

January 9, 1972

THE LAST TWENTY YEARS: THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS
Opening Remarks

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Content: may be mildly sensitive	
Whole: ok	
Lang: ok	
Print: ok	

In the new course we are creating, we deal with what we call life phases and delineate four lifetimes that each one of us has to live. The first one is from birth to 20 years. And then you die and start all over again building your family life from 20 to 40. Then you die and enter your third lifetime, from 40 to 60. After that comes your fourth lifetime, from 60 to 80.

We are in our 20th years as a movement. We date ourselves from 1952. Between now and July 1, which starts the next 20 years, we will die and then we will build a brand new self-conscious life in this manifestation of the spirit movement.

I remember when I was in the war and had been through two landings. We were out off the coast of Okinawa for a third one the night before Easter. And you know, you feel that if you get through two of those, you couldn't make three. Fortunately for us, the Japanese weren't there on the beach and so we walked in standing up. But we didn't know that the night before. I remember I was talking with the man whose ship I was on about the way life came to me, and I used the illustration of an artichoke. You tear away trying to get at the heart of it. I was trying to discover, I suppose, what my life was all about. There I was, in my imagination, very likely near my end. When you reached the heart, what was life all about.

As I think back over the past 20 years, so much has gone on. Trying to pull those artichoke leaves, petals, asking what was at the heart of it all. Quite obviously we were focused on the renewal of the historical church. All of us are aware we have been fanatics at that point. Our overall strategy--which we've come up with in a rather remarkable fashion I think--was that you first of all created an instrument in the form of a course in the curriculum. Then you began to teach that systematically, in our imagination across the globe, but to begin with throughout our nation. From the very first, we gridded the United States of America and began to teach systematically so you'd touch every part rather than starting from one little place and moving on and on and on. And what we were after was to put pressure on human awareness through the course, to belch into being awakened people. And when you had a thousand awake, we'd teach another course hoping that a hundred of them would belch into a higher consciousness. And then another one where you'd have ten. And then finally another one where you'd have but one who would perhaps stand. Now you never lose the thousand, but they sink about 12 inches below the surface where they remain until at the right moment this one is called up, then that one. That first course was RS-1. And the whole curriculum that surrounded that course was as you well know in many ways a repetition of RS-1. That was our first strategy.

THE RELIGIOUS HOUSES

The second overall strategy had to do with what today we call the religious houses. Early we discovered that you could wake up a clergyman in a certain congregation, but you'd come back six months to a year later and he'd collapsed. There was no way to nurture him that would enable him to stand. You dare not say that about yourself. (I do a little gurning here

with this.) Before God I'd better stand. Though all fall away, I'd better stand. But when you're talking about your neighbor, you're talking about nurture. We began to establish the religious houses who were nothing except nurture centers to enable people to stand. And now as you know there are 36 of them on this continent, and overseas there are 29 in various metropolitan centers. That was the second strategy, and we think it has worked extremely well.

LOCAL CHURCH EXPERIMENT

The third strategy was the local church experiment. We've not only been fanatics in terms of the historic church, we're fanatics at the point of the local church within the religious establishment. Not out of any sentiment, but because we're persuaded that there isn't such a thing as the renewal of the church, save the last fat lady in the last congregation in the last boom-docks has an opportunity to grasp what it means to be a human being of authenticity in our time.

But this is also hard headed revolutionary strategy. No revolution began at the top and came down. Practical revolutions that change the structures of society are sooner or later grassroots revolutions or they don't come off. And your local church is your grassroots. So that a year ago, and before a year ago of course behind the scenes, we began the local church experiment. In the first year we had 80 churches. This year 144. But in principle we already have 550 churches scattered across this continent involved. I would want to witness to you that I think it has worked far beyond any dreams we had any right to have. But that's what we've been after, and I would anticipate that the experiment has already begun to snowball, and that snowball is going to grow extremely large before the six years that we've bracketed out for the experiment have come to an end. Hopefully by then, it will all be out of our control and we will have seen the established church pick it up and go or with it.

THE NEW SOCIAL VEHICLE

All of this was looking for another strategy which really doesn't fit within that 20 years, but is at the apex of them, the point marking the transition into the next 20 years. That's your New Social Vehicle. As you know, we date the church renewal movement from 1917. This is the 55th year of it. It became clear fairly early, I would say at the close of World War II, that if the church was to be renewed it had to forge a new image of herself as mission to the civilizing process. And one of the criteria or the major measuring stick for whether or not the church was renewed was whether or not she was signally engaged in mission to humanity, to society. Therefore we had to be concerned from the very beginning with the world. But there was no sense turning to that until you had done the course, you'd done the religious house and had begun to create the forces to do something about those social processes in and through the local congregation.

