive new social system. This movement, widely known as the period of the Social Gospel, has been described, abused and ridiculed in the past two decades for its theological naivete. As Martin Marty writes,

"... it turned out to be a Christ of Culture solution to a Christ of Culture problem and as such it could not cope with the depths of the human situation."<sup>1</sup>

## THE TENSION BETWEEN SOCIAL

## ACTION & CULTURAL ANALYSIS

Certainly the immediate descendants of this first generation of Social Gospel can be faulted for a distorted, optimistic theology. What is not so often noted is that the weaknesses of the Social Gospel can be located as equally in an inadequate social criticism as in theological weakness: It is relatively easy for the mid-century to see as obvious the developing complexity of the social structure of the first decade. We have lived through so many rapid changes, so many revolutions in basic life styles that just could not be imagined, even by science fiction writers of the early twentieth century. The tools of psychological and sociological inquiry which today form so basic a part of any analysis that we are largely unconscious of them, played no significant role in the assessment of half a century ago.

Although the decisive critique of the Social Gospel began in the late twenties and early thirties with the insights of Reinhold Niebuhr, the churches did not apprehend it for many years.

As a boy in the thirties, I grew up under the influence of ministers whose major thought molds were those of the Social Gospel. They were, in the main, young men, graduates of seminaries in the thirties. The idealism of building the Kingdom of God on earth, pacifism, socialism, all fitted together with a view of Jesus as the pioneer human prototype. "Are ye able, said the Master, to be crucified with me?"

robert spike

we sang lustily at youth camps, and with absolute confidence, the reply, "Lord, we are able, Our spirits are thine. Remold them, make us, like thee, divine."

The social action agencies of national Protestant denominations were not established until the late thirties and early forties, still largely under unreconstructed social gospel influence. At the same time an ever increasing group of people were re-examining the theological bases of Christian ethics under the stimulation of Dr. Niebuhr's thought, and of others like John Bennett, and the man who influenced me most in seminary, Professor Justin Wroe Nixon.

I can remember very vividly the heated debates in seminary over the implications of Dr. Niebuhr's writings for the concerns of the churches in social action. In the mid-forties even we were still sure that if you accepted the more classical doctrine of man as sinner, if you gave up the Kingdom of God as a human goal, then the nerve of social responsibility would be snapped.

Dr. Niebuhr himself was a phenomenon we could not account for. His own deep involvement in political action could only be a fluke, unrelated to his gospel. I well remember hearing him for the first time, in a Union Hall in Rochester during the 1944 Presidential Campaign. It was this speech, which was not in any way theological, that convinced me that there was some deep relationship between social philosophy and Christian faith. It sent me to reading *The Nature and Destiny of Man*.

## THE SOCIAL GOSPEL SOBERED

What was happening to me as a young theological student was also happening to a great number of people who had belonged to the Social Gospel persuasion. But in the main the effect of such thinking served only to sober and to modify the traditional concerns of the Social Gospel era. It did not alter the categories, the ways of thinking about man and society. These categories have remained intact from the days of Rauschenbusch. They are the great new facts of half a century ago—international relations, issues of economic justice, race relations. These concerns still are the major program divisions of denominational social action agencies. They were the heart of the old Federal Council of Churches and now the Division of Christian Life and Work of the National Council of Churches. A proper question is, "Why shouldn't they be?" They are the great unsolved problems of the age. Reconstructed Protestant Social Action, however, gave up its tendency to simplistic solutions in these areas—pacifism, socialism and brotherhood through understanding.

It has thus come about that the agencies and groups with most serious concern here have become social education oriented. They saw one of their purposes as alerting the church constituency to the ethical issues in the fields of international relations, economics, race relations, and, less frequently, politics. It is interesting that the political structures have been much less enshrined as "program areas" than the other mentioned emphases. About a decade ago there was some discussion, and several consultations were held, about the possibility of adding a department of Political Affairs to the Division of Christian Life and Work. It never materialized.

The second emphasis in Protestant social action has come to be the expression to the public and public agencies of consensus opinions on public issues insofar as they can be ascertained. Thus, one of the most troubling problems for social action forces has been the matter of representation, of who was speaking for whom. The pronouncements and the study documents of social action have become increasingly balanced in their analysis and recommendations. The Frontier Fellowship, which had begun in the thirties as a rallying point for people who rejected the non-theological, idealistic approach to social action was no longer necessary. The mainstream now shared these views. The counsel of Niebuhr and Bennett, so widely scorned in the thirties and forties as being too pragmatic, too pessimistic, is really the context in which such pronouncements are made.

(continued on page 5)

## about this article . . .

What is the appropriate mode of action for the awakened man in our time as he relates to this "age dying for lack of authentic symbol"?

Where is the common ground between those who would renew the church first and then let it serve the world and those who would make common cause with existing "secular" groups who have taken up the task of cultural transformation?

Is the church as a social institution reduced to one of these existing "secular" groups and treated accordingly, or should the existing church be viewed also in some way as a place of God's breaking in?

Does the sociological frame of reference replace the theological frame of reference as a way of seeing the church in our moment of history? How can the two visions be held without one blanking out the other? Can they be held simultaneously?

The questions raised in the above paragraphs are examples of the cluster of knots which need untying in our time. Robert Spike's lecture printed here is a contribution to the conversation. Its purpose is more that of analysis than prescription. It is not definitive but highly suggestive. In our opinion it presages the kind of creative grappling that must be willingly taken up by all of us who are destined to live in these times.

Lest you write this article off as another exercise in theological jargon which many readers plow through only with the aid of Herculean patience and Webster's Unabridged, we encourage you to come to the article with such practical questions as these: "Do I expend my energy on the young adult class in my church school attempting to get instituted a more adequate curriculum in theological education or do I turn my major attention to encouraging the two or three members who are like-minded at the point of getting more adequate housing for low-income citizens to move with an existing community agency toward this relative goal? Assuming that the two enterprises are not mutually exclusive, how do they relate to each other?"

Two books that are seminal to the current discussion which Mr. Spike mentions are Berger's *The Noise of Solemn Assemblies* and Gustafson's *Treasure in Earthen Vessels*. We recommend them to our readers and encourage the digestion of Mr. Spike's article as a springboard into the stream of discussion.



Robert Spike is General Secretary for Program of the Board for Homeland Ministries of the United Church of Christ. Among his books are *In But Not Of the World* and *Safe in Bondage*. This address was presented last year at the Institute for Religious and Social Studies in New York. Mr. Spike is a member of the National Advisory Council of the Faith-and-Life Community.

# THEODORE GILL TO BE PERSPECTIVES LECTURER

Ten years ago in September, 1952, an idea moved forth into history, a thought took form as a new institution, a possibility became an actuality, the Christian Faith-and-Life Community opened its doors for the first participants to venture into a new style of theological education. To mark the beginning of the second decade in the life of the Community, the Board of Directors has announced the Feast of the Beginnings for Thursday, September 20, 1962. Dr. Theodore Gill, President of San Francisco Theological Seminary and former Managing Editor of *The Christian Century*, has been chosen to deliver the fifth annual Perspectives Lecture on this occasion.

Every beginning seriously undertaken demands a view, a direction, a destiny, a prospectus; precisely, a comprehensive and realistic perspective. As the Community celebrates its tenth anniversary and opens its eleventh year, Ted Gill is uniquely able to bring together clarity and vision about the Church, contemporary culture and the particular task of the Christian Faith-and-Life Community.

Presently serving as president of a Presbyterian Theological seminary in California, Dr. Gill is widely known for his incisive and forthright writing as managing editor of *The Christian Century* and editor of *The Pulpit*. A graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary, Dr. Gill did further study at Union Theological Seminary in New York and received his Th.D. from the University of Zurich in 1948. Prior to taking up his editorship with *The Christian Century*, he served as Professor of Religion and Dean of the Chapel in St. Charles, Missouri, and as pastor of the West End Presbyterian Church in New York City.

The Feast of the Beginnings is a symbolic celebration to which all friends of the Community were invited. It was held in the Texas Union Ballroom at the University of Texas in Austin at 6:30 p.m. on September 20.



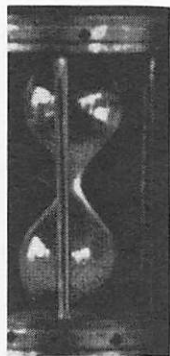
## new icons for old . . .

