

THE MESSENGER

SEPTEMBER 1966

What does Swedenborg mean?

What did Swedenborg say about it?

How is the Swedenborgian doctrine different from other teachings about Christ?

What difference does it make?

DOCTRINE OF THE LORD A Symposium

What ideas about the Christ do we share with other Christians?

What do Swedenborgians believe about the Lord?

What do Swedenborgians have to believe?



REPORT FROM THE MINISTERS' INSTITUTE
LECTURE PROGRAM ON SWEDENBORG'S
DOCTRINE OF THE LORD pp. 131-37, 142

OCTOBER CALENDAR

MAINE ASSOCIATION TO MEET OCT. 15-16

BOSTON CHURCH TO DEDICATE NEW SANCTUARY OCTOBER NINTH

Beginning its one hundred forty ninth year of organized church life, the Boston Church of the New Jerusalem will embark on a new adventure on October 9, with the dedication of their new sanctuary and open house in their new parish facilities in their new project, "Bostonview."

That is a lot of newness, especially after a century and a half that has been marked by unusual stability. The congregation worshipped in one building for a hundred years, and changed ministers only four times since 1818. Now, however, they are waiting for a new full-time minister, and everything about their physical situation is new, and to some extent different.

Especially different is the towering, red brick apartment building that carves a new notch out of the Boston skyline over the site of the old Boston Church, and includes the sanctuary and parish rooms of the new Boston Church in its first two floors. The story of Bostonview — its significance and its promise — and the story of the historic dedication, will highlight the October issue of The Messenger.

The Maine Association of the Church of the New Jerusalem will hold its 128th Annual Meeting at the church in Bath, Maine, October 15th and 16th. All who wish reservations for the night of the 15th, should contact Mrs. Howard P. Holmes, 33 Liberty St., Bath, Me.

At the last meeting of the Maine Association, held in Portland last October, the Rev. Richard H. Tafel, President and General Pastor of Convention, presided at the induction of two lay ministers -- F. Waldo Marshall, to serve the Bath Society, and Michael B. Salvetti, to serve Portland.

NEW CHURCH THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL TO CELEBRATE CENTENNIAL OCTOBER 22

Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the New Church Theological School will be the feature of the fall meeting of the Massachusetts Association when it meets as guest of the school on October 22. The meeting will be held in the new building, bought by the school in the spring of 1965, and it is hoped that remodelling and decorating will be complete for inspection by Association delegates and guests.

More details of the new NCTS facilities, along with pictures, will be included in the October issue of The Messenger.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Readers of The Messenger:

The Messenger is full of words this month. It is long on ideas, and shorter than last month on names, faces, and activities of people. Maybe some of the pictures should have been saved from last month, to avoid this feast-and-famine contrast. However, the contrast helps to point up an issue that seems important. The place of intellectual work in the total life of the church needs more thinking through. Few would deny it a place, and few would give it the whole field, but I doubt that many of us can agree much more specifically than that. Consciously or unconsciously, each of us assigns value and priority to the thinking side of religion on the one hand, and the doing side on the other. Usually we assume that others -- especially our friends -- make the same value and priority judgments as we do; but there is enough confusion, frustration and misunderstanding over the relationship between theory and practice -- faith and charity -- to convince me that there are no unanimous judgments.

Some of us are inclined to become interested and involved more easily with people and activities, others with words and ideas. Both inclinations are vital to the life and growth of the church, and I hope that The Messenger can cater to both -- either alternately, or at once -- partly in an attempt to please all of the people some of the time; but more positively to help both thinkers and doers to develop more respect and appreciation for each other's goals, values and priorities.

LAST ISSUE: (p.108) Linda Clark is Executive Committee Member, not another secretary ... (pp.113,126) The Rice-Johnson wedding was on Sunday night, not Saturday.... (p.115) the lady on the right is Doris Tafel, not Betty.... (p.128) the correct new phone

number of the New Church Theological School is (Area 617) 969-4453. Sorry about those -- and the sundry discomforts and discrepancies.

THIS ISSUE: There are ideas in the words that crowd these pages: some fresh ones even for those familiar with the Doctrine of the Lord, some surprising ones for those who think you know what "line" a particular writer will take, some controversial ones -- all shapes and sizes. Fresh, surprising, controversial or controversial, are they important? Do they make any difference? They were important to their authors, and they were to me when I selected them for this issue -- not ultimately in themselves, but significantly in the life of the church. Theology, even at its most abstract, brings into conscious consideration the basic motivations of our churchmanship.

DOCTRINE OF THE LORD — A Report from the Ministers' Institute

The Ministers' Institute in Urbana had two sections -- a Human Relations section, reported on in the July-August issue, and a lecture section, consisting of six lectures on, or related to, the Doctrine of the Lord as it is found in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. Dr. George Dole gave a summary of Swedenborg's formulation of the doctrine. I read a part of a paper that grew out of an experience in ecumenical dialogue, and was intended as a statement of Swedenborg's teaching in terms and relationships that may be useful in communicating with theologians in other traditions. Extensive portions of these two lectures appear in this issue. These two articles are followed by excerpts from the other talks: the Rev. Franklin Blackmer's discussion of a prominent school of thought with regard to the New Testament (lead by the German scholar Rudolph Bultmann), and its relationship to our understanding of the Lord; the Rev. Everett K. Bray's comments on the Doctrine of the Lord in connection with preaching and counselling; the Rev. Paul Zacharias' considerations of the doctrine in relation to mission work; and remarks by Dr. Friedemann Horn concerning the implications of the doctrine for requirements for church membership.

WHAT IS OUR DOCTRINE OF THE LORD?

— George F. Dole

The Lord God is by definition reality itself, supreme reality, and therefore the most difficult for us to know. We know him only because he has revealed himself to us. He has revealed himself to us in such a way that there are simple statements concerning his nature, but beyond these we should not be surprised to discover that there are different aspects of the doctrine concerning him. It is these different aspects which must be carried in mind together, used as mutual correctives, if the degree of knowledge we can have is to be as faithful as possible to that which cannot ultimately be known.