THE SPIRIT FORM

So this last summer was in many ways the climax, but I'd rather call it the apex, the turning point into the next 20 years. This large number of people gathered here in Chicago and worked out the social dynamics represented on the social process triangles. And of course that's just the beginning.

You could already begin to smell why it is people like yourself rather than some other people that we need to talk with. Now that is roughly what church renewal has meant, with one addition which you can't, I can not, put in as either a strategy or a technique, because it is something that permeated every dynamic, every tactic, every stage on our way. And that is the recovery of form to human spirituality without which the rest of it was meaningless and without which you could no more do the social vehicle than you could with your two arms fly to the moon. (You have to qualify those old sayings about flying to the moon these days.) And though we have a long way to go, nobody ever creates the spirit. But in this time and that time and another time there are those who are called to give form that the spirit may be made readily available to the masses. And I'd like to spin on that a while but I'll let it go.

THE CHRIST HAPPENING

Church renewal is what we've been about. I want to say two other things have happened in these 20 years. One is that we stumbled on a penetrating understanding of what in our jargon we sometimes call raw humanness. I have to be careful with a statement like that. I think that 20 years ago and more when we started out, we did not anticipate something like that, but when you look back, you wonder why. What I mean by that is illustrated, evidenced, in the category of the contentless Christ. Now mark you, that's a highly technical word, for the Christ happening has content. But the content of the Christ happening, because it is a happening and not some idea, is supplied within the happening itself. That is to say, the Christ happening happens in the second century, and it happens in the 15th century, and it happens in the 20th century. Mark you well, we're not fooling with a new kind of Christian gnosticism where you reduce the Christ event to some doctrine that you superimpose on life. NO! NO! NO! NO! NO! For the Christ happening is the happening that happens in Africa and it happens in India. I mean in India. And that happening in Africa thought it be the same happening, is a different happening because it is happening to Africa. Or, the Christ happening happens to you, and you're unique and you're unrepeatable. And the Christ happening happens to me, and I'm unique and unrepeatable. You do not have my internal history, and the Christ happening does something to my internal history. It does something to your memory, your anticipation. If you squeeze this a bit, you begin to understand how it becomes clear that whatever else we mean by this happening, we mean that it unveils what man is, what you and I are, and enables us to be what we are as man.

Now precisely because of this, you and I can speak to every man, not just to some men. And precisely because of this we can speak to every culture, and not just to some cultures. And precisely because of this we can speak to any time, and not just to one particular time. Today, within the movement I think that we are more aware of the radical deeps of humanness than any manifestation of the people of God has been hereto. We are aware that the wellsprings of spirituality have flowed afresh into the movement and will continue to flow. A few years ago you could feel the spirit begin to ooze out of the ground. Now it's flowing. I used to preach down in the hills of Kentucky and Tennessee and the western part of Virginia. And I remember coming across a very, very, very green, lusciously green hillside. And there didn't seem to be any care or anything. But coming out of that grass was a huge continuous gush of water that made itself into a sizable

brook almost immediately. That's what made it so green. What I think is coming out from the deeps of humanness in our time is the flow of the spirit.

THE CORPORATE POSSIBILITIES

The third thing that is crucial that we stumbled onto in the last 20 years is corporateness. All of us are products of 500 to 800 years of brainwashing relative to individualism. By stumbling on corporateness I mean the necessity, if you're going to get anything done, of working together. It became clear that no matter how bright any of us were, no matter how vivid the experience of the Lord Jesus Christ was in your life, alone you could do nothing. The other side of that was to begin to be aware that if you could bind yourself together, you could almost no longer define the impossible. And I don't think that's too strong a statement.

You know, these days I am shocked. We live in a complex time that is beyond the capacity of any man to define. And the way one experiences that is: "My God! Nobody can do anything. It's too complex." I don't know if you young ones are going to fail or not. I won't be around very likely to see it. But you have a chance to do something for the total historical process, something which I suspect has rarely ever happened in history and which, in my opinion, no other group is even close to in our time. And that's a major statement. And it's not because I'm somebody. You're somebody. He's somebody. It's not that. You take us one at a time and most of us know that we're something like two-bit human beings. you put us together and we're far more than the sum total of the creative gifts of each one of us individually. You haven't even begun to see yet the concrete possibilities. But you can see in the distant horizons of the sky your possibility. That's corporateness.

There is no romance in this, no sentimentality in this corporateness. The highways of our moment in history are strewn with little tiny communities that arose and then passed out of being because men were seeking after community for its own sake rather than mission. They were seeking for acceptance. This is the tragedy of your hippy movement who were after a hunk of love. Those who go searching for love never find it.

I want to repeat the three strategies. A hardheaded realistic battleplan for the renewal of the church. A discovery of spiritual deeps beyond the anticipations of any of us. And the discovery of the power of corporateness, and I mean the POWER of corporateness.