"Everything is up for reconstruction: the image of the church, the image of the minister, the image of the layman, the image of the missionary, the image of worship, the image of evangelism, the image of the Christian life, the image of the saint. What does all of theology's recent blowing and wheezing in these areas mean except that some of the baroque and Victorian and futuristic horrors we've had hanging in our heads are being taken down and stored away in history books to make room for the tentative first sketches of new images drawn after the manner of the church's old masters?"

—Theodore Gill



## BEGINNING



## THE SECOND DECADE

w. jack lewis

Ten years is not a long time as history goes, not more than a speck on the chronological scale, but it is at least twenty per cent of a man's working lifetime. And in the years since World War II, the social, scientific and technological changes have been so rapid and so revolutionary that one decade now may reveal more breakthroughs than some previous centuries have witnessed.

The beginning of the second decade in the life and work of the Christian Faith-and-Life Community has caused the Board and Staff to pause and reflect, criticize, evaluate and re-examine our reason for existence as an experimental arm of the Church and the churches.

It would be impossible to express adequately the indebtedness of the Community to the 120 Board and Advisory Council members, 20 staff members, 2000 program participants, and more than 2500 individuals, foundations, church and civic groups whose gifts totaling almost one million dollars in ten years have been poured into this venture of faith. In the preparatory years, 1950-51, it became clear that whatever form or structure developed, it would surely encompass experimental work with university students, adult laymen from local congregations, publications, vocational groups and social issues. The first three became realities in the first decade and the latter two should be launched well within the second decade under *The Institute of Cultural Affairs*, chartered in August 1962, by the Executive Committee of the Board of the Community. Studies by the Staff during the past year pointed the need for such an institute, including within its scope experimental work with motion pictures, television and the liberal arts.

1962-63, our eleventh year in the College House program, and our fifth in the Laos House, will show a number of revisions in the internal organization: 1) closer liaison between the staff and the Board of Directors; 2) clearer delineation of duties within the six standing committees of the Board and the provision that all be *working* committees; 3) strengthening of the staff procedures, allowing it to function as a genuine corporate ministry under its elected chairman; 4) improved accounting procedures, more detailed audit by Certified Public Accountants, better current position with regard to accounts payable and receivable; and 5) increased concern for closer working relationships and service to local congregations and their pastors and to denominational boards and institutions as such.

The Faith-and-Life Community is no end in itself, but images itself as an arm or servant of the Church of Jesus Christ to aid the Church in fulfilling its mission of proclaiming the Gospel to all men, demanding social justice for all men and continually devising and revising ways and means of equipping laymen to be agents of reconciliation in family life, occupational life, civic and all other cultural affairs. It follows, therefore, that all efforts of Board and Staff and all funds secured from whatever source must be channelled in this single direction and for this overarching purpose.

The Laos House as an adult experimental center for laymen and clergymen was established in 1958. Financially, it was almost disastrous, but the need to take this next step was urgent. Despite staff strains and dollar "brinkmanship," the past four years have shown the wisdom of the decision to risk everything to launch this intensive study center as both "sign" and "servant" to local pastors and congregations. As husbands and wives came for study out of a myriad of denominational and occupational backgrounds, it became crystal clear that renewal in the church had to take place in the local congregation, rather than in committees and councils, good as these are in setting forth guide lines and combatting barriers to unity in the faith. Further, the parish clergyman was seen afresh as the key man in renewal, first as teacher of laymen and again as the teacher of teaching laymen in the developing "small group" or "House Church" units within the given parish. It also became evident that a voluntary covenant relationship between participants, whether clergy or laity, would be essential to a serious and continuous group ministry within the church and within society.

The new decade will see a renewed effort made within the Laos House programs to serve local congregations by acting as a catalytic agent for the church in experimental work with teenagers, young adults and older adult couples, sharing in colloquies with their clergymen such practical insights in teaching methods, subject matter and cultural wisdom as may be gained by the staff. Normally, new curricula will be hammered out during long-term with the college students, then distilled and tested with congregational groups. Results will be shared through publication with church and campus ministries at large.

Beginning the second decade, several revisions in the College House program are being made: 1) reducing number of students to thirty participants, both men and women, utilizing meal time procedures which have proved so beneficial at the Laos House, including readings at table, art-form discussion, creative conversations; 2) providing for 35 non-program residents, especially international students to live in the College House facilities as a testing group for intercultural sharing and the articulation of the Christian faith in free discourse with those of other persuasions; 3) worshipping once daily with staff families at 7:00 A.M. Monday through Friday; 4) concentrating formal teaching to one extended session, combining worship at table, meal, conversation, lecturette and seminar on Wednesday evenings from 5:45 to 9:00 P.M., thus establishing a pattern for what might evolve into the "House Church" format in small groups within the local church and campus denominational centers; 5) securing "guest lecturers" for the Friday Evening Discourse who are on the growing edge of culture, bringing faculty and student guests to share in the provocative discussions which will carry over into the life of the university itself; 6) making the staff available on a more personal and regular basis to each of the residents, participant and non-participant alike; 7) cooperating with local university churches and the denominational campus Christian workers in developing patterns for intensive-extensive ministries on the campus.

The curriculum in the College House is also undergoing revision. The second decade will find first-year fellows and Senior fellows studying together. All students will have had

the core course on "The Meaning of Human Existence" before regular classes begin. This will be given in an intensive weekend study before university registration begins, and registration week will be used for orientation in CFLC the first three evenings. The "Feast of Beginnings" on Thursday, September 20, in the main ballroom of the Texas Union, (see story in this issue) will launch the Community into its second decade and the College House into its eleventh year (the first was September 15, 1952.) The curriculum itself will be in four parts, featuring a running dialogue between theology and culture under the general themes: I. The Courage to Be; II. The Courage to Know; III The Courage to Act; and, IV. The Courage to Express.

Set in the context of daily worship, undergirded by corporate discipline within a covenant relationship and focused toward responsible life in the midst of the 20th Century world where the Word of God's love in Jesus Christ is to be fleshed out, bodied forth, incarnated, the way ahead is fraught with uncertain certainty, joyful soberness and great expectancy. The second decade of the Community's existence will be "good" before the Lord, who gives our every tomorrow, our every moment to be lived to the full, without appeal to self-justification. The call is to die to past pretensions and illusions and lo, to live, now, in this moment, open toward the future, embracing every experience God brings to us as we encounter Him in the concrete neighbor in the real world. In Jesus the Christ we take our stance of faith, nothing can separate us from the love of God . . . All things work together for good . . . Therefore, let us be about our Father's business.

## THE TENSION BETWEEN

continued from page 2

### THE CHURCH THROUGH THE WORLD'S EYES

In the late forties and early fifties several factors began to emerge that together now shape another orientation for the social responsibility of Protestantism.

One of these factors was a development in the sociology of religion. If one man were to stand as a key figure in the spawning of this, it would be Richard Niebuhr, although he has in no way been identified with the influences that have spun off from him. His own genius of interpreting the sociology of church life in theological categories has been largely unduplicable. However, a number of his students have taken very seriously his own respect for the insights of the social sciences as providing categories for thinking theologically about the role of men in this time, in this society, in particular parts of this society. His own concern for particularity, the given human situation, rather than abstractions about the human situation and its problems, produced in his students at this juncture a serious turning to the world, to the structures of power, and the possible alternatives open to men caught in these structures. Kenneth Underwood, William Lee Miller, James M. Gustafson, Robert Lynn and others represent this point of view. This concern did not begin, nor has it taken the shape of an alternative to the framing of social propositions in response to social problems. It simply asked: What are the social and economic, political and theological questions that confront a man in his place of work and influence? How are these issues actually raised? What language is used? What really motivates decisions on social issues? This general point of view is sometimes known as contextual ethics, although names mentioned in this lecture are not easily tied to a school willingly.

Another key figure, largely from the theological perspective, has been Paul Lehmann. In 1953, a group of friends, colleagues and disciples of Reinhold Niebuhr published a symposium called *Christian Faith and Social Action*. Dr. Lehmann's chapter in that volume, entitled *The Foundation and Pattern of Christian Behavior*, became a rallying point

for those who looked to another source than the stream of Social Gospel reconstructed by neo-orthodoxy for guidance. He describes a contextual ethic in the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer,

"... a matter of accurate and serious consideration of the actual circumstances. The more complex the circumstances of a man's life are, the more responsible he is and the more difficult it is for him 'to tell the truth' . . . Therefore telling the truth must be learned . . . Since it is simply a fact that the ethical cannot be detached from the real situation, the increasingly accurate knowledge of this situation is a necessary element of ethical action."