We may single out three particular aspects of the doctrine of the Lord. There is first a qualitative, structural aspect. For this we would turn to the first chapter of True Christian Religion or to Divine Love and Wisdom. There is a processual, incarnational aspect for which we would turn to the second chapter of True Christian Religion, Doctrine of the Lord, or to those chapters of the Arcana which expound Genesis 12 through 28, (A.C. 1401 to 3882) and there is last, an operational aspect to the doctrine, which we find described in the third chapter of True Christian Religion and in Divine Providence.

Now, how are these three related? What do each contribute? Why are all three necessary? These are questions with which we must deal, and the interest is not just academic. To the extent that the church is not the New Jerusalem foretold, something is wrong in it. This something has to do with the doctrine of the Lord. It is not that people do not know or recognize or accept the right words, but that the doctrine does not seem to have had an effect on us in proportion to its importance. There is too little astonishment at the phrase "the Divine Human."

The first three chapters of True Christian Religion, titled "Father," "Son" and "Holy spirit," cover these three aspects, which we may perhaps regard not so much as aspects of God, but as aspects of doctrine concerning him. No matter what we approach, whether it be a "thing" a "person," or God himself, the criteria we apply will radically affect our description. We may describe a machine as to its materials, its substance, its form; as to its structure or as to its operation. We

may describe a person as to his quality or as to his internal workings or as to his effectiveness in the world. Particularly in the case of a person, it is very evident that no one of these types of description will be totally true or accurate without others as well. Considering each aspect as an aspect of thought about the Lord rather than aspects of the Lord himself, is an approach to the whole person -- the whole Lord -- and not just to a part of him. Considering the Trinity as aspects of the doctrine concerning him justifies the personal terms for the essentials of the Lord God in the Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each of these is, in that respect, a whole person perceived in a particular way. There might be some support for this thought in the phrase in the Writings, which I like very much, that distinguishes the One. Love and Wisdom are indistinguishably One. They cannot in fact be separated from each other and still retain existence, but they can be thought of separately. The distinction, however, is in the thought about them rather than in any ontology.

Let us briefly take the first three chapters of True Christian Religion and mention with very little comment the principle points made in them. The first chapter we have termed the qualitative, structural one. This takes a relatively static view. God is one. He is ultimate reality. He is ultimate substance and form. He is infinite. He is Love and Wisdom. He is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. Throughout we have this verb "to be." The verb does not take us from one place to another or move us, but simply describes as to essence. This chapter in TCR concludes with a section on the creation which forms a bridge to the succeeding chapters.

The second chapter deals with what we will call the processual or progressive aspect of doctrine concerning the Lord. It is stressed at the outset of this chapter that it was this very God, the one described in Chapter I, who descended and assumed a human, doing this as divine truth and yet not separated from divine good; doing this in accordance with his divine order, so that in this human he made himself righteousness, and accomplished a reciprocal union with the Father so that God became man and man God in one person. He did this by means of states of exinanition and glorification. He redeemed the world by subduing the hells and restoring order in the heavens, and in doing so he laid the foundations for a new and spiritual church. The concluding sections of this chapter deal with details that have regard to the incarnation.

The third chapter of True Christian Religion deals with the operational aspect of doctrine concerning the Lord. The Holy Spirit is the divine truth. It is also the divine energy and operation. This energy and operation are Reformation and Regeneration among men. The Lord makes these operate in those who believe in him. And the Lord operates of himself from the Father, and not vice versa.

The fourth chapter of True Christian Religion we should mention briefly, as it deals with the Trinity. This Trinity is the Father Son and Holy Spirit, which are as soul, body and operation in man; that is, they are one. This Trinity was not before the creation and the incarnation. The concluding sections of this chapter deal with tritheism in the Christian church.

Now, let us review briefly what we have in these first three chapters of True Christian Religion. First a chapter on quality and structure, where the primary verb is the verb "to be;" God is. Second a chapter on the processual, progressive aspect. This very God did various things -- made himself righteousness, accomplished union, subdued the hells, restored order in the heavens. Third, an operational aspect. That is, this God, heretofore seen primarily as being and doing, now does for individuals, as a matter of his very nature. His operation is reformation and regeneration. This is the outcome of his being and of the process that went on within him. We may therefore distinguish in the second chapter those things which deal primarily with internal process, his descent into assumption of human, his making himself righteousness, and his accomplishing a reciprocal union with the Father. From these we bridge into the operational aspect, the aspect of redemption, the aspect of founding a new church.

We have then these three aspects: what he is; how he functions, primarily internally regarded; and what he does, how he is related to his creation. These have to do respectively with his nature, his form, and his use. These have to do respectively with Father, with Son and with Holy Spirit; with purpose, means, and effect; with love, wisdom and use. Various persons at various times and all of us at one time or another will tend to find primary value in one or two of these and less value in the third. When we find more value in the first in the qualitative, we turn toward the philosophical, metaphysical style. When we turn toward the second, the functional, then we tend into Christology and into the exemplary nature of this for

our lives. And when we turn toward the third, the use, we turn toward the devotional or practical, immediate side. The disadvantages are fairly clear. An excessively qualitative structural approach is static. It neglects the fact that there was a human like ours just as gross and as shameful as anything we know in ourselves. To try to find salvation in perceiving the structure of the universe leads to a gnosticism or a mysticism. I was very much struck when a young person at Fryeburg was disturbed by the statement - "God is love and wisdom" because this seemed so de-personalized. This seemed a God with whom one could not sit down and talk. Now, the disadvantage of an excess of emphasis on the progressive aspect the processual aspect are perhaps more subtle, but there can be a lack of infinity. Stress on the Lord, instead of the Lord God, may produce a tendency to regard this incarnate Lord as remote from us in time and space, as an example only -- an example about whom we must read and whom we must follow, but not a present active power in our lives. The third, the operational, can lead to an attention to internal witness only, to a private religion without the discipline of structured thought and learning concerning the nature of the Lord. It can lead to the deification of one's own best impulses, to a placing of supreme value on being in the stream of Providence.

