

when souls

# Awaken

*An Interpretation of  
Radical Christianity*

CHARLES E. BROWN

289.93 B87wh

55-02743

289.93 B87wh

55-02743

Brown Gift.

When souls awaken.

---

## Keep Your Card in This Pocket

---

Books will be issued only on presentation of proper library cards.

Unless labeled otherwise, books may be retained for two weeks. Borrowers finding books marked, defaced or mutilated are expected to report same at library desk; otherwise the last borrower will be held responsible for all imperfections discovered.

The card holder is responsible for all books drawn on this card.

Penalty for over-due books 2c a day plus cost of notices.

Lost cards and change of residence must be reported promptly.



**Public Library**  
**Kansas City, Mo.**





# WHEN SOULS AWAKEN



# WHEN SOULS AWAKEN

*An Interpretation  
of Radical Christianity*

By  
Charles E. Brown, D.D.

with an introduction by  
Gene W. Newberry, Ph.D.

GOSPEL TRUMPET COMPANY  
Anderson, Indiana

**COPYRIGHT, 1954, BY GOSPEL TRUMPET COMPANY**

**PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**



## CONTENTS

| LECTURE   | PAGE |
|---|------|
| I. HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF CHURCH REFORM . . . . .                  | 19   |
| Why Repeated Calls to Reform?                                     |      |
| This Reformation a Burst of Creative Energy                       |      |
| We Teach What the Church Teaches                                  |      |
| Reformation Concern an Ancient Christian Concept                  |      |
| Reformations Before the Reformation                               |      |
| The Force and Spread of Reformation Ideals                        |      |
| Passion for Reform Yields to Secularism                           |      |
| II. THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND OF CHURCH OF GOD REFORMATION . . . . . | 42   |
| Soteriology Derived from Wesley                                   |      |
| Holiness Reformation—Its Rise and Emphases                        |      |
| Perfectionism in Warner's Teachings                               |      |
| Divine Healing of the Body  |      |
| Meaning of the Ordinances   |      |
| The Ecclesiology of Warner  |      |
| III. ASCETIC DISCIPLINE OF THE NEW REFORMATION . . . . .          | 69   |
| What Is Ascetic Discipline?                                       |      |
| The Mood of Martyrs   |      |
| Reformers Follow Ascetic Pattern                                  |      |

Some Reformers Invited Persecution  
Ascetic Discipline Applied to Ministry  
The Burden of Congregational Judicial  
Discipline  
The Discipline of Life  
Asceticism as a Condition of Institutional  
Existence

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| IV. THE DEVELOPMENT OF<br>ORGANIZATION . . . . . | 101 |
| The Belief in an Infallible Pattern              |     |
| The Passing and the Permanent in the<br>Church   |     |
| Organization of Church Work Necessary            |     |
| Divisional Movements and Their Out-<br>come      |     |

## INTRODUCTION

By Gene W. Newberry

Dr. Charles E. Brown was asked to deliver the first series of lectures in the School of Theology in 1951 because at the time he was the church's outstanding theologian. In the series he did not deal systematically with the wide range of doctrine, but chose rather to explain the genesis of a few doctrines and develop the interpretations given to them by "radical Christians" since.

As a penetrating thinker, Dr. Brown has discovered the channels through which creative ideas have come. In doing so, he has become both historian and theologian for the church. In this present book he points out that we cannot refrain from exploring the historic backgrounds of reformation ideals and reformation traditions which preceded the modern church. He says, "The rains come as a gift from God, but they fall on mountains furrowed by ancient valleys which provide channels through which life-giving waters must flow. And so the rains of God which fell upon our forefathers in the 1880's likewise fell upon mountains of historic ages, and

were channeled through valleys molded by age-long processes of history, and it is over these river beds that the divine streams have flowed to us.”

It was an encouragement to the seminarians to have Dr. Brown in their midst for these days. He is a living example of true and dedicated scholarship. They knew that he had persevered through the years in his own pursuit of truth. They knew that he had studied the original languages of Scripture to arrive at bedrock starting points. They were impressed that he strove for continuity of basic thought and idea through the intervening years.

Dr. Brown was born in 1883. He began Christian activity as a boy preacher and has continued without interruption through about sixty years of marked devotion to Kingdom ideals. He has served as evangelist, pastor, missionary executive, educator, and Christian journalist. For twenty-one years as editor of the *Gospel Trumpet* he gave intellectual leadership to the church. For a period of almost a decade and a half he was able to produce about a book a year of creative writings. He has been indefatigable in the Lord's work.

A glance at the many titles written by this Christian scholar will impress one with the breadth of his interest in the progress of Christian thought.

One of the early books authored by Dr. Brown,

*Dawn on the Mountains*, was Christian fiction. He says that he still has a burden for this kind of literature and that one of his last books may be a novel. Ideas and themes seem to roll over one another in his mind and demand attention.

He has written more in the fields of ecclesiology and ecumenics than in any other. There are four titles here: *A New Approach to Christian Unity* (1931), *The Church Beyond Division* (1939), *The Apostolic Church* (1947), and *When the Trumpet Sounded* (1951).

A second area of major interest has been the doctrine of the Kingdom and Final Things. Here he produced *The Hope of His Coming* (1927) and *The Reign of Christ* (1948). The second title is a tip-off to his general thesis (following New Testament usage) that the kingdom of God is not to be understood in geographical or political terms but rather as the spiritual reign of God in the hearts of believers.

Two more titles deal with heavy theology: *The Meaning of Salvation* (1944) and *The Meaning of Sanctification* (1945). This second book has enjoyed wide reading and acceptance in evangelical seminaries.

In the area of devotional reading are three books. They are composed of helpful essays on the life of God in man, as follows: *The Way of Prayer* (1940), *The Way of Faith* (1943), and *Adventures in the Spiritual Life* (1946).

Finally there are two titles for general and popular reading: *Modern Religious Faiths* (1941) and *Questions and Answers* (1949). The latter, of course, grew out of many years in an editorial office in dealing with the queries sent in by readers.

In addition to this present book, Dr. Brown is now writing an elementary handbook in theology. Most of these books will outlive their author. They are required reading for an understanding of the theological emphasis given by the Church of God. They contain germinal ideas and flashes of insight that will be determinative for many years to come.

Dr. Brown has always carried the burden to make the great truths of Christianity simple and attractive. His parables and stories are vivid. His flowing prose is graphic and fanciful and always a delight to read. This is a great gift, humbly used. His friends still remember the picturesque wording of his editorial essays in the *Gospel Trumpet*. But best of all, he writes with discernment and challenge.

Most of his readers would have a favorite book of the several Dr. Brown produced. His *Reign of Christ* has been helpful in a day when earnest Christians have needed an antidote to the crude literalism and obscurantism in the apocalyptic preaching on the radio and elsewhere. But probably his most helpful book has been *The Apostolic*

*Church.* Here he threads his way through the historic doctrines of the church and traces them back to their biblical statement. Here the Reformers, the Church Fathers, and the Apostles add their validating word to the "truth once delivered." It is a good and helpful book because throughout there is the authentic ring of authority and power.