Lehmann confused many people, however, by referring to this point of view as a *koinonia* ethic. What he meant by this was that ethics must begin with ethos, and the place then to start for the Christian was the concrete reality of the Church. The social ethic did not begin with the application of individually conceived principles upon a social situation *out there*. It had its origin in the relationships and structures and whole character of the Christian community itself.

However, the overtones of the usage of the word *koinonia* in our time has played havoc with a clear understanding of what Lehmann was trying to say. The association of the word *koinonia* and our word *fellowship* seemed to imply that Lehmann was talking about some kind of interior ethic, a parochial interest, unrelated to the problems of the world, the agony of the world. Nothing could be further from the truth. What has to be recognized is that the church is not separated from the world ultimately. It may separate itself momentarily to assess and celebrate its identity as a community of faith and worship. But the church exists also in its human involvements, its status, its life through its members and their involvements in the world. James Gustafson has just probed this dimension of the Church's life in his recent volume, *Treasure in Earthen Vessels: The Church As A Human Community*.

In addition to this footnote on *koinonia* ethics, it must be remembered also that the present concretions of the institutional church are not the only possible forms of the life of the *koinonia* in the world, and for the word *koinonia* one cannot read *denominational*, or *interdenominational*, or *local church*, or even *ecumenical* in the designation of *koinonia* ethics.

### THE LONELY CROWD AND THE FRIENDLY CHURCH

To the thought and influence of Yale Divinity School, Paul Lehmann and assorted thinkers, the rise of popular cultural criticism on the fringes of the social sciences must be noted. Undoubtedly it was *The Lonely Crowd* that set off the spark as far as implications for social ethics are concerned. The more central stream of sociologists of religion quietly went through a revolution. They moved from statistical and ecological concerns to interest in the value structures of various parts of American society, inner city, suburban, rural. The daring of Reisman in mixing psychological and sociological data became the style of a kind of criticism which perhaps is too broadly called cultural analysis.

While this interest has had close kinship with the insistence on contextual ethical discussion, the intensive study of concrete decisions, in the main it has been quite its opposite as far as scope is concerned. This has been pulse taking, intuitive, hunch-like reportage on the popular arts, the mass media, the life styles of Americans, the vagaries and inconsistencies between professions of belief and the commitments of people as represented by what they buy, what they read, and how they spend their leisure time.

While there have been preachy, scolding aspects to this cultural assessment, these have come principally from outside the Church. There has been judgment in the writings of Christians here, but often the most characteristic thing has been the acceptance of the culture, of standing within in cri-

tique, rather than denunciation. Writers like Martin Marty, Roy Eckhardt, Marvin Halverson, and the late William Kirkland have stood here.

In terms of the structures of Protestantism, the impact of this form of theological-sociological-psychological cultural analysis has had its greatest influences on the mission boards and the Christian education agencies. This is not to say that social action agencies have not been influenced too, but the givenness of the classical categories I mentioned earlier has been that the influence has been far less than in a home mission board, where the serious study of the dynamics and structures of city life becomes the context for practical decisions as to how and where money is to be spent, and on what kinds of institutions and services. Every Divisional Assembly of the Division of Home Missions of the National Council of Churches for the past two or three years has devoted the central part of its meetings to serious assessment of American mass culture and various parts of that culture.

It is only now that the presence or absence of theological underpinnings for this interest is being faced. Incarnational theology, the theology of involvement have been really catch phrases used by many people so fascinated by the cultural assessment that they did not want to probe the more theoretical implications of what they were doing.

It is Bonhoeffer, of course, who seems really to be the doorway through which you must go to erect a theology of culture. And yet it is very easy to take only the congenial part of Bonhoeffer's thought, the acceptance of a secular culture, the glorying in the death of God, as Vahianian almost seems to be doing. It is a dizzying vista, and one that I find myself constantly tempted to follow—the searching out of the works of the Holy Spirit in the world, rather than in the enclave of the church, the understanding of the church as a part of the world.

Lehmann has stated it eloquently in his chapter in *Christian Faith and Social Action* in his critique of Brunner's evangelical ethics. Brunner says that the "will of God as it is made known to faith through revelation is both a gift and a task." Lehmann repudiates this definition as "that fateful retreat from the sovereign priority of grace into the traditional and deadly ordering of the ethical life from the law to the gospel." He repudiates Brunner's "Divine Imperative." An ethic based upon the self revelation of God in Jesus Christ is more concerned about the Divine Indicative than it is the Divine Imperative. The primary question is not, "What does God command?" The primary question is "What does God do?"

It is really this committed curiosity about what God is doing in this time, in this place, that holds together in some kind of unity all those in the cultural analysis—contextual ethics crowd.

It is an insistence that questions of strategy for the church in the world are not derivative questions either from a theological premise or goals of social action. They are the same process.

## STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

Now there are enormous dangers in this general direction, and this is why I plead for some kind of tension that seems to exist only in my title and not in reality.

There is first of all the danger of the *sanctification of what is*. Peter Berger is getting at this partly in his *The Noise of Solemn Assemblies*. Here he is calling for the disestablishment of the churches, by which he means the relinquishing of institutional status and position. He identifies Martin Marty, Bill Webber and me as conservatives, a label that all three of us, I'm sure, find a little startling, because we accept the fact of the institutional character of the church in some form in this society as being something that is not only a problem but a blessing.

In fact Berger, trained as a sociologist, takes out after the sins of the church really from the molds of the social gospel, reconstructed this time not by neo-orthodox tempering as to the nature of man but by a kind of evangelical idealism as to what could happen by the act of pure will and motivation.

Incidentally, the accident of origins and the confusion of who one is likely to find on what side is illustrated by comparing *The Noise of Solemn Assemblies* with *Treasure in Earthen Vessels*. Here is Berger, from a Lutheran high-doctrine-of-the-church background, really coming out for a sectarian doctrine of the church. What is needed is the repetition of the non-conformist Reformation in England, the repudiation of the institution for the sake of the gospel. On the other hand one has James Gustafson, from that very non-conformist Congregational background, calling for an appreciation of its fundamental nature as a human community.

"Because it is a human community the Church can make Christ present to men. Its social adaptiveness is a strength rather than a weakness, a good rather than an evil. It must find the political forms, patterns of interpretation, and liturgies through which Christ can make himself present to the disinherited Negroes and Puerto Ricans of Manhattan, the Hindu Tamils of Ceylon, the dying aristocracy of Western Europe and the people of Eastern Europe under Soviet domination. Failure to adapt means failure in its mission."<sup>2</sup>

It is apparent in such a contrast that one reason why there is not much spoken tension between social actionist and cultural analyst is that there is so much overlap of concerns and reliance upon common sources. Berger wants the church de-institutionalized in order to speak prophetically to the world. Gustafson wants proper understanding of the human processes at work in the institution so that it can change in order to minister to the world. It is not an activist-pietist difference. Both points of view seem to share a common doctrine of man, but the difference seems to be somewhat obscurely in the interpretation of revelation—what God is doing in history, something that might be called the mechanics of revelation, if that is not too shocking and grotesque a term for theologians.

## GOSPEL OR CHURCH?

The second great danger, and really an accusation that might be raised justifiably against those caught up in cultural analysis, is that the transcendent power of the Christian God is not taken into account. Even the over-againstness of middle axiom social action principles brings something of the transcendent to the situation. The best laying open of this danger I have seen was just done for me in a paper by a student. He took my book *Safe in Bondage* and used it as a sample of the tendency in this direction. In this book, which describes a strategy of mission, I have said that the world is not interested in our proclamation of Jesus as Lord, but only in our offering of Him as Saviour. In a thoroughly devastating way, the student points out the impossibility of severing these two works of Christ, and, more precisely, the dangers of being swallowed up in the sea of meaningless claims, causes and little religions that flood the secular world, if the identity of the Christian community and its kerygma is not defended.