We should note that there is no real excuse for any of these misinterpretations, that all are flatly contradicted in the writings; and yet we do know that they occur not only among people whom we observe, but that they occur in our own thought. These are misinterpretations within the church. Others may prevail outside partly because New Church doctrine does not always fit easily into Christian language and thought forms. Other misinterpretations of what we teach may be more prevalent outside our own bodies than they are within.

The doctrine of the Lord for the New Church is complex, and has immense depth which we cannot plumb though we spend a life-time in the effort; but that it has a simple outline in the Trinity, and that the aspects of doctrine, the major aspects we can perceive, are re-related to the Trinity. The minister, above all, must preserve a balance between the aspects, perceive on what level or levels his own questions and the questions of others are being asked, and must insist to others that they understand the whole in outline at least before they claim to understand, or present, or compare any of its aspects.

Holistic Ontology: The Nature of Christ.

One of Swedenborg's distinctive characteristics *vis a vis* the philosophy and theology of his time was his alternative to the three standard ontologies: materialism, idealism and dualism. His fourth way was not named by him, and was unique in enough respects that it cannot be identified with any nature school of thought. Jan Christian Smuts, and more recently biologist Edmund Sinnott and psychologist Ira Progoff, have developed parallel view points. Smuts and Progoff have identified this view by the term holism, and although the term is used in a different way in other contexts, I have found no better name for Swedenborg's conception of reality. By holism I mean to identify Swedenborg's basic presupposition that spirit and matter are equally and similarly objectively real, together forming a whole that is indivisible except in intellectual conceptions which are based upon incomplete perceptions. This Weltanschauung includes all the materialist and idealist affirmations of what is, but rejects the limitations imposed on reality by both of these positions and by dualism.

For Swedenborg, all of reality is either actually or potentially a whole with material and psychical aspects. The more this potentiality is actualized in both aspects, the "more real" a phenomenon is. All of creation has physical and spiritual aspects: man, who can be conscious of both, is the fullest expression of created reality. The risen and glorified Christ -- the complete actuality of both physical and spiritual, created and uncreated, human and divine potential -- is the uniquely definitive Reality.

This ontology entails certain aspects of Swedenborg's christology even though in his own formulation he constructed them on theological (as opposed to explicitly philosophical) grounds. For one thing, it makes the potential of finite humanity inherent in the eternal infinity of God, and makes spiritual reality inherent in the nature of man, while still maintaining the distinction between God and man -- except in the unique event of Glorification, or union of God and man in Christ. For another thing, it makes the presence of God in the man Jesus directly comparable to (though discretely different from) the presence of

God's image in all men, and the reality of God's power in all creation.

Swedenborg distinguishes his ontology from Pantheism by a fully-developed system of "Discrete Degrees" -- radical differences between orders of reality which are contiguous, and necessarily related, but not interchangeable or homogenous. K. C. F. Krause expressed the system more or less directly, as Pan-en-theism. The term suggests well Swedenborg's concept that God created from himself, and is in all creation, but the creation is not God: the two realities are discrete. The parallel, but radically different, presence of God in Man, and in the man Jesus, is part of this system.

Process Christology: The Person of Christ.

I first heard attributed to Paul Lehman the aphorism that it is impossible to state a Christology without erring on the side of Docetism or Arianism, unless the statement is in narrative form. If Swedenborg errs, it is on the side of Docetism, though I do not think this was intentional. If he escapes the dilemma, it is through his concept of process -- the essence of narrative -- in the person as well as the work of Christ. In brief, this process begins with the intersection of two poles: divine nature and initiative on the one hand and human nature and processes on the other. For Swedenborg, this intersection occurred according to what he considered normal process of conception, in which the joining of spiritual potential carried via the sperm, and physical potential inherent in the ovum, resulted in the growth and development of fetus, child and man. With this physiological assumption, and the theological presupposition of Virgin Birth, he defined incarnation as the result of the impregnating of a human ovum with direct influx from God. This definition is distinguished from Docetism by its close parallel to his understanding of ordinary human conception, in which an ovum is impregnated with a soul "in the image and after the likeness of God." (cf. e.g. AC 714) In any man, this image of God is his inmost essence and last-revealed potential; in Jesus the similarly concealed inner telos was God Himself. A difference between this and apollinarianism is somewhat subtle, but nevertheless real, resting in the concept of process. The sense in which Jesus' soul was divine cannot be separated from the struggle and development of Jesus. Swedenborg saw no

omniscient logos simply inhabiting a physical body, but saw the logos uniquely present potentially in the child and fully actual only after glorification.

At birth, the reality of God in Jesus was almost entirely limited to the presence of divine potential, and during infancy and childhood he was "a boy as other boys and a man as other men," almost without reservation. As a child, there was no consciousness of divine potential. The boy Jesus acquired knowledge through experiences and instruction as other children do. He "knew" things that were not compatible with divine thought and enjoyed things which could not be combined with divine love. (AC 1542) The fact that such ideas and emotions were rejected in the course of intense struggles testifies to the implication which recurs often but which is not clearly specified: that imperfect human knowledge and self-centered human motivation were real in the consciousness of the child Jesus. Awareness of divine potential came later, and complete transformation of his intellectual and emotional nature took all of his life.

Through experiences of struggle with temptation, the divine inner potential became successively more and more actual and conscious while the human nature--including habits and inclinations as well as physical form -- was successively transformed in accordance with its potential. This was not a linear progression, but fluctuated in and between each experience of struggle, from more-human-and-less-divine to more-divine-and-less-human. The nadirs of this alternating progression were the states of divine self-emptying or limitation, and the peaks were the states of increased human self-emptying. The former was characterized by separation of Jesus' human nature from divinity, and the latter by progressively more complete union of the two. Swedenborg referred to both the low points of the process, and the entire period of the incarnation, as the state of exinanition; and the peaks, as well as the final outcome after the resurrection, as the state of glorification. When speaking in the second sense of these two terms he sounds closely parallel to the kenotic strain in Pauline-Lutheran thought, but his own greater emphasis was on the process of alternation and progression.