What are some of Dr. Brown's special burdens and skills? He does not give the impression of being arbitrary and overbearingly dogmatic in the presentation of his ideas. He too is a pilgrim searching after truth, and the road is long. He welcomes allies in the search. He is acquainted with the heritage of words and ideas left by those who have gone down the road before. One is impressed in his writings that he is acquainted with the authorities in theology, both classic and modern. And he clearly is a student of ecclesiastical history. In fact, he is at his best in delving into the mysteries of biblical and historical theology. He does not reveal a taste for pastoral theology. This should not be surprising, nor should it be construed as a criticism. All men have fields of special concern and skill. In Dr. Brown's case his special interests preclude extensive treatment of such areas as social Christianity, administration of the local parish, education and nurture, liturgy and worship. These are left for other specialists. One judges that Dr. Brown feels high es-

teem for those called to work in these cognate fields.

Dr. Brown is famous for some of his repeatedly stated cautions. He says often that there is no warrant in Scripture for making the distinction between the visible and invisible church. The two actually may find identity in this world. It may be accomplished by "maintaining an open fellowship free from bars of creedal or organizational restrictions, which would shut out any sincere Christian." Augustine was one of the first to make the distinction. Some of the reformers, following his idea, used the point to justify division or apostasy in the church. Some modern leaders have succumbed to the same temptation.

Another caution and warning come from his perceptive analysis of the causes of apostasy in the historic church. He avers that it has its basis chiefly in a dishonoring of Christ. His saviorship and lordship are denied and his unique priestly office taken over by fallible men. There is also the danger that the leadership of the Holy Spirit will be supplanted by the ordinances and administration of men, and that the Word of God will be displaced by the traditions of men. The only safety for the church is to maintain a Christocentric approach to all her words and work.

There is a surprising minimum of hero worship in Dr. Brown's writings. He is a living link with



the pioneers, yet he does not make plaster saints out of them. For example, he does not find an ironbound completeness in the thought of D. S. Warner. It is his sincere belief that Warner enjoyed a spiritual illumination concerning the nature of the church. But there was an "open-endedness" about it. He feels that Warner probably was not aware of the fact, but that he "was very definitely an experimentalist, a spiritual explorer in reality throughout his whole life." After his illumination, Warner spent the rest of his life experimenting how to make the ideas and insights feasible in this world. Many ministers and teachers share his vision today and find it "so appealing that no growth of mind and heart can ever make it seem small and narrow." They too are captured by the ideal and are working creatively to make it practicable and fruitful.

We move now to a listing of a half dozen of Dr. Brown's major emphases and lasting contributions to the thinking of the church.

1. In this book and others Dr. Brown has attempted to put meaning into the special descriptive phrase, "radical Christianity." This caption is not altogether his own. He himself applies different definitions to it. In one place he says that it is the ideal which rejects the church of the bishop and also the church of the prince. That is to say, it opposes the Roman Church and the state or established church as well. Again, "radi-

cal Christianity” may be defined as a pure church ideal which attempts to re-create in these days the unity and power of the apostolic fellowship. A third definition also inherent in much that he has written is that radical Christians present a Christ-centered message and hope. In fact he says that the true glory of the church is to be found, “not in its democracy, not in its pure doctrine, not in the splendid idealism of its members, but first of all in its nearness to Christ.”

2. The church which is the body of Christ is a fellowship not amenable to human organizing. The true basis of its membership is spiritual. It has been very gratifying to Dr. Brown to hear famous theologians in recent years (such as Emil Brunner) give much the same emphasis.

3. This second point has posed a paradox for many. How can we be saved from total anarchy in the church’s life and work? Dr. Brown clears up a point that has baffled earnest Christians, and at the same time gives an answer to those who condemn human and functional organization. The answer is that it is a far different thing to organize the work of the church on the one hand, and to attempt to organize the church which is the body of Christ on the other. This does not at all sound like a splitting of hairs to those who, with tender conscience, have wrestled with the problem. They are in debt to Dr. Brown for this insight.

4. Dr. Brown has shown marked interest in the ascetic disciplines of historic Christianity. In point of fact, this subject has been a preoccupation of many editorials and sermons. It is clear to him that if a person truly follows Christ he will deny himself. The cross will be central in his thought and action. He will be a quality Christian. He need not have rules and restraints laid on him from without. There will be a compulsion from within. He denies himself, not because he must, but because he will. The compulsion of love prompts him.

It is the hope of Dr. Brown that a strong and true discipline of self-denial can be established and maintained in the church, because such self-discipline is authentic in Christianity. But it must not be built upon legalism, Pharisaism, and mere artificial religion. It must be built upon the will and affection of the person. Thus it will be a kind of voluntary asceticism which can deliberately be hard on oneself, but dares not be judgmental toward others. "The training of a definitely consecrated Christian is the fruit of discipline exercised throughout a lifetime and is of greater value than any other type of training. . . . In my opinion, the only question is whether in any specific instance the discipline involved contributed to the spiritual development desired."

5. Dr. Brown deals tenderly but forthrightly with those who are caught in the web of complete

literalism and futurism concerning the kingdom of God. He knows that many of them are earnest men whose biblical exegesis begins from wrong premises and historical context. They are led to unbelievable crudities of interpretation. Doctor Brown and others have succeeded so well that the Church of God has been saved from the premillennialism that has so beguiled uncritical fundamentalists in recent years. It is here that he breaks most pointedly with that group. Here he expresses a true conservatism that Christ will come in judgment at the time of his own appointing and will make final rewards unerringly. It ill behooves man to try by his own pronouncements to force God's hand in history or impudently to seize the divine wisdom in interpreting the signs of the times.

6. In many ways Dr. Brown has said that the crucial Christian teachings lie deep in the historic theology of the church. At all points he holds a pious regard for classic traditions and emphases. He presents no novelties, but old and neglected truths in a fresh new light. The reformation under Luther and the reformation under Warner simply put old doctrines in a new setting. This is to say that Dr. Brown takes a historical and genetic approach to ecclesiology rather than a purely apocalyptic and prophetic one. Thus, Part One of *When the Trumpet Sounded* deals with "The Roots That Run Back to the Past." There he

traces the historical connections with radical Christianity.

It would be difficult to overemphasize this point. It is crucial to an understanding of Doctor Brown's theological system. That is what his book, *The Apostolic Church*, is all about. It is the motif of this present book. He discovers doctrinal links, connections, and associations in an almost unbroken line all the way back to the first-century church. He pays his debt of gratitude to the Quakers, the Anabaptists, the Pietists, Luther, and the Wesleys. In fact, he says that reforming activity has been going on since the middle of the first century when the stream of missionary endeavor was broadened to accept the Gentile churches established by the Apostle Paul. More especially, he thanks Wesley for his emphasis on the "experience of the apostolic church," Luther for his emphasis on the "doctrine of the apostolic church," and the Anabaptists for their emphasis on spiritual democracy, the "form of the apostolic church."

In general, one might characterize Dr. Brown's churchmanship as that of a conservative evangelical. He is both of these in the highest sense. But in the main, he himself eschews all labels. He has labored valiantly to re-emphasize biblical theology as the birthright of the church in the twentieth century. He has endeavored to authenticate the first-century ideal of spiritual democ-

racy for the modern church. He has looked longingly toward the past and wistfully at the present and toward the future in the hope that the church may again be set on fire with apostolic fervor and ideals.

Gene W. Newberry  
Professor of Theology  
The School of Theology  
Anderson College

July 19, 1954

## Lecture I

### HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF CHURCH REFORM

**D** S. WARNER and his associates around the eighth decade of the nineteenth century placed strenuous emphasis upon the idea of reform in the church. And they viewed the end product of their intensive labors as a reformation. In fact, the common expression for their work was the "Last Reformation," a term which has perhaps fallen into disuse, either for good or ill, among us at the present time. The plain meaning of the term was that the church would be restored to its apostolic purity from which there would not be time for apostasy before the imminent coming of the Lord.