# CALENDAR OF ECUMENICAL STUDIES

The problem of there being any vigorous debate here is that there is no other party that seems to have any ground to stand on to launch the correcting attack. The social action orientation described in the historical foreword, which still has many adherents, is subject to the same malady. It begins with God as a First Principle, but He is not a jealous God and too polite to denounce the slide into atheism that can so easily happen when you fix on Man and his destiny, albeit under Christian auspices.

The debate cannot go on between those who would renew the church first and then let it serve the world, because of the exaggerations of psychological interpretation that mark this interest in the renewal of the church as a spiritual community. Such determined focus on the ways men behave in personal relationships has produced a narrowing of the understanding of how men in groups behave in society. The over stress on the beloved community, the small group, the remnant, understood in psychological terms, has ironically produced a kind of atomization as far as understanding men in society is concerned.

Where is the challenge to the party of involvement to come from? Perhaps to put it in a better way: How does the transcendent dimension intrude itself into the religionless world? That sounds like a contradiction, and it is the important contradiction of Christian faith, that always keeps it from being smoothed out into a culture religion. How does the Word intrude itself into the world where the Spirit is already at work? I believe that it must come through a new vitality in sacramental worship. This is not to be construed simply as a revival of liturgical fussiness, but a genuine insistence on the validity of Word and Communion as the mark of the Christian community. Here is the vehicle of communication of transcendence in an age dying for lack of authentic symbol. It seems like a curious juxtaposition—involvement with the leisure revolution, strategies for specialized ministries in the urban society, the vocation-by-vocation analysis of responsible action, with the sign of Broken Bread and Wine. And yet this must be, or we go down into the pit of empathy.

## PARISH LAYMEN SEMINARS:

Forty-four hour weekend short-courses for laymen over the state and nation; including lectures, seminars, study periods, group conversation and art form presentation; articulating and probing the serious questions of life in the world and life in the church.

Course offerings from the Community Curriculum:

- CS I A: "The Possibility of Full Humanity" (Prerequisite for all other courses)
- CS I B: "The Life of Faith/Unfaith: the Affirmation of Man in History"
- CS II A: "The Contemporary Church as Life in the World"
- CS IV C: "The Dynamic Form of a Contemporary Christian Style of Life"

## LAIC THEOLOGICAL STUDIES:

CS I A and two other courses from the Community Curriculum presented in the fall and spring for laymen in Austin and surrounding communities; meeting eight Thursday evenings at the Laos House for dinner, group conversation, lecture and seminar.

## PARISH MINISTER COLLOQUIES:

Four months of meeting two days each month for pastors of churches of all denominations in Texas and neighboring states; to engage in theological study and dialogue, seminars and lectures. One two-day colloquy each year for advanced study offered to those who have attended a previous four-session program. A special four-day course offered for the first time this year for pastors of churches of all denominations over the nation.

## MINISTERS WIVES COLLOQUY:

Two-day course for the wives of pastors who have participated in the Parish Minister Colloquy; offering CS I A and a selected advance course from the Community Curriculum.

## CAMPUS MINISTERS SYMPOSIUM:

Annual four-day course given in the spring, open to campus ministers over the United States; offering CS I A and workshops utilizing the Community's ten years of presentation in the College House.

## HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT SEMINAR:

Forty-four hour weekend short-course for high school students; adapting CS I A to reflect upon the concerns of the emerging adult in contemporary American culture.

## THE COLLEGE HOUSE:

Nine month residential program for a selected group of University of Texas students; offering weekly seminars, daily worship, group conversation, art form presentation and guest lectures.

## PARISH LAYMEN SEMINARS:

Course	Date
CS I A.....	October 5-7
CS II A.....	October 19-21
CS I A.....	November 16-18
CS I B.....	December 7-9
CS IV C.....	January 11-13
CS I A.....	January 25-27

## LAIC THEOLOGICAL STUDIES:

Fall Session.....October 11-December  
(Eight Thursday evenings)

## PARISH MINISTERS COLLOQUIES:

Class of 1962 (four sessions)	October 1-3
	November 5-7
	December 3-5
	March 4-6
Advance Colloquy.....	January 7-9
National Colloquy.....	January 21-24

## MINISTERS WIVES COLLOQUY:

CS I A.....	November 26-28
Advance Course.....	November 26-28

## CAMPUS MINISTERS SYMPOSIUM:

Spring Course.....April 28-May 1

## HIGH SCHOOL SEMINAR:

CS I A.....	November 9-11
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## THE COLLEGE HOUSE:

Senior Fellow Prevocational Seminar.....	September 14-15
First Year Fellow Preceptorial.....	September 15-16
Orientation.....	September 17-20
Opening of the Residential Program.....	September 24

FOR INFORMATION CONCERNING ANY OF THESE COURSES, WRITE

The Corporate Ministry, 2503 Rio Grande, Austin 5, Texas. The calendar for February through May will appear in the January issue of **Letter to Laymen**.

## Dear Everybody:

Subject—"The Laymen's Lament"

There is reported to be a sign in the Pentagon which reads K.I.S.S., meaning "Keep it simple, stupid!" Friend and foe alike have been asking that of *Letter to Laymen* in recent years.

How simple is simple? Surely not so simple as the answer of Linus concerning the clouds in the comic strip. What then?

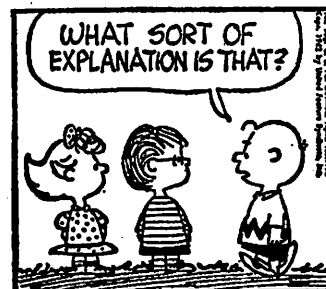
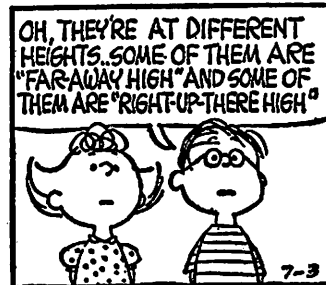
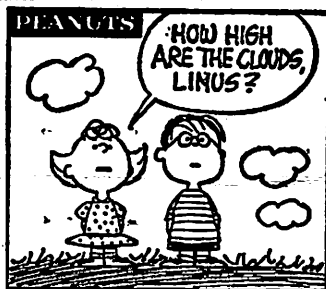
During a one day stop-over in Pittsburgh, August 29, between conferences in Lancaster, Pa., and Beloit, Wisconsin, over a luncheon at the Press Club in Pittsburgh, this question was posed to two journalists on the ALCOA staff. Both read *Letter to Laymen* regularly. One was Bill Shepard, former Board member of the Community, when he lived in Port Lavaca, Texas, and now handling international public relations for his corporation. The other was Jack Nettles, editor of *ALCOA News*. Both are active Episcopal laymen.

Their suggestions: Write for the readers rather than for one another on the staff. Pay attention to sentence structure, guarding against needlessly complex sentences and phrases. If using unfamiliar words, add parenthesis or clause to define or explain. Subheads in longer articles help break up the solid mass of a printed page and often serve to whet the reader's appetite to read the whole article. Art work and layout generally have been good. Retain some sort of informal column such as "Dear Everybody," giving personal reflections of the various staff members and also pointing to articles within the same issue to heighten reader's interest. Brief editorial note as preface or footnote to major articles would help focus reader's attention on the central issue being developed and insure more thorough reading of the article.

Such advice is indeed helpful and much appreciated. Many readers have offered similar suggestions in the past few years. Now, with the beginning of the second decade of CELC, the intention is to move toward clearer communication through *Letter to Laymen*. This will take time and effort and the development of skills within the staff.

Beginning with this issue, *Letter to Laymen* will be published six times annually on a bi-monthly basis. Subscription will be \$2.00 per year with the hope that the publication will be largely self-supporting. Readers' comments and suggestions are welcome at all times. It is further hoped that most readers will also want to be supporting "Friends of the Community" with some regular monthly or annual contributions so that this pioneering work can move ahead with vitality into the second decade (see "The Second Decade" on page 4).

*Jack Lewis*  
For the Corporate Ministry



## NEW L/L SUBSCRIPTION PLAN

"in order to . . ."

Most of us are very familiar with the "Due to . . ." notices which have appeared on the front of our local newspapers and with the renewal notices for our favorite magazines. These notices usually begin: "Due to rising costs beyond our control, the publishers reluctantly announce an increase in subscription rates . . ." With this issue of *Letter to Laymen*, we are pleased to make the following "In order to . . ." announcement.