The paradigm of the incarnation as a whole, and of the recurrent cycle from separation to glorification, is the universal human situation of struggle with temptation. Swedenborg's

view was that in the condition of being tempted, a man feels separated from what Nels Ferre calls the push of Process and the pull of Purpose, and isolated and aligned with the object of temptation, Resisting the temptation "as if of himself" (Swedenborg's philosophy of "as if" was his principal means of negotiating the dilemma between predestination and autosoterism) he comes into a closer relationship with God, which results in transformation of his will. Temptations are proportionate to the immediate potential of the man to deal with them.

Parallel to this, Jesus in his human nature was subject to temptation. He was subject to the most powerful of temptations, because of his divine potential. When tempted, he felt most separated from the Father. With each temptation overcome, as if by his human nature alone (as is all temptation), he evolved further toward his divine potential, with consequent transformation of his human nature. The forty days in the wilderness, the withdrawals for prayer, Gethsemane, and ultimately the Cross, describe and symbolize the states of separation, divine self-emptying and human temptation. The working of miracles, the transfiguration, such statements as "I and the Father are one," and ultimately the post-Resurrection appearances, describe and symbolize glorification, transformed human nature and union of God and man. The alternation and progressive intensity of these symbols of exinanition and glorification in the Gospels is descriptive of the process.

The end of the process, the state of final glorification, at or after Resurrection, was antipodal to the beginning: the divine potential was fully actualized and the human nature was transformed and glorified. Beginning as a human with divine potential, he ended as God in human form. Both full divinity and full humanity were present in beginning, process and end; the separation which characterized the beginning was overcome by the process, through transformation -- not elimination -- of the human nature. Thus, the Chalcedonian formula in full applies to Swedenborg's conception of the final outcome of the Incarnation: at conception and during his ministry, he was indeed "fully man and fully God;" but only at the glorification was he "not two natures but one."

Cooperative Soteriology: The Work of Christ.

A cardinal axiom in Swedenborg's doctrines of creation and of man is that man is created with freedom of choice. Explicitly and im-

PLICITLY, this concept of freedom is limited in a pattern suggestive of an existentialist perspective: in the human situation, it amounts to spiritual freedom to choose between similar shades of gray tending either toward God and a heavenly life, or self and the world. Small as the area of choice is, it is irreducible and indestructible. God's management of creation provides such checks and balances in the general conditions of reality and the particularities of each situation, that neither good nor evil ever becomes an irresistible compulsion.

In this framework, salvation requires human cooperation -- a free option for God. Autosoterism is avoided by a compound limitation on man's ability to save himself: human freedom is limited to choice by essentially inert man between alternative active influences, and even the power to make the choice is exerted only "as if" it were man's. Swedenborg attributes all but a choice of intention to God. However, without this free choice, God does not save against the will of the man He has made free. Redemption requires cooperation by man to this extent.

The balance of power between good and evil influences in human life was for Swedenborg the area of the redemptive work of Christ. His theology of history defines a situation which developed in the general atmosphere of the human condition, in which this balance was endangered to the point where it could be preserved only by direct divine intervention. It is here that the necessity for real humanity in the nature of Christ appear, because in the detailed ramifications of Swedenborg's ontology, God in his infinite goodness could have no direct contact with the evil influences which threatened the spiritual life of men. Only a man was capable of such contact -- capable of being tempted. Therefore, God had to become man in order to meet the temptations that all men meet, but still be God to resist the temptations that no man could resist. To accomplish this purpose, neither mere appearance of humanity, nor mere humanity, would suffice: thus Swedenborg's concept of the purpose of the incarnation simultaneously excludes docetism and humanism. The man with divine potential who met these temptations, overcoming them and actualizing his potential in the same struggles, became -- through the process of struggle -- God in human form. This has parallels in the tradition of recapitulation theories: there is a sense in which Christ was the type of all lives, and the temptations he met and overcame are the type of all temptations.

The ontological consequences of this already have been discussed. The soteriological consequence is that the temptations which were overcome by Jesus can never overpower any man who enlists the Lord's help in resisting them. This redemptive act has no effect except insofar as it is chosen by man, but to the extent that it is chosen it is absolute in its power to save.

This construction excludes theories of sacrificial redemption and substitutionary atonement. It views the Passion as the final, climactic and definitive temptation -- concluding with or followed by the ontological development of the New Being, the Godman; and resulting in freedom from sin for all who avail themselves of it.

CHRISTOLOGY WITHOUT MYTH

-- Franklin Blackmer

(Rev. Blackmer reviewed a book, whose title he took for his talk, and commented on its significance for an understanding of the relationship between our doctrine of the Lord and other christological thinking. Excerpts from his remarks follow.)

It has been true for some years, in talking with other people, when they ask what the central teaching of the New Church is, that if we say that Jesus is the God of the Old Testament, and that the Trinity represented in the Gospels is not a Trinity of persons; many people have responded, "Well, I've always believed that." Actually, I'm not sure they always have believed it, and we still hear ministers that make that declaration about their personal beliefs, continuing with a form of prayer which prays to the Father for the sake of the Son. So there is a confusion in their minds, at least, which continues. Yet, the ideas seem to be moving in the direction of identifying Jesus with Jehovah, and certainly in the direction of abandoning any thought of an aloof God who must be satisfied by the sacrifice of somebody on earth.

Many leading theologians of the last twenty years have moved a long way from the extreme scepticism of the historical research period, and are coming back to agreement that the Gospels must stand as the evidence about the work of Jesus and the life of Jesus.

Rudolph Bultmann (leading German theologian who has contributed much to the change

just described) makes a distinction between two phases of the Gospel presentation. The first phase is the actual account of Jesus as living at the beginning of the Christian era. It appears to be pretty largely the evidence of history as presented in the narrative. But alongside this, Bultmann has another form of validity. This has to do with the spirit of the Gospel, or what people can get from the Gospels by intuition -- as distinguished from the evidence and ideas being presented to the mind.