The expression has caused difficulty for the later generations of the fellowship. The first difficulty arises from the paradox of saying that the church is the spiritual community of the redeemed, the fellowship of the saints in light, and then stating that such a spiritual institution needs, or even is capable of, reformation. How can one say at once that the church is the bride of Christ and that only, and nevertheless the

church stands in need of reformation. This paradox has confused many earnest minds.

### WHY REPEATED CALLS TO REFORM?

Further pursuit of the thought resolves this paradox into another; that is, the distinction between the visible and invisible church which was first noted by Augustine in the fourth century, but which has become the very foundation and practically the only basis of a reasonable justification of denominationalism in the Protestant era. Here again is another difficulty. The term "reformation" seems only to be justified upon the very same theory which justified denominationalism; that is, that there is both a visible and an invisible church. In other words, seemingly the only way to justify the term "reformation" is to admit the validity of the distinction between the visible and the invisible church and thus justify the whole system of denominational division.

At this point we may, if we wish, evade our difficulty entirely by the bold assertion that the church of God on earth, the spiritual community of believers continuing through all history, although constituting the body of Christ in a second incarnation is, notwithstanding, quite lacking in the gift of omniscience and others of the infinite qualities of God. Under these circumstances, laboring as we do under the historic limitations of



man's finitude continuously across the ages, we have no reason to assert that the human community bearing the divine treasure would be preserved from all error and thus inevitably freed from any necessity of reformation. We might, in fact, say boldly that the true spiritual community, consisting as it does of fallible human beings, would often require to be checked on an erroneous course and led back time and again to the original standards of Christian doctrine and practice. The mere assertion that the church is composed of masses of finite human beings is sufficient justification for the repeated calls to reformation throughout the ages.

As a matter of fact, this is the picture which history gives us. The first general reformation in Christian history was that led by Paul and his co-workers which completed the freedom of the Gentile Christians from their partial slavery to Judaism. Obviously, even in the Apostolic Age, conditions were far from ideal for the Gentile converts to Christianity before the completion of Paul's work. It was the theory of the Judaistic Christians that these converts should become out-and-out Jews by the completion of circumcision and all the ceremonials of proselyte admission followed by complete obedience to the dietary and social regulations of Judaism. That a man like Paul could accomplish such a massive reform among believers who, whether Jews or

Gentiles, were mostly completely imbued with Jewish preconceptions and prejudices, is perhaps one of the greatest marvels of New Testament history, albeit scarcely noted by professional students of that era.

The term "reformation" may be justified without admitting a sharp division between the visible and invisible church. We are certainly justified in using the term "church" loosely as referring to historical Christianity in general. For this is a common usage of English literature and is undoubtedly followed in the Bible; e.g., in the famous passage where John accused Diotrephes of casting members "out of the church" (III John 10). Using the word "church" in this way, a reformation of the church is the most natural way to describe a movement which is not concerned primarily with any sect but with a general call to all Christendom. In that sense the word "reformation" is still valid. And doubtless many of us believe that the coming of the Lord is so near that the term "last" is sharply descriptive of God's work among us in our time.

The term "last" can also be used in a qualitative sense meaning the return of the church to apostolic integrity and normality beyond which it cannot advance. The term "last" can also be used in a wider chronological sense as implying that this desired condition of the restoration of New Testament Christianity actually will prevail at

the end before Christ comes, and, therefore, whenever we enter into this condition at any time, we are entering into the final state of the church. And in that sense we become a part of the "last reformation."

Unless we believe that the attainment of the unity and purity of the New Testament age is impossible, it is hard to see how we can deny the validity of the concept of the "last reformation." No reformation will ever be needed which places us beyond the standard of the apostolic church. I do not take this concept to involve a profession of infallible knowledge of the ideal church, but only a faith that one of the present defects—division—may and will be overcome.

#### THIS REFORMATION A BURST OF CREATIVE ENERGY

The pioneers of this reformation were mostly men and women without technical theological training, and it is no doubt partly due to this fact that they viewed it as a new thing in Christian history. Indeed, they had good reason so to think. For in their own persons and lives they experienced such an outburst of energy and such a stimulating and commanding vision of new possibilities in the church's work that they literally lived that text which says, "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). They asserted their originality because they felt a fresh lift of cre-

ative spiritual energy thrilling through their circles of fellowship and leading them on day by day in fresh experiences of the renewing and thrilling power of the grace of God.

This presentation of the reformation as a completely new thing was an advantage, although an entirely uncalculated advantage, in the new world of the western frontier of the nineteenth century. The Civil War had been ended long enough for a mighty wave of recovery to sweep the country. Railroads, like giants, were thrusting their mighty iron fingers into the rich treasuries of grain, coal, oil, and gold across the face of the earth's richest continent. Men were thrilling with the idea that this is a new world and all the dead things of effete Europe should be scorned and cast aside. They had reasons to strengthen this confidence. From all parts of Europe adventurous souls were pushing into this new and goodly land. As these new settlers amassed wealth, they sang the praises of a new continent, a new era in the life of mankind. Men who saw a new day for the church had small reason to turn back to its long sad history in Europe for confirmation of their astounding and inspiring vision.

A sturdy young son of European peasants rapidly becoming a multimillionaire in Chicago or Omaha would hardly write to his European peasant father for advice about how to do business. However, the college-graduate grandson of

this multimillionaire might be expected to take a much greater interest in social studies of his great-grandfather's environment in Europe than the first American immigrant of the family would have appreciated. In the same way, it has happened in our time that we have become interested in the historic background of the movement in which our grandfathers engaged. They were concerned with showing that everything in which they believed was more or less a fresh new thing in Christian life and thought. In many respects they were right. Moreover, their presentation was largely an acceptable one, especially to the only people who would be expected to hear them, that is, such as were afflicted with a divine discontent.

In our own time, however, it would be a denial of the responsibility of critical thought to refrain from exploring the historic backgrounds of reformation ideals and even reformation tradition which preceded this last reformation by more than a thousand years.

In such explorations we do not seek to deny the creative energy of the Spirit and the prophetic character of the movement which it created among us in the 1880's. The rains come as a gift from God, but they fall on mountains furrowed by ancient valleys which provide channels through which the life-giving water must flow. And so the rains of God that fell upon our

forefathers in the 1880's likewise fell upon mountains of historic ages and were channeled through valleys molded by age-long processes of history, and it is over these river beds that the divine streams have flowed to us.

There was, notwithstanding the appeal of freshness, a certain disadvantage in presenting the message as entirely new. For as the historical sense developed among the American people, there grew along with it the feeling that what is new in Christianity is not true, because the truest Christianity was revealed in the first century and any real Christianity must have its root in that historic epoch. Therefore, from this point of view also, it becomes necessary to trace the historic backgrounds of the Church of God reformation movement to discover whether it really is the product of historic Christianity—to see for ourselves whether it is really rooted in the firm foundation of the historic church's life and tradition.