THE CHURCH RENEWAL MOVEMENT

Now we start another 20 years. Church renewal is finished, it's dead, it's gone, because it has finished its task. The historical church in our day is renewed. Oh, like most any war, a lot of people are going to die in concretizing that last parish, that last congregation. A lot of us are going to die before this renewal is done, but the war is won.

I say this to myself, as perhaps you've heard, that there comes a time when a movemental process marries the establishment which bore it. And the irony is that out of that marriage comes the future where both movement and establishment are transformed. This is to say that God runs history, and not the movement or the establishment. The irony for the establishment is

that she no longer exists as she was. She experiences metamorphosis, becomes other than who she is, and is aware that she begat or bore the movement that occasioned her metamorphosis.

I have said that the Protestant Reformation was not in any sense a manifestation of the movemental dynamic. It was a manifestation of the marriage of movement and church which took place over 300 years before with Peter Waldo, with Huss, with Wycliffe, with the Illuminati, with the spiritualists, with the many other renewal forces that chipped away and blasted the mother church until she became other than she was in the Protestant reformation and in the Roman Catholic counter-reformation.

THE WORLD RENEWAL MOVEMENT

The church renewal movement of which we have been an intimate and I believe a crucial part has in one sense finished its work, and now another movement is called for. You don't try to get continuity, I think, until you overstate your case relative to discontinuity. Sure it's the same movement, and sure it has a job to renew the church. But on the other side, the job now is not to renew the church, it's to renew the world. To seriously work on church renewal until you could say that the church was renewed would seem to me to be courting sheer disaster, no matter how much the Lord made use of your efforts.

Nobody knows what the movement relative to renewing the world would look like. If you knew what it would look like you wouldn't have to become the movement, because you would have done what you had to do in order to grasp what it has meant to have been what you have been. Only when I say to myself what I said to you tonight am I able to name us. So you don't know what the world renewal movement is, but you can see what the relationship is to the church. The world renewal movement which is the church has got to move out in front of the church as the church engaging itself in the social process, first of all as a motivating example to the church, and then as the research, training, and demonstration force that enables the church to follow the example which was put before it.

THE CRUCIAL LAYMAN

Now in some sense the church renewal movement was the movement of the cleric. And I don't mean simply some ordained ass like myself. There are many ways in which all of you around the table have been clerics. I think of David Wood. He's a frustrated clergyman. He's a lawyer, but he's a frustrated clergyman. But not really. I mean, it is not that he wants to be a clergyman, but to do the job that at this moment has to be done in the spiritual dimension. Your frustration was in terms of having to become what you could not become and be a lawyer that is a clergyman. Maybe I didn't say that well. Now in the next stage of the movement, or the new movement if you can accept my poetry, what some character like myself is going to experience is frustration about being a lawyer, a dentist, a businessman, because I've got to become that in order to participate with you in this next job that has to be done. Blessed is the man who can anticipate some ten or twenty years ahead the frustrations he is going to experience. I know this is true.

You laymen in many ways have been very patient, I mean the layman dimension of you has been very patient. But your hour is at hand. Don't ask me what that means--that's why you're here. But you know that it's going to

mean a battleplan, large sweeping strategies--no little petty matter of where you take the next step. You're going to have to get a wide, broad brush and you're going to have to have, even as the renewal of the church had to have, a fundamental intellectual vehicle like RS-1. The laymen here in Chicago, because they have been close by, have been working for over a year on what we call the new course. Not to replace RS-1. You can't replace RS-1--it's dealing with the raw edge of life itself. But the course now has got to be the kind of a bridge that moves from RS-1 to the concrete stations through which each one of us are engaged within the humanizing process or the structures of society. And then you're going to have to build a construct whereby this kind of a course or series of courses, or a whole web of courses, can be brought to the last parish across the face of the globe. You're going to have to teach these courses to the established church people, for they have to know how to engage themselves. At the same time, you're going to have to come at the civil establishment and penetrate the secular religious in those establishments.

Secondly, I anticipate that in the next twenty years you are going to have to forge the means whereby the spirituality that's loose can be an everyday experience of everyman. I'll not dwell on what that means, but you and I could put flesh and blood on it as to how the other world is always present right in this world, becomes a vital reality that enables life to pulse in every vein of your body. For some time I've tried to say that down inside of me there's a dance. It has nothing to do with whether I'm up or down. It's a dance. There is a life, there is a liveliness in terms of being present right in the midst of this world, at every moment and in every aspect of it being present to the other world in the midst of this world. Oh my, how what you know about RS-1 begins to fill full every situation you are in, every aspect of your own existence.

THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT

There is a third thing that I anticipate twenty years from now. You'll be sitting around the table talking about what happened--you have to think forward exactly as you think backwards. Well, there'll be corporateness, kind of. But you're going to have a global movement, the shape and the form I don't know. I don't want to talk about this, but the movement will have many shapes and many forms and several dynamics. There has got to be within any such movement what we call the symbolic order. You've got to have the nothings like me, or the nothings like some of these others hers. Then there has got to be a kind of commitment which is exactly the same kind of commitment but cannot exist as the symbolic order because the task that you're out to accomplish means that you've got to be there rather than here. That's the only difference, but without this second dynamic you'll never have a movement. And then thirdly, you have a dynamic in which a large number of people at this kind of dedication and that kind of dedication, and this level of dedication and that level of dedication, will be engaged in bringing off the mission. This will happen at the global level because the job is global. In my mind, this summer we're going to have our first global council a token one, a symbolic one. As you perhaps know, this globe is divided into 324 regions. What would it mean to have just one participant from each region. Each one would be doing the job autonomously right where they were, but they would be glued together so that as one task they'd come off in history. This is corporateness grown into the dimension in which history is, which complexities of history actually invent. Now that's my long introduction.

THE EXPANDING DEMANDS

This is our tenth year in Chicago; we came here in 1962. When we arrived, there were thirty of us in the order. Now in the order there are about 1,300 of us. When we came here ten years ago our budget was \$30,000. This year it was over three and a half million dollars, and over half of that the order earned itself by some of us teaching school, some of us in business and some of us lawyers and some of us doctors. And we went from one religious house to 65.

Five years ago we started to fulfill the dream, though we'd long prepared by going to every corner of this globe and scouring out what the situation was. We started our overseas work. It's been rather shocking. The problem is that the Holy Spirit is there way ahead of us. If we had the forces right now we would be in every country in the globe, minus China and parts of Russia I suppose.

This building is a sign of turning a corner. Some of you were here in the summer when we...to say we were out of space is an understatement. We were worried for fear we were going to have to go out and raise five million dollars to get something that was adequate. We didn't have five million and felt that none of us had the time to spend that way. There's so much to be done. And then God was good once again to us, and this building was given to us at Christmastime. In some ways, I suppose, we've outgrown it already, before we got in it. I hope some of you who've never seen our West Side ghetto campus get a chance to go out and see that. We've been on a church seminary campus out there. This new building, the very form of it, indicates the move to the world. This space turns the corner. I guess you can guess then why you're here.

THE NEXT 20 YEARS

First of all, we would like to see a group of people like you talk about what it might look like for the next 20 years as this movement turns the corner or you have a new movement that is engaged directly in society or that relates directly to fulfilling your obligation at your secular station. That's the first reason we wanted you. Then secondly we wanted you here to have you begin to talk about how you're going to fund the movement in the next 20 years. You can see if in ten years we accelerated from \$30,000 to over \$3,000,000 that unless we stumble, fall on our face or get ourselves fouled up, you're going to be dealing with many more millions per year. Now how does a little outfit like ourselves adjust itself to that sudden acceleration? We want you to think about that. What we need is your brains about how you look ahead at what has to be done to build the kind of development strategy that will carry us in the next ten years like the ones which seem like peanuts to us have carried us in the last ten years. We would like hard headed reflection.

And then lastly, we would like this kind of a group to think--and this is related to the one before--of how we could get ourselves off the ground clean. We've got to do some work in this building. I don't know very much about these things. They tell me that it might cost a hundred or two hundred thousand dollars to get this place usable. I'd like to see the top two floors done well so that you could bring people of prominence from anywhere to go through the kind of courses that we've got to hold. The

time has come when we've got to get the Fred Harrises, the McGoverns, the Percys, the politicians--you can go on. The time has come when we've got to get the bankers, and to get the heads of Westinghouse. That is what I suspect, I don't know. I'd like to hear from you. I'd like to see two of the floors set aside and almost kept separate for that kind of thing--something we were never able to do out at the West Side campus. Oh yes, I don't want to forget some of the upper bracket churchmen. The time has come when we've got to move head on on some of the bishops of the various churches. We're talking about maybe \$200,000, I don't know.

Out at the old campus, we have a \$180,000 balloon note coming due in two years, and I'd like to hear you talk about that. The one way we could handle it is to tell them to take it back. We never intend to leave that ghetto and move up into some other place. I don't know what they'd do, frankly. But anyway if we could get our slate clean ready for moving into the next ten years it would be a great help.

Then around the edges we should talk in the arena of just what it does mean to be a man of the spirit. I had a talk with Rodney Wilson who works for Sante Fe. It's cost you money to come, and what may be more for you, it's cost you time. I think you have some sense after our point of view and the urgency of this moment. I hope you can see why we have called on you for help.

J.W.M.