In other words, Bultmann seems to be making use of what in Swedenborg is the inter-relation between the intellectual and the affectional. It appears that without using the same terms, and without the clear view of the psychology of the internal man which characterizes Swedenborg, Bultmann is feeling for something which is an inner core of the Gospel message, which comes intuitively.

It is at that point that there is considerable criticism from other scholars, as to whether Bultmann is reading in his own interpretation. And I suppose the same people would criticize the New Church in the same way.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE LORD IN PREACHING AND COUNSELLING -- Everett K. Bray

In preaching, the pastor is as it were at a distance, and he proposes the problem as well as the treatment. In the counselling function, the counsellor is meant to do most of the talking -- revealing to himself as well as the counselor, not only the problem but also the remedy.

As man, Jesus was the gathering together of all of the human race -- anthropos, man in the general, generic humanity, including all human potential -- and as God, he was the perfect, complete, actual full embodiment and presentation of the characteristics of all that God is -- God as divine Jehovah, as he declared himself to Moses at the burning bush and the by Jesus when he called himself the "I am."

In getting out of sickness, unhappiness, slavery, something must be done now. Jesus always required some act on the part of his patients. "Stretch forth thy hand ... take up thy bed and walk ... go watch ... go and sin no more ... go tell your relatives what great things God has done unto you." No one can begin any improvement from anywhere except

exactly where he is, and everywhere that any human soul is, there is Jesus -- even knocking at the door of his heart, even at the inmost of his desire to be healed. He is there to begin to help to change his will, to begin moving the heart to become a heart of flesh instead of a heart of stone. All that is needed is the first step from where you are.

Each person sees the Lord through his own eyes; there isn't any standard abstraction of him which could be the object for man to worship. Each worshiper sees Jesus, the bidding Jesus, according to his own interpretation. He draws his picture of the Lord Jesus according to his understanding of the words of Scripture. Each person therefore sees Him in his own way.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE LORD AND THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

-- Paul Zacharias

(Excerpts:)

All of life is good; all of life is in a sense religious. Every man has a gift, and a use to serve. This being the case, it seems to me that the organized church does not have to head up every worthwhile cause in the world. Our main task is to lead to the good, to inspire, to encourage, to help as many people as we possibly can; and then let them make their own decisions as to where and how they want to witness to the Lord. But the church, as an institution, does not have to be in the vanguard. There is something bordering almost on vanity in the present notion that the church as to be always in the vanguard, always pointing the way, with the rest of the world following behind.

The best way to bring about a really vital relationship (with the neighbor and the Lord) is through very small, intimate groups where there is religious orientation and foundation, where there is sharing and face-to-face encounter with the real issues of life and death. In such an atmosphere of freedom and respect and genuine concern for the welfare of people's souls, people can wrestle more effectively to become more whole, responsible, effective persons.

As a church we need to delve much more into the implications of what Swedenborg wrote to find the applications of his insights to modern life. This is a crying need, a desperate need. I, personally, would favor our Convention paying the salaries of perhaps two or three competent scholars, for a period of two or three

THE THINGS WE DID

FROM CAPE COD IN MASSACHUSETTS: A REPORT ON A "VACATION CHURCH"

The New Church in Yarmouthport has for some years now been in the category of a missionary activity of the Massachusetts Association.

The church program consists mainly of a series of summer services extending from the first Sunday in July through the Labor Day weekend. Those attending are largely summer residents and visitors, relatively few of whom are members of the New Church. The church has come to have a recognized place in the summer season of this Cape Cod town. Not the least of its uses is the encouraging number of people the Priestnals talk with about the church and its teachings. The worship program is augmented from time to time, principally by organ recitals which are open to the public. A children's concert in July was particularly successful last summer, and during August an evening concert for organ and trumpet filled the seating capacity of the church.

The very fine organ in the church is a magnet for visiting organists and musicians many of whom stop in to ask whether they can play the instrument for an hour or so. On June 23rd there was a recital given there as a part of the program of the annual convention of the "Organ Historical Society of America," a nationwide organization of organ devotees.

As an expression of the Church's concern for social progress, for the past four summers the Yarmouth Church has helped to make possible a rather unique opportunity for a negro boy from Alabama. Each summer there is a job open which includes care of the church building, care of the grounds, painting, and odd jobs of repair. To develop a feasible plan, the Priestnals have offered a home to a young boy who fills these needs and does other work as well.

Through a teacher in a Negro school in Alabama they have obtained several outstanding boys who want to earn money to continue their education. At the end of the summer by working for the church, for the Priestnals and for people in the neighborhood, a boy is able to take home what seems to him a considerable sum of money. But in addition, and more important, these boys can function in

AMERICAN NEW CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

The ninety-fifth Annual Meeting of the American New Church Sunday School Association was held on Wednesday, June 22, 1966, in Barclay Hall at Urbana College, Urbana, Ohio. There were 45 members and 12 visitors present. Mrs. Alan W. Farnham, Brockton, Mass., Mrs. Ernest L. Frederick, Miami, Florida, Mr. Harvey M. Johnson, Brockton, Mass. and Mr. Wayne Sundquist, Payette, Idaho were voted into membership in the Association.

Reports were heard, and votes of thanks given to those volunteers who have helped the Lesson Committee in assembling and packaging the materials for mailing for so many years. The members were much pleased to learn that after eleven years of work the Hosanna is ready for the printer and should be available to the schools in six months or so. It was voted unanimously that the Executive Board of the Association request a joint meeting with the Board of Education to discuss the closer coordination of their Sunday School related functions, and that they report to the Annual Meeting of the Association in 1967.