### WE TEACH WHAT THE CHURCH TEACHES

From this standpoint, it is interesting to note that the Church of God reformation movement is strongly rooted in historic Christianity, having no alien elements whatever. Though an interesting point may be made by emphasizing our differences with any particular sect, nevertheless, it is surprising to note the strength of the argu-

ment that points out our agreement with the total Christian tradition. We join with all Christians in teaching the atonement of Christ and the forgiveness of sins. Actually, we join with all Christians in teaching that we should live above sin, because there is no Christian church that denies the value of such behavior. The most any of them can say is that such a life is impossible. Nevertheless, none of them forbid it. None of them command a man to sin. When we prize sanctification and purity, we prize what universal Christianity has esteemed since the movement began. All Christians teach that Christ can heal; so we teach. All Christians teach that Christ saves; so we teach. All Christians teach that He sanctifies; so we teach. All Christians teach that Christ is the head of the church, and so we teach. All Christians teach that Christ will come again, and so we teach. All Christians teach that Christ will raise the dead, and so we teach.

Even on the minor issues the result is similar. All Christians teach foot washing. They teach that Christ washed the disciples' feet, and they teach that we ought to wash feet, although many of them interpret the command as a metaphor. All, however, teach it.

Now the fact that we teach some of these things with a different emphasis than do various sects is no reflection upon our orthodoxy, because nearly every one of the sects stresses a different

phase of any given doctrine. No man in his senses could teach each Christian doctrine in conformity with the individual interpretations of the various denominations because their emphases are so different that such a performance is an impossibility. But in one way or another, giving our own special emphasis, we teach only what the church has always and everywhere taught. We stand strictly within the limits of the historic Christian tradition.

#### REFORMATION CONCERN AN ANCIENT CHRISTIAN CONCEPT

As we teach the same Christian doctrines the church has always taught so also we took a very ancient theme when we began to preach "reformation." For reformation passion has been alive in the church for more than a thousand years. This subject can be only briefly sketched.

As previously pointed out, the Apostle Paul was the first reformer, preaching the anti-Judaistic reformation. Undoubtedly, a local reform took place under his leadership in the church of Corinth, which was reformed from its division, its worldliness, and its carnality by the prophetic ministry of the Apostle Paul.

Another general reformation in the church was attempted by the Montanists in the second century. Montanism was a reaction against the growing formality of worship and the rigidity of



organization in the budding Catholic Church of the time. Its leaders denounced the deadness and coldness of the old congregations and accused them of lack of power and fire. The old churches had, they said, turned from spiritual worship to ritualism. They had lost the glory of Pentecost. One of the greatest minds of the church of that time, Tertullian, withdrew from the historic Christian movement and went along with the schismatics who were preaching the reformation movement of Montanism. Understand that we do not have to prove that this reformation was valid; we only establish the fact that it occurred.

#### REFORMATIONS BEFORE THE REFORMATION

Most informed Protestants are so familiar with the evils of monasticism that they are likely to reject emphatically any suggestion that monasticism could under any circumstance be regarded as a reformation. However, a reformation may be relative. That is to say, any earnest attempt at improvement in existing conditions would certainly rank as, in some respects, a reformation, viewed from the history of its own time and not from the standpoint of the evils which it itself developed. The beginnings of monasticism represented a very sincere and earnest attempt to effect a reformation in the church of its time. The founder of Christian monasticism was St. Anthony of Egypt, who took up the ascetic life

about the year 270. He was followed by Pachomius, who established the first Christian monastery in Egypt about 315. The movement was put upon a firm foundation in western Christianity by St. Benedict about the year 529.

Undoubtedly there were very strong ascetic elements in the early church from apostolic days. Paul dealt with such people in his time.

### *The Monastic Reform*

But the great monastic movement as such began at that very point in the end of the third century which we have traditionally marked as the beginning of the age of apostasy. This does not mean, however, that the monastic movement was, relatively speaking, an apostasy in its own time. It was, in fact, a recoil against the worldliness and deadness of the incipient Catholic Church of the age. Please understand that we do not justify the methods of the monastic movement. We simply judge that its purpose and intent and, to some extent, its early efforts were reformatory. It was, moreover, a reform which literally came out from among the worldly congregations of the time without denying the Christian character of the Catholic Church.

Meanwhile, there grew up later in the medieval church the yearning for a pure church. This was often voiced within the Catholic Church itself, especially by some of the early Franciscans. In

fact, this passion for a pure church developed the movement called the Spiritual Franciscans which was later bitterly persecuted by the Inquisition.

### *Reform Within Catholicism*

It is not commonly understood in American Protestantism that even the old churches, Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic have felt within themselves the powerful urge and the stirring movement of reformation. A great reformation swept the eastern church in the eighth century. It was called the Iconoclastic movement. It was a movement to destroy idols and images in that church.

Even the Church of Rome had its mighty storm of reformation, the movement led by Ignatius Loyola and his Society of Jesus, organized in 1540 and commonly called the Jesuits. I am sure it will shock many Protestants to think of the Jesuits as being the reformation party in the Church of Rome. Such was certainly the case, and they actually reformed the church in many respects and set it on its road to the attempted conquest of the modern world. All Protestant historians recognize the force of this mighty movement, and most of them call it the Counter Reformation. The fact that it was in direct opposition to the Protestant Reformation is not an argument against the fact that it was a reformation. It thrived and prospered because the Catho-

lic Church in general recognized the need and felt the desire for reformation.

### *In the Twelfth Century*

Elsewhere in my books I have traced the course of the reformation movement which took form in southern France, northern Italy, and northern Spain, as early as the twelfth century. Some of the dissenters against the church, for example, the Cathars, were actually heretics. However, others like the Waldenses, who originated in 1176, were soundly orthodox Christians. There were in the countries named some forty sects at about this time, most of whom were orthodox Christians.

Against these dissenters Pope Alexander III ordered a crusade in 1181, which was ineffectual, but Pope Innocent III proclaimed another crusade which ravaged southern France from 1209 for twenty years. This terrible purge by fire and sword was followed by the setting up of the Inquisition as a systematic and massive effort to violate the conscience of humanity through the exercise of force and cruelty. Dr. Charles H. Lea has written three large volumes on this Inquisition.

### *Hounded by the Inquisition*

This war on Christian conscience, carried forward with zeal and force for many centuries,

cannot be even briefly described in this short hour. Enough is it to say that it scattered the dissidents over all Europe and hounded them to the death throughout long weary centuries of pain and darkness. That dissent against the Church of Rome could persist and endure under this age-long systematic and cunning exercise of force is one of the greatest miracles of all time. Very few, even of educated people, have any idea of the Herculean efforts to destroy this root of evangelical Christianity.

The Roman Catholic Inquisition was principally in the hands of the Dominican Order, although sometimes Franciscans engaged in this enterprise. Any person, man or woman, who was convicted was quickly burned at the stake. This sentence was executed by the State as a legal penalty, but the conviction was pronounced in the courts of the Inquisition. Vast multitudes were imprisoned for life, mostly without even being convicted. From this awful yoke of pain and slavery there was no release even in confession because the person who confessed and repented was generally held in prison the rest of his life as a penance for his sin of departing from the Catholic Church.

Notwithstanding this awful engine of fear and terror, the reformation movement lived underground in Europe for some four hundred years until the outbreak of the sixteenth-century Ref-

ormation. This secret reform movement reached England in the latter part of the fourteenth century, where it was propagated by John Wycliffe and his Lollard preachers until early in the fifteenth century. From England the reformation movement spread to Bohemia where it created great excitement until the beginning of Luther's reformation in Germany. When Luther began preaching in Germany these hidden seeds of dissent from the Church of Rome began to spring up all over Europe. The people thus raised up formed a third type of reformation workers called Anabaptists.