In order to continue and improve the distinctive theological and practical content of the *Letter to Laymen*, and in order to administer most efficiently the contributed funds received by the Community, the Board of Directors and the Corporate Ministry announce that beginning with the September, 1962 issue of *Letter to Laymen* (Volume 9, Number 1), the *Letter* will be bi-monthly throughout the year: September, November, January, March, May and July. The subscription rate will be two dollars (\$2.00) per year for six issues.

The staff of the Community will be giving increased attention to making each *Letter to Laymen* carry articles which quicken the understanding and arouse the thoughtful response of our readers. We shall continue to use this journal to share the knowledge and concerns which emerge out of research and experimentation in the Laos House and the College House, and to report events of importance in the life of the Community. Other special features are being considered in planning for future issues. Reader response is earnestly solicited. The reflective responses and critical evaluations received in the past have been stimulating and helpful.

During the past years the contributed funds of the Community have been used to provide a large number of complimentary subscriptions. In keeping with the revised financial policies of the Community, complimentary subscriptions will be limited and given on a selected basis in the future. A subscription renewal form is enclosed and readers are urged to return this as soon as possible with the name and address.

*Letter to Laymen*

SEPTEMBER, 1962

2503 Rio Grande, Austin 5, Texas  
Second class postage paid at  
Austin, Texas



# the incarnation and our contemporary culture

by samuel h. miller

How does Christmas fit into our world? Or we could ask: What is our world doing to the celebration of Christmas?

There are moments when one can catch a glimpse of something rather terrible happening. It is true we still have the conventions of keeping Christmas, exchanging gifts, singing carols, and the ancient images of angels in the heights and wise men traveling from afar. All make a claim that there is a certain sanctity about the season. Yet in spite of these things I see something else happening — something quite different.

Do you remember last Christmas? How wearied everyone had become long before the day arrived? How frenzied and impatient? Everyone had been tormented by floods of Christmas cards. People were being driven, as if something had gotten out of hand, bewildering them, leaving them confused. Then Christmas came, and the mountains of packages were attacked. The children were distracted by too many gifts while the adults tried to put down on little pads whether Aunt Minnie had given the plaything that had a broken pair of scissors in it or whether it came from Cousin John, until the whole thing became a distasteful minor riot. At last everyone was quite willing to confess they would thank God when it was all over.

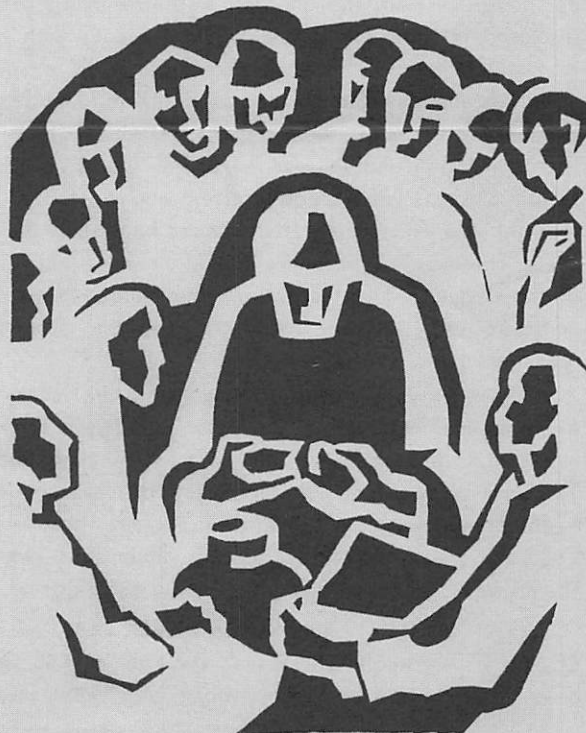
CAN CHRISTMAS BE REDEEMED? I am frightened by what is happening to Christmas. It is wholly possible in the history of the world for a day fraught with extraordinary significance to be so corrupted that after a while there is nothing to do with it except to repudiate it or to put something else in its place. This has happened in Western history. Saturnalia, the celebration of the winter solstice, was in itself a profound recognition of a changing and turning world and the mystery of the creation's power, but it became so utterly corrupted that it was no longer capable of sustaining the spontaneity of the human soul.

We are supposed to be entering the high tide of human joy in this Christmas period but whether the holiness of the season will be ridden through and through by commercial elements that have run away with us; whether what little peace we might have had has now been exhausted in the vast attractions in which we confess our slavery to a world that has gotten out of hand, we do not know.

I think we have reached a point where as Christians we must ask ourselves whether Christmas can be redeemed. It will be a sad day if it cannot be, but we must say with all soberness that the world itself with its commercial greed, its quantitative motif, its vast and ugly lust of possessiveness, has now overlaid the peace, simplicity and the kind of naive joy that once reigned at the heart of the Christmas celebration of the birth of a child.

THE ANCIENT AND LASTING PROMISE — What is it that stands behind this first Christmas? Is there any way we can penetrate the clutter and confusion, this tremendous burial ground of rubbish? Is there any way in which we can turn back to the promise of a kind of joy that the world neither gives nor takes away? Is there any chance that we can recover a Christmas like this, undistracted by many things that have no connection whatever with Christ? Is there any chance that we can find in this vast haystack the little needle of that ancient and lasting joy that came to men in the midst of a world that denied many things but certainly did not overwhelm them with such a vast and luxurious celebration that the thing itself was lost?

Any attempt to relate the themes of "incarnation" and "contemporary cul-



# Letter to laymen

JOURNAL OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND-LIFE COMMUNITY IN AUSTIN, TEXAS

ture" will meet an overwhelming diversity of interpretations. Both themes are vast and there are no easy simplifications.

In the incarnation we have a truth enunciated about the reality of God revealed in the life and work of Jesus. The ramifications involve many levels of life—history, humanity, nature, freedom. There is no single, isolated fact here, or even a single definition. It is instead one of the most profoundly elaborate truths of all time.

Put over against this the equally complex reality of "contemporary society." How many layers make up our present culture! The ancient Hebrew, the Greek and the Roman, the Christian, early and medieval, the Protestant Reformation, the Renaissance, the rise of science, and the Industrial Revolution—each adds its peculiar work view, its own mores, and factors shaping man's reaction to religion and to the world. Obviously some of these are of the very substance of the "incarnation" and bear its imprint, but others are indeed strangers to the idea, and some so wide of touching it that there is a great gulf fixed between them. But when all these are put together what does the lump seem like? Is there any way to say whether our culture is susceptible of being interpreted as based on the "incarnation"?

THE INCARNATION IS NOT A SINGLE EVENT. We will get nowhere until we try at least to be definite about the meaning of the "incarnation." Here our major difficulty is a superficial simplicity which assumes that the incarnation is a single event telling how God manifested himself in the man Jesus. Such an idea tends to pinpoint the action of God as if it were an interruption in the history of humanity, rather than a revelation of God's eternal and universal relationship to our world. In the incarnation a relationship is disclosed which involves all times and all men. It is the very character of reality itself.

The incarnation, when limited only to the birth of Jesus, as though it were the one solitary time God's reality was disclosed in time and space, would leave us with a revelation which has no universal relevance. Such a suggestion usually proceeds from the notion that nature and spirit are two separate realms, and the bridge which unites them is the incarnation. Actually in the Jewish world no such separation existed. God made matter, and as far as Biblical thought was concerned, there never had been disdain felt for it. The incarnation makes crystal clear the implicit reality of the divine in all of creation. The transcendent is immanently rooted; the very bread on the table glows with the real presence.

In short, the incarnation is the doctrine that every form of existence manifests a reality greater than itself. They are the result of God's presence in the realm of time and space. They are both **nature**—that is, what they are in themselves—and **creation**—what they are by God's purpose and grace. They are measured always by two dimensions—the one in themselves, the other what they are in all things or in God.

WHAT WOULD AN "INCARNATIONAL" CULTURE BE LIKE? One might ask now, in the light of this, what kind of a culture would be "incarnational"? In what ways would

such a doctrine be reflected in the thoughts, arts, and activities of an epoch?