The following officers were elected: President, Rev. Harold B. Larsen, Northport, N.Y.; Vice-President, Rev. Franklin H. Blackmer, Urbana, O.; Secretary, Mrs. Ola-Mae Wheaton, Fryeburg, Me.; Treasurer, Miss Gertrude Dole, Edmonton, Alta.; Nominating Committee Member (1968) Rev. Thomas A. Reed, Baltimore, Md.; Nominating Committee Member (1969) Rev. Owen T. Turley, Bellevue, Wash.; Chairman, Lesson Committee, Mrs. Ernest Haskell, Jr., Bath, Me.

Marian Kirven, President

a white community for the first time in their lives without fear and with success. Several people in the community have cooperated by inviting them to swim, picnic, etc. with their children, not once but consistently. The value of the experience from the human relations standpoint is probably far greater than the money earned, though this also is put to good use.

The church especially welcomes all New Churchmen who are on or near the Cape during the summer.

LAST SUMMER

REPORT FROM FRYEBURG ASSEMBLY

Our three-weeks' session was a success, as usual. The pleasure of meeting together with many old friends and welcoming new ones is always a high light of the Assembly.

As in the past years, the lectures given by Reverend Everett K. Bray, Reverend Dr. George Dole, Reverend W. R. Woofenden and Reverend Harold Larsen were both inspiring and instructive. Edward C. Hinckley, Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the State of Maine, gave a most interesting talk on his work with American Indians and pointed out the need for changing our technique: Instead of telling them what they need we should find out from them what they need and how we can help them. Two talks by Reverend Ernest Martin, pastor of the National Church in Washington, D.C., and two by Dr. Walter L. Whitehead, Professor Emeritus of M.I.T., were included in the regular lecture program.

Don Foster, former Peace Corps member, who has been working with The Community Development Foundation in Mexico and the Dominican Republic, gave several talks on his work and showed slides. Harold Larsen provided many evenings with movies of foreign countries, as well as The Wayfarer's Chapel movie which was used at the World's Fair. Bill Woofenden and Dot Farnham showed slides of the Convention at Urbana. President Tafel and his wife visited us one afternoon, together with Vice-President Pole and on the last week-end some ten members of the Oriental Society visited with us. Mr. and Mrs. David Mack also spent an afternoon at the Assembly.

Each of the three Sundays was a gala day because so many within driving distance attended the morning services in the Fryeburg New Church and came to dinner with us, bringing our number up to nearly a hundred. On two of these Sundays baptisms took place. One was the infant daughter of Reverend and Mrs. Theodore Foster, and the second was the infant daughter of Major and Mrs. Stewart S. Perry.

Our financial picture has been reviewed and we have decided to raise our rates for next year because of increase in costs. Over \$300.00 was raised to help defray the interest on the mortgage of the new Dole Wing; and

The President's Column.

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION

Mrs. Tafel and I were so glad that we were able to attend the Annual Session of the California Association. Aside from being one of the President's official duties, it was a happy and rewarding occasion. The meetings were held in El Cerrito and San Francisco from September first to fourth and were well attended. I can understand why Californians are apt to refer to this as Convention. The presence of ten ministers strengthened this impression. In addition to the Business Meeting and that of Boards and Committees, there was a three-session Workshop on inner spiritual growth. This was led by three representatives of the Jungian Institute and used Bible material almost exclusively. This approach to our inner life holds intriguing possibilities for the New Church, not so much as to its philosophy perhaps but certainly in its use of symbolism. The Association Meeting ended on Sunday with Worship Service in the San Francisco Church conducted by the General Pastor, the Rev. Othmar Tobisch, with the Rev. David Garrett delivering the sermon.

Richard H. Tafel, Sr.

GROUND BROKEN FOR "INTERMEDIATE CHURCH" AT GARDEN OF THE GODS

On August 14, ground breaking ceremonies were held in the Holland Park section of Colorado Springs, Colorado, for the construction of what has been termed an "Intermediate Church" in a program expected to culminate in a spectacularly beautiful Garden of the Gods Memorial Church. The October issue of *The Messenger* will have pictures and more details of this new project, sponsored by the Home Section of the Board of Home and Foreign Missions.

the Sales Table cleared over \$190.00, an all-time high. The Women's Auxiliary is indeed grateful to all the many friends who sent us donations and made this possible. Already we have many reservations for next year, so if you are planning to join us write well in advance for reservations. Send them to Mrs. George F. Dole, 77 Otis Street, Newtonville, Massachusetts 02160.

Ernest Haskell, Jr.

THE AQUEDUCT PAPERS

IV. The Case of the Talking Woman

by Brian Kingslake

THIS is Aqueduct speaking. Greetings, dear friend from the other side! I am delighted to see you, though you have caught me at a time when I am feeling very humble and inadequate. I have failed dismally in my efforts to restore a poor fellow creature to a proper relationship with her Maker. It has indeed been an unhappy experience. And as this case is typical of so many that are coming over from your world just now, I will give you an account of it, in order that it may serve as a warning to you and your people, and help you to see life more clearly in its proper perspective.

She was a cultured and intelligent woman, and when I first saw her this morning I thought I should get on well with her. She realized more quickly than most do that she had passed over into the spiritual world. Knowing that my job was to help her, she confided in me readily - far too readily, as I was soon to discover.

How that woman talked! Poor soul, it was part of her disease. Self-expression, the pouring out of her thoughts before they were properly formed, the bubbling over of her ego . . . neither she nor anyone else could stanch the flow.

At first she was very charming. She showed an interest in my work, and said she would like to take up similar employment when once she had settled in the new life. There was nothing that would suit her better, she said; and she was well qualified for it, having devoted the whole of her life to helping other people. One thing only was worrying her at present - her three children. Two boys and a girl. Yes of course, they were in their late teens, and an aunt would be looking after them; but they were all three so devoted to her, and they had always been so dependent on her - she just couldn't imagine how

they would manage without her. She had always done everything for them, and protected them against their good-for-nothing father, who used to beat them when he had been drinking too much. When children have a father like that, the mother means more to them than usual - didn't I agree?