#### THE FORCE AND SPREAD OF REFORMATION IDEALS

The Anabaptists have received bad treatment from many Protestant historians, especially of the older school. They differed in many respects from the Reformed Church of Switzerland and the Lutheran Church of Germany. To begin with, the Lutheran Church of Germany and the Reformed Church of Switzerland were at first state churches, and as they spread they took the form of the state churches in the new countries whither they went as often as they found it possible to do so.

On the other hand the Anabaptists were never connected with the government of any country. The most they could ever do was to obtain tolerance and freedom of religion. This was for them

a rare privilege, a privilege which they found scarcely anywhere in the sixteenth century except in Holland. For this reason, Holland became a great center of Anabaptist teaching. The Anabaptists gradually took the name of Mennonites from one of their famous leaders, and out of this Mennonite church in Holland, there grew the Baptist and Congregational churches which have had so much influence upon the history of America—both religious and secular.

### *Heritage of Spiritual Democracy*

The Anabaptists were believers in spiritual democracy. Their churches were not run by bishops or kings, but by the membership functioning under the principles of the universal priesthood of believers.

It is the belief of many modern scholars that democracy in general, and the beginnings of the American nation in particular, grew out of the teaching and practice of these principles by the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century.

The Anabaptists and their associates formed a third group in evangelical Christianity. They were all advocates of reform. In their case they taught a reformation by coming out from the older churches, Protestant or Catholic, which were governed by the State or the bishop. Their reformation struggle was carried on for centuries.

In English Christianity also, a powerful refor-

mation movement sought to reform the church from the inside. This movement arose in England in the sixteenth century. Its proponents were called Puritans. Their passion for reform was even greater than that of the radical Christians, because they were in the midst of a hostile environment which they sought to change. The Puritans never accomplished their purpose within the confines of the Church of England. But they came to America along with the radical Christians and contributed their quota of reformation ideals and reformation zeal to the Christian life and thought of America.

Thus we see that reformation ideals and reformation zeal were an integral part of historic Christianity as it was received by the first settlers in America.

America early in the nineteenth century saw a definite attempt to establish a new reformation under the labors of Thomas and Alexander Campbell. They called their work a reformation movement. Later they came to think of it as a restoration movement.

The Mormons, the Shakers, and other heretical sects of the nineteenth century were only a perversion of the age-old passion for reform in the heart of historical Christianity. The words of Jesus' prayer that "they may be one" have thundered in the consciences of Christians for nearly a thousand years. As long as those words



are hearkened to, they will awaken the slumbering zeal for reformation. It was because Warner and his associates heard that stirring voice that they immediately began their work with earnest enthusiasm and labeled the undertaking, the "last reformation."

Elsewhere I have summed up the successive steps of the reformation as follows:

First, there was the Reformation of the sixteenth century acknowledging Christ's place as prophet or teacher in his church. Following this there began the pietistic movement in Europe under Philipp Jakob Spener which restored the doctrine of salvation, honoring Christ as priest and Savior from sin. This reformation was in two stages. Pietism came to power in the revival of John Wesley, which covered the world. In this revival entire sanctification was restored to its place in Christian doctrine and thus the unveiling of Christ as priest was completed.

### *The Movement Toward Unity*

For some eight hundred years radical Christians had been emphasizing the fact that Christ is king or ruler in his church. In 1825 there began a great movement toward Christian unity. Just as Pietism preceded the holiness revival of the Wesleys, so this movement toward unity preceded the reformation of Warner.

Edward Cronin, a young dental student, began

a movement in Dublin, Ireland, in the year 1825, calling for the unity of all Christians. He was joined by a number, including J. Parnell, afterwards Lord Congleton, and John N. Darby, who soon took the leadership in the movement. This movement later spread to England where its followers were called Plymouth Brethren, but at its inception, it stressed the doctrine of the unity of believers. About the same time Thomas Campbell and his son, Alexander Campbell, initiated the movement for reformation whose adherents were later called Disciples. In 1825 in the city of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, John Winebrenner started a movement which he called the Churches of God in North America.

The intention of each of these movements was to escape from sectarianism and discover the ancient unity of the New Testament church. Time forbids any listing of reasons why these movements failed in their objective. It is enough to know that they started and that they were to some extent a preparation and an introduction to the work of reformation which D. S. Warner and his associates began to preach about the year 1880.

If these three major movements in Christian life and thought (the sixteenth-century Reformation, the pietistic revival, and the early efforts toward unity) may be said to have each carried a torch—one the torch of gospel doctrine, one

the torch of spiritual redemption, and one the torch of Christian unity—then we may say that D. S. Warner grasped each of these mighty torches and placed them together in one blazing ideal of New Testament Christianity. The light he carried was a fire, and concerning fires there is never any question of size. A fire is a fire, and no matter how small at first, it can in time cover a vast forest.

### PASSION FOR REFORM YIELDS TO SECULARISM

In the easygoing, indifferent age of secularism in which we live, it is almost impossible to appreciate the age-old passion for reform which burned like a fire in the heart of Christianity for nearly a thousand years. Doubtless there are many reasons for the death of reformation passion in our time. Perhaps the fundamental reason is to be found in the secularization of modern society. When modern society gradually became secularized under the influence of the industrial revolution and the scientific development of modern times, something happened to the passion for reformation. My theory is that the passion for reformation, which had pulsed strong in the heart of the church for so many ages, was taken over by secular society and transformed into political reform. In the process of time a large section of political reform was captured by the followers of Karl Marx and transformed into the Com-

munist theory of radical, social revolution. Thus it has come to pass that all modern evangelical Christianity is unusually conservative.

For roughly a period of one hundred and fifty years historical Christianity in general has been on the defensive in a scientific and industrial age. It seems true that the strain of this defense has worked for greater toleration between the ancient and modern forms of Christianity, thus lessening the tension of reformatory zeal.

Not only have the ancient Orthodox and Roman churches labored under the attack of modern industry and science, but evangelical Christianity has suffered in some respects even more than they. Evangelical Christianity, therefore, has been on the conservative side, fighting a battle of defense ever since the rise of the modern and industrial and scientific movement. This fact alone has inhibited nearly all concern for ecclesiastical reform. As a matter of fact, the present-day world church movement is, in the light of history, an antireform movement because it seeks to undo what was done in the sixteenth-century Reformation.

The lack of reformation zeal in our time is also partly due to another influence of secularism—the religious indifference which secularism fosters. Not only has modern man the animal desires which man possessed a thousand years ago, but he also has ready at hand a philosophy of secular-

ism which justifies these animal appetites and systematically places them in the category of conditions for the good life. To a man thoroughly imbued with such a philosophy all concern about church reform is not only idle but offensive.

Considerations such as these make a modern man wonder why Warner and his associates ever could become so concerned about a new reformation. In their age there came opportunities to make money and attain worldly success such as perhaps was unique in American history. Yet the open doors to fame and riches they utterly ignored and turned their thoughts to reformation in the church. Why did they do so?

The answer lies in the fact that they were extremely sensitive Christians and, as such, were fully imbued with the historical traditions of Christendom; and one of the strongest of those traditions was the passion for reformation.

## Lecture II

### THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND OF CHURCH OF GOD REFORMATION

WINEBRENNER, the founder of the Winebrennerian Churches of God, was a minister of the German Reformed Church before the beginning of his reformatory movement. From this fact, it has sometimes been inferred that his theology was necessarily the theology of the Reformed Church and that, consequently, the theology of D. S. Warner was also that of the Reformed Church. It seems impossible to make a more erroneous deduction from the historical facts. To say that Winebrenner and Warner were adherents of the Reformed theology because Winebrenner's movement came out of the Reformed Church is quite the same as to say that Luther and a second-generation follower of his were adherents of Roman Catholic theology because Luther came out of the Roman Catholic Church. The very fact that a man rebelled against and deserted a religious organization is evidence amounting to proof that with at least some es-

sential points of the theology of that organization, he was in sharp disagreement.