In such a culture, people would seek to discern the symbolic or sacramental character of things or events. It would be open to those dimensions of reality beyond mere existence—namely relationship, intention, freedom, possibility, and meaning. It would continuously reflect the paradoxes of God in man, the Word in the flesh, the eternal in time, the kingdom of God in the world. Its art would find the numinous in common things; its philosophy would begin in wonder and reach beyond reason; its industry would reckon with the human as well as the technical.

In contrast to our culture, what can we say? First, that we live in a predominantly naturalistic culture. That is to say, all the overtones of the symbolic and the sacramental, all the aura of ramifying relationships, all evidences of the indwelling whole, all the meaning beyond itself, all this has been stripped away from life. A spade is a spade—and so is everything else. Max Weber epitomizes it by saying "we live in a disenchanted world." It is neither a materialistic nor a spiritual world. It is a neutral world, a "thingified" world, as Gabriel Marcel calls it. The incarnation is not here.

Moreover, it is the kind of culture generally which avows no world view. It is basically a culture of expedience, of adjustment and convenience. Whatever seems to go today is sufficient. Tomorrow will try something else. In brief, there is no metaphysical passion, no concern for truth as an ultimate reality. Where this is missing, the nearest version of reality—what we can see and feel—is taken for the whole thing. There is nothing beyond the immediate. The depth of incarnation is not here.

Samuel H. Miller is Dean of Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts. This article is reprinted by permission of the editors of *The Intercollegian*, publication of the National Student Council of YMCA, in which it first appeared in the December, 1958 issue. Dr. Miller is currently a member of the National Advisory Council of the Christian Faith-and-Life Community.

In the third place, the incarnation assumes that the "Word made flesh" involves us in an interior exercise of the spirit, known traditionally as contemplation, as a way into reality. Of this our culture is woefully ignorant. Our virtue, if it is a virtue, is at the other end of the spectrum. We seek reality by action. We are extroverts, drunken with success, plunging from one activity to another with increasing frenzy and lessening satisfaction. The faster we travel, the less we see. The more ground we cover, the less meaning we discover. And then a catatonic kind of conformity threatens us. We rebel against rebelliousness. Life flattens out in a bland homogeneity. And nowhere is there any evidence of an incarnational reality. That would involve an inner action, the willingness to probe depth instead of space and to reckon with the essential freedom of being a soul. Our culture seems more intent on manipulation than on contemplation, more on action than on being.

This leads to a fourth generalization, namely that our culture is technological. We are obsessed with mechanistic solutions to vital problems. The art of our time manifests this

Continued on page Eight



# THE FEAST OF BEGINNINGS

SEPTEMBER 20, 1962  
THE CHRISTIAN FAITH-AND-LIFE-COMMUNITY  
AUSTIN, TEXAS

Beginning the Eleventh Year of the College House  
Beginning the Fifth Year of the Laos House  
Beginning the Ninth Year of the Letter To Laymen  
Beginning the First Year of the Institute of Cultural Affairs

## PROGRAM

RUSSELL P. ROBERSON, Chairman of the Board, Presiding

### THE CELEBRATION OF OUR COMMON MEAL

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And with thy spirit.

Leader: Let us pray.

People: O God, the holder of the destiny of all mankind, who art known in thy knowing of us, and who art present in man's fullness; we remember all sorts and conditions of men: the 'religious' and the 'secular'; the distressed and the complacent; those lost in their belonging and those hiding in their solitude; those paralyzed by cynicism and those hope-filled by their dreams. We pray for the Church which stands today both quick and dead. O Lord, save thy people and bless thine heritage. Amen.

Leader: Let us bless the Lord.

People: We bless thee, O God, for this food which betokens thy care over us, and we acknowledge our responsibility for our neighbor both near and far, now and forever. Amen.

### THE CELEBRATION OF THE COMPLETION OF THE FIRST DECADE

W. Jack Lewis

### THE CELEBRATION OF THE BEGINNING OF THE ELEVENTH YEAR

Robert R. Bryant

## THE FIFTH PERSPECTIVES LECTURE

### "THE SHIFTING REALITIES"

THEODORE A. GILL

President, San Francisco Theological Seminary

### THE CELEBRATION OF OUR RETURN TO THE WORLD

Leader: Let us go forth into the world in the knowledge of our acceptance before the Lord. Let us be present to life as it is given. Let us act with decisive courage, forgetting not our obligation to every creature.

People: We go forth in the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

The following is an excerpt from the program statement indicating the forward thrust which the Community anticipates as we affirm our vocation toward the eleventh year and the second decade:

*The present spirit and intention of the Community continues to be the proclamation of the Word of Life. Through empowered speech and creative form, it continues to be a source of quickening in the whole movement for Christian renewal of life in the world. The Community accepts its task to be in the vanguard of the Church as sentinel and servant rooted in the historical body of Jesus Christ, and performing its unique work on behalf of all men.*



The wood cut "The Last Supper" which appeared on the program cover and is reprinted on the Christmas card from the Community and in this issue of **Letter to Laymen** was done by Herbert Seidel, an artist who has chosen to remain in East Berlin to speak his life through work in art to his own people. His portrayal of the feast of beginning for the Church of Jesus Christ had unusual significance for over three hundred and fifty people who attended the **Feast of Beginnings** in Austin.

**Sometime or other** even the oldest ideas have to be brand new to each one of us. It was in Istanbul that the no doubt routine idea dawned on me that what Christendom is pining for right now is a new iconoclasm. There is surely no more appropriate, more practical place for iconoclasm's first agitation than in Istanbul, that is, Byzantium Constantinople. Images were first smashed there a long time ago. Certain Christians decided to clear the icons out of the churches and an interesting chapter in church history was written in that ancient tinkle and clatter. But it's no such judging of churches or smashing of statues that I have in mind these days. The images that must be done in by contemporary Christians are the mental pictures that we still carry around, the familiar shape of traditional ideas and conceptions that still give structure to our thinking.

**My question is**, what are the familiar profiles cut by doctrines and relationships, such as the image of saints? What comes into your head when someone says "saints"? What picture, what shape does that idea, that word, conjure when it is uttered? The image, for instance, of faith as the buying of an idea, the image of faith as the signing up to a confession, the image of faith as the acceptance of some idea? This is the kind of image that we have already done much about in our biblical studies, in our theological reflections, that you represented here have worked diligently to reshape for yourselves: an image of the church that is closer reality.

**The problem is**, how do you get rid of this whole literary image of faith as something that involves your membership, and replace it with some more fully personal image of faith? The betting of a life instead of the finding of a priest. The pledge of a whole being instead of the nodding of a head. The change of a total direction instead of speaking some traditional word. Not that any of these which I would reject as total descriptions of true faith may not have some partial role in faith, but the point is to recognize that they are partial.

**Another example** of this kind of iconoclasm is the image of Christian ethics as the wheedling of Almighty God, the recipe for getting your way with him, the formula for getting him to do for you what you want him to do. How do we exchange this image of ethics for a truer statement of ethics as responsible life? There are other examples: the image of the Kingdom of Heaven as a time or place, the image of eternal life as an embodied spirit catapulted to ethereal bliss. This is the kind of image that we have to do something about.

**But I was telling you** about where I got started on this whole idea. There I was in Istanbul. My companion on the terrace of the fantastic Istanbul-Hilton Hotel was a Swiss lady, the director of the relief operations in Turkey for UNRA, Inter-Church Relief and Church World Service. Far below us, where we sat on the terrace, glittered the historic sea which so narrowly slices Europe from Asia at just that point. On our side, great terraces stepped down to the water from the balcony where we sat. On each terrace were lawns of flowers and on some there were swimming pools where rich brown bodies shattered the shining emerald. On

the terraces between there were shallower reflecting pools with scarlet fish playing in the azure, tracing their improbable silvery veils. I think I even remember barefoot dancing girls swishing around before my startled ministerial gaze. Anyway, while I ooh-ed and aah-ed over all of this, my hostess was ordering our lunch in three languages, using them on a waiter who obviously would not have been fazed by thirty, and whose shellacked finesse suddenly made me wonder how I ever got off the farm. Deftly milady designated courses, selected dishes, never at a loss, ever steering straight for the sumptuous and the caloric. Only over the vintages was there any hesitation and that not from uncertainty, but for reverence. Each course had its own art work, and before any decisions were set my benefactor and our factotum had hauled two new languages into the deliberation, and milady had apparently eaten three cigarettes, chain lit, which seemed to dissolve on her excited breath. All of my dreaming self still rejoices in the recollection of that meal in that milieu. Only my mind shudders when I think how close I came to missing the most important thing about the occasion, which was that I was lunching with a saint.