What she had suffered from that man! He had been her "cross," which she had always borne with Christian patience and fortitude. She gave me a detailed account of incident after incident in which he had figured badly. She said she had written down all the details of time and place in a note book - she would show me one day. Once he had beaten her, and made a weal right across her back. She loosened her dress to show me the scar, but then suddenly realized she was now in her spiritual body and so would have no scar. But by making an effort of will she produced the effect of it, apparently to her great satisfaction.

It was not only her husband's drinking and cruelty - she could stand that. What upset her most was the Other Women. Oh, there had been a succession of them, who had insulted her in her face. Yet, for the sake of the children, she had always been patient and forgiving, and had never divorced him, though he had often asked her to do so. "Forgive and forget," that was her motto. Of course she might be wrong in holding to this, and I might not agree with her, but she believed it was a Christian's duty to forgive and forget, which she had always done, even with that husband of hers.

She herself had devoted most of her time to child welfare, as she was passionately fond of children. She had been an Inspector for an Orphanage Society which put children out into private families. She was not one of those people who were content to sit on committees; she went actually into the homes where the children were boarding - slum homes, most of them. Of course, she took some insect powder with her, which she sprinkled on the chair before sitting down (you could never be sure about bugs in these places) but you have no idea how appreciative these people were of her visits! It really brought some sunshine into their drab lives. Of course she might be wrong, and I might not agree with her, but she believed it was a Christian's duty to bring sunshine into people's drab lives.

At last I thought the time had come for me to introduce her to her new life. First I told her about heaven, and her face glowed serenely. Then I told her about hell, and she muttered, "My poor husband!" I said pointedly that those in heaven think nothing of themselves, and dislike even referring to themselves in conversation. She said she was just like that, and how sorry she was for self-centered people, because they missed so much from life. And off she went again, with anecdote after anecdote to illustrate her complete unselfishness. As soon as I could get a word in, I went on to say that the angels are like empty vessels which the Lord fills with his own life. She said, "Ah yes! I am like that! How beautifully you have described my own case!!"

And so she went on. Incident after incident flooded out, in all of which she was the central figure. There was no bragging about it; she was not particularly boastful. Most of what she said was quite trivial. No one would have considered her wicked. She was just wrapped up in herself. Her thoughts were running round and round in one restricted circle. Though she talked so volubly, I never heard her say a single sentence which did not include a reference to herself.

This was getting ridiculous. I was beginning to be afraid to say anything at all, because whatever I said she immediately twisted round to herself. And gradually a more boastful element was entering in. Her references to her husband were becoming more bitter. Her physical charm was fading. Her tone of voice had become harsher, her speech more rapid and strident. Now she would not even listen when I tried to interrupt her; she just talked on and on, in an ever increasing crescendo, till I was afraid she might explode!

Stop her I must, if I was to do anything for her. So I decided to resort to extreme measures. There is a trick which we can perform when necessary. I opened a small channel between her mind and a certain region of hell, which resulted in her having a mild paralytic seizure. There was a sudden breath-taking silence. Her jaw stuck half open, and she gazed at me in horror. I knew she could hear everything I said, but could not move a muscle, let alone answer back.

"Don't be alarmed," I reassured her. "I shall hold you like this only for a few moments while I talk to you, then I shall release you. Now please listen carefully. You are in a far more dangerous condition than your husband. I have known many men who have been driven to drink and adultery by the selfishness of their wives; but almost always, when they have reached this side, and left their alcoholic, lustful physical bodies in the grave, they have been only too pleased to make a new beginning. But your self-obsession is more interior - and it has been growing worse, even while you have been speaking to me. You are practically in hell already. Please try to appreciate your extreme danger, and ask the Lord to have mercy on you and save you, before it is too late. Now you can have your speech back, and answer me how you like."

Her mouth snapped shut. She shook herself, and rose to her feet with great dignity. "I am deeply offended," she said. "You have entirely misjudged me. You do not understand me in the least. I have been wasting my time talking to you. And apart from incompetence, you have insulted me. I shall report you to the authorities." And, still talking, she turned her back to the Lord's glorious Sun, which was shining so beautifully in the eastern sky, and set off walking into her own shadow.

She was right. I am incompetent, when it comes to pathological cases like hers. They call me Aqueduct, because a little of the Lord's truth trickles through me to those who are thirsty for it. But if a person is not thirsty, I cannot help them. A specialist is required. As soon as she had left me, I "tuned in" to one of our senior men, who had been an eminent surgeon in your world. (How did I do it? Why, I concentrated my thoughts upon him, and he immediately appeared before me; we talked together until we had communicated fully, and then he vanished.) This man has undertaken to give her a clinical examination, to determine whether the cancer has attacked and damaged her inmost Ruling Love. If it has, then I am afraid there is little hope for her. But, if she has any vital part unaffected by the disease, he will operate, and she may yet be saved. I earnestly pray to the Lord that it will be so.

Cont'd. from p. 137

years, for this express purpose. I'm thinking particularly of delving into the Lord's Second Coming, and the consequences of it in the modern world. I'm thinking particularly of the meaning of spiritual states (Dr. Spoerl was always speaking of them); all modern psychology is going in that direction, and we should be at least in the midst of this movement.

We should make more and better use of our lay people. Practically all of our more important departments and committees are controlled by the clergy, and I have some doubts about the wisdom of this. Even, for example, on General Council, on which there are four ministers and eight laymen, I would venture to guess that most of the important decisions and policies are initiated and greatly influenced by the clergy. If we are all ministers, all partners with Christ, then we should be giving our laity more reign than they now have.

The certainty and the centrality of the Risen Christ is the key to everything in our life as a church. It is worthy to note that every twentieth century theologian, from Bonhoeffer to Tillich, from Bishop Robinson to Harvey Cox, all have this as their major thrust, each in his own individual way: the Lord Jesus Christ can still transform life. Perhaps we can quibble with their methods, and how they get there; but the point is that virtually all the theologians have this as their main burden, that the Lord Jesus Christ is alive and moving in the hearts and minds of people today -- and can still transform and inspire individuals. This certainly should be at the heart of the New Church Gospel. What are we doing with our teaching of the Risen and Glorified Lord? This is the main burden and challenge that is facing us right now.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE LORD AND REQUIREMENTS FOR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

-- Friedemann Horn

(Excerpts:)

Being aware that the organized New Church is, so to speak, an organ of the New Church at large, means in the first place that a member of the organized New Church should always bear in mind that he belongs to the whole body of the larger church. This is very important, because this attitude alone can preserve him from the feeling either of superiority or loneliness -- the mania of feeling very superior or very special, important to the kingdom of the Lord; or on the contrary, the terrible depression of feeling something like an outcast or a non-conformist.