Neglecting Winebrenner entirely and confining our attention to D. S. Warner and his associates in the reformation movement, we find what may be summarized as an unusual combination of Arminian soteriology, or doctrine of salvation, with Baptist and Congregationalist ecclesiology, or doctrine of the church, together with an important original element that will be discussed in a later section.

#### SOTERIOLOGY DERIVED FROM WESLEY

Soteriology means the theology or doctrine of salvation, and it is no reflection upon the ability of Warner to say that in this field he made no fundamental changes in the historical theology of Arminianism as modified by the Wesleys. His originality was in another field. I have read elaborate expositions of the theology of Warner. If Warner's theology had been original with him these expositions would be edifying and illuminating, but inasmuch as his theology of salvation was almost completely conventional Wesleyanism, these attempts at describing Warner's doctrine are liable to be misleading.

#### *What Was Wesleyan Soteriology?*

The doctrine of salvation as it stands in the New Testament was developed from Jewish

Messianism as modified by the apocalypics. Undoubtedly, there was a new beginning in Christ, and the writers of the New Testament were mostly men who associated with him personally. Therefore, to a great extent, they were justified in presenting Christ as they knew him to be. This mode of presentation was a wholly new thing, a novelty in human life and thinking. Nevertheless, they interpreted this Messiah in terms of current Jewish thinking which included not only the ideas of the Old Testament but of the apocalypics and of the writers of the Apocrypha.

Sometimes I am amazed at the lack of attention which scholars give to the massive movement away from Judaism in the early church, the movement which we might call Paul's reformation. I feel sure that not enough thought has been given to the fact that, though the last word of Scripture was written by a Jew, the very beginnings of patristic theology are mostly in the hands of Greek thinkers. I believe that Ritschl is warranted in calling attention to this astonishing fact. His thesis certainly is true, that the earliest technical theology was created by Greek thinkers who by stretching the New Testament ideas of redemption and salvation upon the Procrustean bed of Greek philosophy created the new discipline of Christian theology.

However, I differ with Ritschl as to the imme-



diately evil effects of this new creation in human thought, for I believe that the gospel as the New Testament teachers promulgated it was already enunciated in forms compatible with Greek thought as early as the formation of the Greek New Testament, and this conclusion arises from causes too numerous to mention.

### *Greek Fathers Taught Freedom of Will*

Be that as it may, the very first preachers of Christianity outside the New Testament were the Greek Fathers, and broadly speaking, the Greek Fathers were believers in freedom of the will. Doubtless, it is an anachronism to call them Arminians, but such they were in effect more than a thousand years before Arminius.

Perhaps the chief difference between them and Arminians is that they tended more toward a theory of moralistic salvation or salvation by righteousness and obedience than did the later advocates of freewill redemption who were on their guard against the heresy of Pelagius.

The Wesleyan doctrine of salvation cannot be understood without reference to the swing over from the freewill theology of the ancient Greek Fathers to the predestinationism of Augustine. This transition came about as follows:

Pelagius, a monk from Britain, came to Rome in the fourth century and greatly exaggerated the liberal tendency in Greek theology, pushing its

freedom of the will and moralism to the point of denying original sin and the necessity of regeneration.

### *Augustine Formulates Doctrine of Predestination*

This doctrine fairly enraged Augustine, Bishop of Hippo in North Africa, one of the greatest philosophers and theologians of the ancient church. As the debate proceeded, Augustine swung still further away from the freewill position held by practically all the Greek Fathers to an extreme statement to the effect that man was born utterly depraved by original sin, was guilty in fact of the sin of Adam, and was liable even as an infant to certain damnation unless he were regenerated by baptism. Moreover, said Augustine, this condition is not one that a man can do anything about. Not only is it impossible for him to save himself by good works; he cannot even offer himself to Christ as a candidate for salvation through grace unless he has been elected and predestinated to salvation from before the beginning of the world.

Actually, there was a practical purpose in this extreme predestination theology. In Augustine's eyes it was not fatalism but merely a firm assurance that salvation comes entirely from God without any credit whatever accruing to human beings. This was the moral purpose of such a radical theology. It was the extremest form in which

Augustine could state the proposition that salvation is by grace alone, and not by works of the Law or the practice of mere morality.

In this way, Augustine set the standard for Christian theology for more than fifteen hundred years, because even today soteriology cannot be understood nor defined without reference to Augustine's historic landmarks.

Succeeding generations saw great growth of what is called Semi-Palagianism. For a while Augustinianism remained the orthodox theological doctrine of the church; nevertheless, the whole practice of penance and ascetic discipline constituted a practical Semi-Pelagianism which gradually worked itself out as a doctrine undermining the official orthodoxy of Augustinianism.

### *Reformers Embrace Augustinianism*

The revolt of Luther and Calvin against the penance, ascetic discipline, and works-righteousness of the medieval church naturally threw them back into the arms of Augustine. For through Augustine it was easy logically to disprove the value of works-righteousness in the experience of receiving salvation.

It only substantiates my theory that God speaks to us and moves upon us by the human fellowship of the church and through the human instrumentality of his earthly teachers, both living and dead, when I recite the fact that even to such a

revolutionary and original teacher as Luther, the message came largely by human means. It certainly is not without interest that Luther was a monk of the Augustinian Order where he had his attention especially called to the teachings of Augustine. It is true that much more than the others he was impressed by this teaching; indeed it is almost true that Luther's whole effort was directed toward reactivating the teachings of Augustine in the sixteenth century. Possibly even more than Luther was Calvin a lover of Augustine and an avid student of his theology. Thus it came about that both in the Lutheran and Reformed communions the doctrines of Augustine were revived and expounded with all energy and zeal, greatly to the disgust of liberal Christians of the Renaissance model like Erasmus.

### *Arminius Leads Revolt Against Predestination*

While all religions were free in Holland, it happened that the Reformed Church became most prominent in numbers, and here its leaders followed Augustine and Calvin in the most radical phases of their theology. As often happens with theological extremism, this Calvinistic Augustinianism evoked a revolt, this time on the part of James Arminius (1560-1609), who led the revolt of modern theological scholars against Augustinianism and Calvinism. Arminianism was not actually Semi-Pelagianism; it is rather a reinterpretation

tation of the doctrine of original sin which, while admitting its existence, denied that it involved guilt in infants and asserted that the grace of God was given to every man sufficiently to enable him to choose righteousness and accept the gift of God's grace in salvation.

Not only did the Arminians teach that man was free to accept salvation; they also taught that by grace he could live a victorious life. In the Fifth Article of their Remonstrance drawn up at the Synod of Dort they asserted, "That those who are incorporated into Christ by true faith and have thereby become partakers of his life-giving spirit have thereby full power to strive against Satan, sin, the world, and their own flesh and to win the victory."\*

Very soon Arminianism drew a following among the upper clergy of the Church of England, and although John Wesley's father was only a humble rector in a small English village, he nevertheless followed the Arminian theology of his superiors in the church, and in this way John literally inherited his Arminian theology.