**Please now**, I caution you, don't go home saying that that man came all the way from San Francisco to tell us that to be a saint you have to smoke and drink. That is not the point. These may very well be problems for Christians, insofar as they are problems of Christendom, though I say to you they are problems of stewardship, not of sanctity. They are problems that enter in the area of diet and etiquette. Christianity is about something far more important than either diet or etiquette, and we hope that it can take care of both. Jesus Christ is about something else. It is very significant for me that it be understood that I am not plugging for eating this or not eating that. I am saying the whole issue of what Christianity is starts somewhere else. The real sanctity of this person as with any person, lay not in the pattern of her least significant habits, but in the pattern of the whole direction of her life. If these other issues are to enter profoundly into Christian deliberation, let them enter at this point.

**This richly cultured woman** had thrown her whole self into the service of the largely ungrateful, endlessly obstreperous refugees of the Eastern Mediterranean. This lunch was a rare splurge for her. Ordinarily, she was engulfed in one of the most noisome, thankless jobs in the whole permanent emergency of international relief. The crisis in my own thinking was precipitated by the realization of how close I had come to being betrayed by a familiar, taken-for-granted, yet false image of looking for the wrong profile, the wrong clues. And if this image was wrong, how many others might be also? Were my unspoken pictures what I had supposed them to be, or was my mind like an attic full of interesting but outmoded junk in which I was busy shoving things around and calling the shoving, thinking? **Who is to give us** the new and the relevant image of the saint? Who shall persuade us that it is not how close-buttoned or barefooted you are, but how prodigal of self

A NEW



and how persistent in service you are? Who shall instill in us a new image, perhaps of a college graduate, maybe a man, a specialist, a technician, a real and up-to-the-minute man-of-the-world saint?

**Whoever does this** is going to find a good many other images that will have to be altered. First to be replaced will be **the image of the world itself**. How do we get across the newer, truer picture of the world not as hemispheric, divided half sacred and half profane, but the image of the world as one world, a whole world, all profane and all potentially sacred? Not only in a philosophic or cosmological sense, but in a quite practical, immediate, sociological sense, **the whole world is in trouble with its images**. It is not enough simply to expand the traditional concepts. Enlargement in this case means a distortion.

**We all read interminably** the statistics of population explosion. We know how abruptly the world has picked up its population, how it took from the beginning of time until 1830 for one billion people to be alive all at once on the earth. By 1930 there were two billion, and another half billion since then, with 1965 as the mark to pass three billion. At least ten thousand years for a billion; a hundred years for the second billion; thirty five years for the third. This is why enlargement alone won't do. The acceleration of enlargement has to be projected. At the year 2000 there will be close to seven or eight billion people. This is what we call a demographic explosion. And the year 2000 is the important date to all of us who consider ourselves educators now.

**What happens** when man's most intimate creativity suddenly becomes his grossest problem? This potentially catastrophic booming of the world's population has already shattered every previous estimate and has only begun to show how ruinously it will mushroom every existing complication in human affairs. What we're up against in this world is a different problem, not just the same one increased. Something peculiar happens to what's in the world just by having more of it happen.

**In this new situation**, having any real living room at all will be problematic. If togetherness is today's problem, space to separate will be tomorrow's. We have heretofore defined human community in geographic, spatial terms, but in this new community coming to life, getting together is not going to be good. How shall the church talk about the concept of community if it chooses to be an evangelistic church? The way the experts see it, community will be the curse made bearable only by a totalitarian congealing of human life. However this transition takes place, the vast changes in human organization will require adjustment that we can hardly conceive at the present time. We would rather not live with such changes in our cities, but they will be conceived and they will be implemented. We can put the brakes on if we will, but still we must recognize what is going on and why, not just close our eyes to it and refuse to confess that this is the reshaping of the common reality. We must get ourselves ready to make our own images in our head.

**Again, reconceptualization** is required by the alterations now going on in the world. Automation, for example, is not just something that happens here and there. It's a promise. There will be a world of machines that will build machines to make just about everything that men make now. This is the present, or shortly dawning, eerie, electronic world of work that does itself. The resultant emptiness of leisure will be infinitely more devastating than the overloading of labor ever was, not just a dislocation like the industrial revolution which exchanged one kind of work for another kind of work. The prospect now is the exchange of one kind of work for almost no work. Automation is like a slow leak in life as we know it, draining off the work which has almost killed life until now, and producing a population which may shortly be giving most of its time to killing time, which until now has been essential to life.

**Do we turn off** the spigot? Plug the hole? Or do we admit that although there is no wave of the future, there is a certain irreversibility to history? What does this say about the way we ought to be looking at the world we are getting ourselves and others ready to face? Mobility. Look at the statistics. Thirty million people are moving every year in these United States. We are nomads again. This shifting, sifting, twisting population that never holds still must somehow be laid hold of, but none of the old grips that were so good are worth anything anymore. It's a different reality we face.

**What does all of this** have to do with the way we address ourselves as churchmen to the world? Nobody lives anywhere very long. The dimension of depth has been lost in reflection, statement and feeling. If this reflects the national consciousness, how does the church speak to the new national mentality? Before, we were able to presuppose the common life of the community where people had lived a long time, where you didn't have to ask for whom the bell tolls because it tolled for you. Now a death in our neighborhood leaves our island intact. What happens when such relationships are superficial, when death itself becomes insignificant? How do you talk to people who aren't pinned down, who don't think deeply, who are embarrassed when death is encountered? These are signs to us of those places where our own pictures have to be redone, not just retouched.



CONVO

Several year ago in Rio de Janeiro, Calvinists gathered from all over the world to celebrate the four hundredth birthday of John Calvin. At those meetings reformed theologians, teachers of the Presbyterian churches all over the world, got together and considered the state and structure of the church and suggested very forcibly that the old classic reformation formula for the church would not do any more. They did not offer a newer one; they went back to a much older one. They asked, in effect, why the image must always be in contest with this more basic one. We would do well in our time, they suggested, to think more directly in terms of the basic biblical image. They found it in the gospel of John: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, that ye love one another." They offered this as a recipe for the true church in our time or any time. If we take that image, what will it do to the familiar outline of our unspoken picture when the word "church" is uttered?

**What does the development** of a thing like the Christian Faith-and-Life Community, the development of the whole theology of the laity in our time, signify for the existence of the church? We are not talking about finding new and better ways for ministers to use laymen; we are talking about putting the common ministry back at the center of the church. We're talking about the commonality, the universality, the generality, the inevitability of the ministry for gaining confessing Christians. If this is taken seriously, what could it do between now and the year 2000? It is the people in the year 2000 about whom we here must be concerned.

**What would this do** to the profile of leadership? No minister I know will accept the name of "pastor-director" suggested by the latest complete study. At the least the confusion suggests diversity of image. What about the word "laymen"? Is it useful? Does it conjure up the right picture anymore? What about the image of the missionary? We talk about fraternal workers, and the change in label indicates a whole major shift in shape within the circles of the church. The image of worship, so long with us in most protestant traditions, has been the getting together of individuals to worship. Common worship has meant the accumulative worship of individuals. Instead, we now begin to think of common worship as being the basic worship out of which individuals worship.

**I finish up** with the change I most regret having to make in my own conception—the change in the family itself. I am one of those who, as far as he knows, is just exuberantly grateful for his whole family and his whole childhood, and I would like it all to be the same for my children. Only it can never ever be, because the reality was done for almost before I was through with it. When I say "family" the operative image in my mind is of the family when I was a child and not a father. There was a father and a mother and a grandmother who lived with us and six children. Furthermore, our family was concentric circles of clan, and we were always in touch with them. Now, at different times within the short lives of my children, they would have had to go around the world to meet the members, even a tithe of them, of the family as thus conceived. They can never have the possibility of living in the world of the family as I envision it. As I am standing here in the same world as the rest of you, I am standing inside another world. The world is made up of people you don't know, but that sustain me to the end of my days. My children will never have this world. Life for them is more exposed. This insulation is not there for them. Katy and I,

and one other brother and sister have to be the thin layer that surrounds them as they move through the world. They don't even have a father very often. I'm not much at home.