There are two kinds of memberships -- the external and the internal. The external is much like that of any human society, or even a club. You subscribe to its by-laws and regulations, and nobody is going to reject your application for membership. Then you manage not to violate those laws (not too much at least!), and nobody would cast you out any more. The internal membership, however, is much more difficult to obtain. It requires a complete change of life, and a never-ending fight against the hells connected with our evil inclinations, or at least the firm will to do that.

In the old, heroic times of our church, an applicant for membership had to sign the Faith of the New Church; then he became either confirmed, or even baptized by the minister. In some of our societies, this is still the case. In the first times of the New Church in Switzerland, there was a split between those who wanted the applicants to be baptized, and the others who opposed this -- stating that in most cases it meant nothing other than rebaptism. Unfortunately, it was the minister who insisted on this extremely exclusive form of acceptance of new members, which clearly was based upon the idea that there is one New Church -- the organized New Church.

Because of this exaggeration, a later generation resigned completely from this type of demand, and accepted almost everybody at a mere declaration of will. Both of these methods seem equally unsatisfactory.

A synthesis is composed of elements of both extremes. It must take the best of both and combine them. We must have some kind of a formula to define membership, but we must take something of the liberal side, which is intended to lead to a more internal and real membership -- a membership of the heart more than of the intellect. We must make membership in the New Church something very precious, not too easily attained.

In Zurich, our new members -- before they join -- either read a great deal of Swedenborg, or attend many services, bible classes and so on; they discuss things with the minister; they should do so, in order to be sure that they do not make the wrong choice, entering this church. They would only feel uncomfortable afterwards, because they do not belong to us.

STATISTICAL NOTICES

DEATHS:

C. E. Gould Capon. A memorial service was conducted by the Rev. Antony Regamey, a member of the Faculty of the New Church Theological School, in Central Congregational Church, Newton, Mass. Saturday, August 27th.

Mr. Capon, a resident of Newton for more than 50 years, died suddenly in his home on August 24th at the age of 70.

Mr. Capon was born in Montreal, Canada, and moved to Newton with his parents shortly after the turn of the century. He was the nephew of the Rev. Lawrence Gould, grandson of the Rev. Edwin Gould, and father of the Rev. Edwin Gould Capon, President of the New Church Theological School.

He leaves his wife, Helen (Wood) Capon; a son, the Rev. Edwin G. Capon of Holliston; a daughter, Mrs. Lloyd Duren, Junior, of Schenectady; and six grandsons.

Burial was in Newton Cemetery.

Glenn Curtis Dirks. Resurrection services were held in the Pawnee Rock, Kansas, Church on June 17, 1966, conducted by the Rev. Galen Unruh. Glenn passed to the higher life as the result of a drowning accident on June 14. He had just previously graduated from Pawnee Rock High School. He was a confirmed member of the Pawnee Rock Church and is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Dirks, sister Laura Jean, and brother Dwight, all of Pawnee Rock.

William L. Montgomery. Long-time President of the Contoocook, N.H. Society of the New Jerusalem Church, passed into the eternal life on March 19, 1966, at the age of 78, having lived in Contoocook since the age of four years. He and his wife celebrated their 54th wedding anniversary in July 1965. The Resurrection Service was held on March 21st at Chapel Hall in Contoocook. The Hall was at one time the church of the Contoocook Society.

Surviving him are his widow, Agnes, of Contoocook, N.H., one son, Roger, of Groveton, N.H., three daughters, Mrs. Eleanor Kimball of New London, N.H., Mrs. Elizabeth Fox of Contoocook, and Mrs. Jane Langensiepen of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and twenty grandchildren.

Mr. Joe Coons. Resurrection services were held for Mr. Joe Coons, 73, of Pretty Prairie, Kansas, who passed away after a four day illness in the Kingman Memorial Hospital on June 11. Services were conducted by the Rev. Eric Zacharias in the church at Pretty Prairie, where Mr. Coons was a member, on June 14, 1966.

Surviving him is a brother, Clyde, of Pretty Prairie; two sons, J.T. Coons, of Wichita; Charles E. Coons of Birmingham, Ala.; two daughters, Mrs. Lorraine Tenix, of Wichita; Mrs. Marjorie King of Huey Town, Ala.; plus twelve grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

BAPTISMS

June 12, 1966 at the home of Mrs. Albert Johnson, Grand Haven, Mich., the Rev. Erwin D. Reddekopp baptized Douglas Scott (5), Gregory Lyle (3), Laura Jeanne (2) and Keith Ryan (5 mos.), children of Mr. and Mrs. William Carley, great grandchildren of Mrs. Johnson.

The Rev. Othmar Tobisch baptized during worship the infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Allan Deal to the Christian name of Blaine Jeremy, on Sunday, June 19, 1966. It was a joy to all that the mother's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Perkins, of Bristol, England, could be present.

On July 31, 1966 the Rev. Othmar Tobisch baptized the infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Ver Linden of San Carlos, to the Christian name of Daniel Ralph. The parents were married in the church and Sue, the mother, is the daughter of our organist, Mrs. Lucille Barnard.

BIRTHS

Born to Mr. and Mrs. Will Pilcher, their first child, a daughter, Lisa (6.4 lbs.) July 2, 1966 in Mt. Zion Hospital, San Francisco.

Born to Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Tafel, their first child, a son, David Immanuel (7lbs. 13+oz) September 5, 1966 in Bellevue Wash.

The Messenger

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