### HOLINESS REFORMATION—ITS RISE AND EMPHASES

Though the Arminian theology in Holland and on the Continent often became a rather cold and philosophical theory sometimes made to harmo-

---

\*Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. I, p. 145.

nize with liberalism and rationalism, such was not its fate in the hands of John Wesley, who, instead, suffused the doctrine with the white fire of a divine enthusiasm and a restless zeal. Wesley also expanded the doctrine into a message of full salvation in the experience of entire sanctification by the destruction of original sin in the believer in his present earthly life instead of waiting, as the Calvinists taught, until death for the complete extinction of the remains of original sin.

The doctrine of entire sanctification thus preached by the Wesleys and their followers spread throughout the whole English-speaking world, as its widening mission accompanied the phenomenal expansion and development of the British Empire around the world. The marvelous spread of English literature also created a favorable atmosphere for the literary mission of the Wesleyan revival.

At the beginning of the Wesleyan revival, practically all the Wesleyan preachers preached entire sanctification as a second crisis in the Christian life. The famous Bishop Asbury laid down the doctrine of entire sanctification in the very foundations of Methodist theology in the American wilderness, and up to the end of the Civil War practically every Methodist preacher in America preached entire sanctification as a second work of grace.

But with the rise of prosperity following the

Civil War, the doctrine rapidly died out in the great rich city churches of the denomination. It was not long until the preachers of sanctification were not welcome in the prosperous churches of the smaller cities and great towns, and at length they were so persecuted by the church leadership that the profession of entire sanctification was liable to be ruinous to a man's career.

### *Believers in Holiness Organize*

It was at this point that the National Holiness Association was formed. Most of its leaders were Methodist preachers who had been driven out of their positions by church officials. However, the official rejection of the doctrine of entire sanctification by Methodism seemed to increase its spread among the other denominations. Nevertheless these denominations also made converts to the doctrine unwelcome in their official circles, and so it happened that the holiness association drew to itself many preachers from other denominations besides the Methodist—Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist; in fact, all the orthodox evangelical Protestant denominations furnished preachers to this fellowship. However, those who joined the holiness association did not thereby disclaim or reject their membership or even their official standing in their denominations. Perhaps the denomination would not excommunicate or disfellowship a minister because he became a

holiness preacher. They simply would not encourage or facilitate his professional career in their midst, and, of course, if a young man came to them to begin a ministerial career, they would not encourage or aid him unless there was a tacit understanding that he would not preach holiness. It was this latter fact that finally called out the holiness denominations who were prepared to educate and train young men for a professional ministry and make a place for them in normal church work.

It was between the expulsion of holiness teaching from the denominations and the rise of the holiness denominations themselves that the holiness association had its greatest era of prosperity. D. S. Warner was active in this era, for he embraced the doctrine of entire sanctification in 1877 and, like many other pastors, he was hampered in his ministry and finally expelled from his pulpit on account of his holiness teaching.

### *Wesley's Doctrine Modified by Time*

Hitherto we have stated the general truth that the doctrine of the holiness movement was derived from the Wesleys and was practically identical with their teaching. In substance this is certainly true. But John Wesley was ordained to preach 225 years ago and launched on his evangelistic enterprise about thirteen years later. Within that length of time nearly any doctrine will



experience growth and development and possibly a difference in emphasis. The differences between the emphases of the Wesleys and those of the modern holiness movement seem to be somewhat as follows:

The Wesleys emphasized entire sanctification as the end of the gradual destruction of carnality, whereas the holiness movement at present never thinks of original sin as being gradually exterminated, but rather immediately destroyed by the Holy Spirit. Furthermore the Wesleys did not emphasize the baptism of the Spirit as the occasion of entire sanctification, at least not to the extent that the holiness movement emphasizes it. The modern holiness movement teaches that the baptism of the Holy Spirit both empowers for service and also marks the moment of the utter destruction of the remains of original sin in the believer.

It must be admitted also that the Wesleys demanded a definite showing of deep piety, sobriety, and unusual earnestness on the part of sanctified believers, whereas in our day not so much seems to be made of the experience and its fruits.

In the Keswick movement in England, the doctrine of a second crisis, a baptism of the Spirit as an endowment of power for victorious living and spiritual service, has been taught since 1875. But it never has connected the baptism of the Spirit with the idea of an eradication of the remains of

carnality or original sin in the believer. In like manner, considerable emphasis on the Spirit's reception has pervaded American Christianity with little or no recognition of the eradication of the remains of original sin. As a matter of fact, a young student of the present day is likely to wonder at the way in which Wesley so easily accepted the doctrine that there were remains of original sin in the believer.

*"Fault and Corruption of Nature"*

The difference between Wesley's normal viewpoint and that of the average student of today is a measure of how far materialistic science has modified the thinking of Christendom, for it is actually the development of materialistic science which has caused the rise of Modernism and weakened the doctrine of original sin in Christendom.

In Wesley's day the doctrine of original sin seemed to him like an axiom of Christian theology, and so also did the doctrine of sin in believers. As a matter of fact, the Church of England to which John Wesley belonged to the end of his life stated positively in the Thirty-Nine Articles that there were remains of sin in the regenerated. Here are the words: "Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam . . . but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam,

whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit, and therefore in every person born into this world it deserveth God's wrath and damnation, and this infection of nature *doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated*, whereby the lust of the flesh . . . is not subject to the law of God" (Article 9).

In his small catechism Luther wrote, "It signifies that the old Adam in us [baptized Christians] is to be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance."

In the Lutheran Formula of Concord in 1577, reference is made to the merely formal obedience of the worldly to which is added, "as also the regenerate do so far as they are yet carnal." The French Confession of Faith in 1559, speaking of original sin, says, "We believe that this evil is truly sin. . . . Even after baptism it is still of the nature of sin." The Reformed Church of Holland decreed in the Synod of Dort in 1619 that Christ "delivers also from the dominion and slavery of sin in this life, though not altogether from the body of sin." Similar quotations may be found in the Westminster Confession.

Even the Church of Rome stated its belief in the remains of original sin in believers. They say "that in the baptized there remains concupiscence, or an incentive to sin. . . . This concupiscence

which the apostle sometimes calls sin [Romans 6:12 and 7:8], the Holy Synod declares that the Catholic Church has never understood it to be called sin as being truly and properly sin in those born again, but because it is of sin and inclines to sin." (See my *Meaning of Sanctification*, pp. 59-62.)

Thus the testimony of history proves that both the Roman Catholic Church and all of the great Protestant communions taught officially in their fundamental creeds that sin remains in the believer after regeneration. Please remember that I am not now trying to prove this doctrine by Scripture, but rather to trace out its historical development before it reached Warner. Wesley believed that it was possible for the Christian to experience the death and removal of all remains of original sin in his nature in this life, and that was the kind of doctrine D. S. Warner received.

#### PERFECTIONISM IN WARNER'S TEACHING

If the doctrine of perfectionism is not a necessary corollary of the doctrine of entire sanctification, it is at least a complementary doctrine and one with a long history in the church's theology. In fact, foremost modern scholars in the field of historical theology have declared positively that until at least the middle of the second century the universal voice of the patristic theology was that Christians must live above sin. What will aston-

ish most students is the fact that sprinkling for baptism arose for the one simple reason that the church taught living above sin.

Because many converts distrusted their ability to do so they postponed their baptism until death approached when immersion was sometimes impossible, owing to the advanced state of the candidate's illness. In such cases the church began to administer clinical baptism—that is, baptism for the sick by pouring or sprinkling. Somewhat later, growing out of the penitential system administered to catechumens and the lapsed, the sacrament of penance and absolution was developed, which made forgiveness of the baptized possible and a sinless life unnecessary.