**The centrifugal forces** of society were running when they were born. Nobody's stuck with each other anymore. Kids have cars earlier than they used to and so they take off earlier. All of this has practical immediate importance to us in the church, where the family has always been the basic element in our nurture. What do we have to do with our picture of the world and common life and the family structure? What is the new direction in religious education through the family as attempted by all the major denominations a few years ago? Those occasions are rare now when the whole family eats together, and children know where importance lies when their favorite television show is on. How do you interest families in those things for which they have no interest?

**My illustrations** are homely but to the point. They all point to the need of instantly reshaping our pictures. We live in that period in the church's and the world's life where everything now depends, at least our whole communication with the world and the church depends, upon our getting very clearly in mind what the realities are. Not just those which we would proclaim, but those into which we throw our work and our lives. This is especially true of preachers, but their problems belong to everyone. When you have appropriately reshaped your theological and biblical images, even then how do you get them through to a world which still operates with old ones? Our concern must not be just for our own re-education and reshaping of images, but for all those for whom we have any kind of responsibility in the spiritual and educational life. The tragedy of this generation is the existence of an invisible glass of non-comprehension which rises between the pulpit and the first pew. People still hear what it used to mean to say "faith," what it used to mean to say "christian life," what it used to mean to say "church." No witness can take place, nothing can happen until something has been sent and something has been received.

**The whole world is in trouble with its images.** Perhaps we may take advantage of the fact that history knocked a hole in most of them a long time ago. We don't have to hesitate to address ourselves to pushing over what is old and empty and lifeless. We do have to be very busy about the task of proclaiming the newer, truer picture of the Christian life, not as static conformity, but as dynamic motion in a certain direction.



W. Jack Lewis, Theodore A. Gill, Russell P. Roberson, *Chairman of the Board of Directors*, Robert R. Bryant.



## new staff of the community

This fall marked the coming of **Wesley H. Poorman** as a teaching member of the Collegium. Wesley is a May graduate (magna cum laude) of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Jean, have one son, Nathan, who is four months old.

In 1960-61 Wesley served on the Community staff as a Danforth Seminary Intern. His academic background is rich and notable. He is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Colgate University. At the end of his seminary career, he was awarded the Sylvester S. Marvin Fellowship for one year of advanced theological studies to begin within three years after graduation, as well as prizes in church history and Christian education. In 1957-58, he was a graduate teaching assistant in Latin at Ohio State University.

The summer prior to his coming to the Community, he served as Director of Christian Education at the First United Presbyterian Church, Coldwater, Michigan.

Since coming to Austin, Wesley has been ordained as an evangelist by the Alamo Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church.

**Clara Pioppi**, a native of Trieste, Italy, joined the Community this fall as an International Visitor Intern. Under this program, visitors from various parts of the world live at the Community for one year, participate in the College House seminars and program, and serve as a part of the house management staff.

Clara is an accomplished linguist, being proficient in five languages. On her return to Italy, she will be a senior student at the University of Trieste. Her degree program there has included a semester as a student at Cambridge University in England, from which she received a proficiency degree, and will include a semester in Germany, which she will fulfill after her year in America.

She has worked for several periods during the past three years in the Community of Agape, a youth training center founded by the Waldensian Church in 1951 in Italy. The center has now expanded its concern to include adult lay education. Since its founding, it has been under the auspices of the World Council of Churches.

The Waldensian Church, of which Clara is a part, traces its history as a reform church well behind the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century to the twelfth century. "We feel ourselves as really the only Protestant Church which has its roots in Italy," she says, although other denominational families have established missions there.

Her keenest interest is contemporary culture as it manifests itself in politics and the arts. She describes her family as average, middle class. Beyond her university career she anticipates working elsewhere in Europe as an interpreter, perhaps with the Common Market.

**Doris Neal**, an ordained Methodist minister who was a part of the Community teaching staff this past year, resigned her position and left November 1st to go to California to complete plans to be married some time this spring.

**Pat Allen** came to the Community November 1st as College House resident hostess. She is originally from Beaumont, Texas, and is a graduate of Baylor University. A participant in the Laic Theological Studies for Austin residents for several years, Pat is a member of the First Baptist Church of Austin.

**John Wilkinson**, a Presbyterian layman, joined the staff this fall as business manager. A former University of Texas student, he has broad experience in business administration, including real estate sales and property management, office management, and book-keeping and cost accounting. He and his wife, Ruth, have been participants in the Austin Laic Theological Studies for several years. He is the father of a daughter and two sons.

After having spent the past ten years traveling about the United States as a military dependent, **Nancy Banister** returned to this city in July and began work as secretary-receptionist. She recently completed the first course of the Thursday night studies at the Laos House. Nancy is the mother of three girls.



Left to right: Wesley H. Poorman, Clara Pioppi, Nancy Banister, John A. Wilkinson. Inset: Pat Allen.



Those attending the Feast were given opportunity to view the Yousuf Karsh exhibit "Portraits of Greatness" on loan from the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service to Casis Elementary School in Austin. This was presented through the courtesy of Principal M. G. Bowden of Casis School.



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## Incarnation Continued from Page Two

by eliminating vital or organic forms for Euclidean or mechanical ones. What this means in radical terms is that we are more concerned with techniques than with salvation. Put in such bald terms, this would seem to be a manufactured conflict, and that really there is no problem. The problem comes, however, when techniques become ends in themselves and completely swallow up in the mad passion of ingenious gadgetry every question concerning the end of life itself. As Gabriel Marcel indicates, there is a strange hostility between techniques and spirit. Techniques are a kind of short cut, and when they monopolize our attention and energy, become a substitute for contemplation. The technical, however advantageous or convenient, is never the fulfillment of the human. One indication of this is that great art, whether it be literary or plastic, can never be reduced to a method or contrived by a trick. There is a mystery which technique does not touch. Here again, we have turned from the way of incarnation.

Paul Tillich writes that both religion and culture in our epoch have lost the dimension of depth. As he points out, the transfer of all religious questions from the depth where incarnation means something to the surface where shallow-

ness can only be compensated for by a quantitative accumulation of experience at the superficial level, betrays the reality of religion. Both religion and culture are robbed of their mutual possibilities.

When incarnation is eliminated from culture, the world of man is split in two pieces. The world becomes nothing but the world—barren, dull and without meaning. It becomes scientifically neutral, morally whatever one wants to make of it, religiously dead, God forsaken. Then the spirit of man drawn off, so to speak, muddies into a sick sentimentality. Romanticism is the substitute for incarnational realism. Christmas becomes a holiday, a Saturnalia of emotional exhaustion, a binge of orgiastic good-will typified by a meaningless wholesale flood of cards and business gifts. Without depth, there are no bounds; without holiness, there is no center; without peace, there is no meaning.

The question stands for each of us to answer, not only as to how we can celebrate Christmas with appropriate respect for the realities involved, but how we can live from day to day so that when Christmas comes we will be prepared by insight and habit to see the lord of grace born in the most unexpected times and places, because it is the nature of God to give himself to man in his deepest need.

## RECENT VISITORS



Episcopal Chaplain, Dr. George C. Bedell, and Dr. Paul Minus, Chaplain of Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida talking with Clara Pioppi, IVIP at the Community.

## CURRENT PROGRAMS

Weekend Seminar IV C-a  
Advanced Parish Ministers Colloquy  
Weekend Seminar I A  
Beginning Weekend Seminar for  
High School Students

January 11-13  
January 21-23  
January 25-27  
February 7-10

## LETTER TO LAYMEN SUBSCRIPTION POLICY

As announced in the September/October issue of **LETTER TO LAYMEN** the Board of Directors has voted to discontinue unlimited complimentary subscriptions. The Journal is now being published six times a year at the annual subscription rate of \$2.00. Those who subscribe at the regular rate of two dollars per year and those who make a gift to the work of the Community will constitute the subscription roll. Please let us hear from you if you want to continue receiving this bimonthly journal of the Christian Faith-and-Life Community.

## letter to laymen

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## NOTICE

Future issues of **Letter to Laymen** will be sent only to those on the Subscription Roll (see article above). Your enrollment as subscriber/contributor should reach us in January to prevent your missing the January/February issue. (Please disregard this notice if you have contributed to the Community in the past year.)