It was at this point that babies began to be baptized, inasmuch as it was no longer demanded of the baptized to live above sin. It has been said that Origen acclimated sin in the church. From that day till the present time it has been the majority opinion of Christian theologians that a Christian man or any regenerate person sins continuously.

In the prescientific ages of the church this continual sinning was laid to the remains of original sin in the believer. Since the rise of modernism there has been a strong tendency to regard finitude as the source of all sin and the bar to Christian perfection. That is to say that to be free from sin and to live above sin would demand infinity

in a limited human being. This view is usually taken for granted and seldom reasoned out, because if once a man would reason upon this subject he would be forced to conclude that all the angels are sinners, as well as all the Christians. He would also have to believe that saints in heaven must forever remain sinners because they will never become infinite.

The doctrine of Christian perfection has had a long and glorious history in the church, not necessarily tied to any special doctrine of sanctification. See my books, *The Meaning of Salvation* and *The Apostolic Church*.

The perfectionism of Warner was taken over intact from the Wesleyans. I cannot find a single novelty in his doctrine.

#### DIVINE HEALING OF THE BODY

At the beginning of Warner's reformation work, many supposed that the doctrine of divine healing was something novel and perhaps original with this reformation. This idea, of course, is very far from the actual facts of history. There is such a vast mass of miracle and healing in all the history of the primitive church and of later Roman Catholicism up to the present time that any discussion of it in a brief lecture like this is impossible. Suffice it to say that at least a profession of miracles and of healing power continued in the ancient church from the Day of Pentecost till the

rise of Roman Catholicism, and that from the days of Augustine to the present time the Roman Catholic Church has believed in and professed miracles of healing so numerous as to bewilder the imagination.

Because there has for a long time existed in Protestantism the theory that the days of miracles are past and that miracles were reserved for the age which witnessed the founding of the church and the completion of the Bible, many young people of today are quite unaware how strong is the current of Protestant opinion against this view and in favor of the continuance of healing into our own age and time. Briefly let us examine the continuance of healing in the modern Protestant world.

Martin Luther prayed successfully for the healing of his friends. Richard Baxter believed in divine healing. Bengel, the famous Protestant exegete, believed in divine healing. Even Dr. Horace Bushnell, noted as a liberal in his day, believed in the possibility of miraculous healing. To these might be added the names of Grotius, of Holland; Lavater, of Switzerland; Christlieb, and many others. Divine healing and anointing for the sick were made an article of faith of the Waldenses in their Confession of 1431.

In this list may be included the Moravians, the Huguenots, the Covenanters, the Friends, the early Baptists and Methodists, all of whom prac-

ticed divine healing. Many of the early foreign missionaries reported healings on the mission fields. In the middle of the last century Dorothea Trudel exercised a healing ministry at Mannendorf in Switzerland and was followed by Samuel Zeller. Pastor Blumhardt had a similar ministry in Mottlingen, Germany. In the United States in the year 1887 there were thirty faith homes for the healing of the sick, and in England and on the European continent there were many more. (See *The Ministry of Healing*, by A. J. Gordon, and *Counterfeit Miracles*, by Benjamin Warfield.) These facts seem to prove beyond doubt that the doctrine of healing was not original with Warner and the reformers.

Two theological points characterized the doctrine of healing. One was that the gifts of the Spirit are permanent in the church—if not the others, at least the gift of healing. Second, was the doctrine that divine healing is in the atonement and as such is a permanent part of the gospel regardless of any debate concerning the continuance of the gifts of the Spirit.

From the doctrine that divine healing is in the atonement the conclusion was drawn that just as you cannot trust in anything else but Christ for salvation, so you dare not use medicine in sickness, as that would indicate a trust in something other than the atoning merit of Christ's death. The reaction from this conclusion has grown so



great in our time that many deny that divine healing is in the atonement. In this connection it is interesting to note that Professor Warfield, a famous Presbyterian theologian who denies the continuance of the gifts in the church, admits that there is no error in the doctrine of healing in the atonement. He writes, "This error does not lie in the supposition that redemption is for the body as well as the soul and that the saved man shall be renewed in the one as well as in the other. This is true."\*

Warfield's theory is that we are actually redeemed from sickness, disease, and death in our bodies, but that we do not receive this benefit until the resurrection. My own theory is that we receive it in part from time to time as God wills through faith, but not completely until the resurrection, according to Paul's doctrine in Romans 8: 23, where he says we are "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies." I take this to mean that the redemption of the body, though actually in the atonement, is not completed until the moment of resurrection and glorification of the body. In this interpretation is found the resolution of the paradox between miraculous healing through the atonement and the use of scientific medical treatment in disease. However, I shall discuss the denial of medical treatment to

---

\**Counterfeit Miracles*, p. 176.

the sick in my next lecture on the subject of the ascetic discipline of the church.

### MEANING OF THE ORDINANCES

Warner and his colleagues were far removed from any doctrine of sacramentarianism. The doctrine of the sacraments is the theory that certain rites like the Lord's Supper (the Mass), baptism, and so forth produce results of themselves, regardless of the state of mind of the recipient. Most sacramentarians maintain that the priest must intend to do what the sacrament indicates, but that is, of course, a very tender point, as it would be easier to rest a man's salvation on his own individual intentions than to rest it upon the intention of a priest whose inner thoughts are to him inscrutable. Sacramentarianism has, however, various grades from the miracle-working rites of the Roman Catholic Mass down through varying degrees of faith in an objective benefit from the rites of the church. Along with the sacraments as such, there go also sacramentals, such as altars, candles, and open books, used symbolically; holy water, incense, and the like.

In order to show their utter repudiation of all such conceptions of the Christian rites, Warner and his associates called the rites of the church ordinances instead of sacraments. They taught that these ordinances were only symbols or figures of the real grace of God which comes to

the heart independently of every artificial means. They were patient and sanctified men, but I cannot imagine one of them being calm in the presence of a divided chancel and an imitation altar in a Church of God building. They believed that the central pulpit was a symbol of the prophetic ministry of men of God called by the Holy Spirit to preach, whereas the symbolism of the divided chancel is that of the priestly ministry administering the sacraments of an official hierarchy. The prophetic minister of the Word of God is not standing between the people and God, for there is no bit of wooden furniture behind him which could symbolize God any better than the pulpit itself does.

#### THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF WARNER

As our studies have indicated, there was almost no single point of Warner's doctrine and practice which it is not possible to point out as a large single thread of theological teaching running continuously throughout the history of the church from apostolic times. It has been my contention for a long time that there is only one such element of novelty in the teaching of Warner, and that is his doctrine that the visible and invisible church are by nature identical and that their identity may be made manifest by doing away with all human organizations called denominations and abiding alone in the fellowship of the

Christian experience of the grace of God. Briefly, then, we may call this the principle of the identity of the visible and the invisible church.

### *Visible and Invisible Church Are One*

Now it is a mistake to brand this doctrine as a complete novelty, inasmuch as it is the testimony of the ablest church historians that this was the universal doctrine of the church until early in the fifth century. All authorities agree that Augustine was the first great theologian to teach a distinction between the visible and invisible church. In actual fact, this doctrine of the identity of the visible and invisible church is still held by the Roman Catholic Church, as it has been held by that church since the fourth century. In fact, it was one of the stigmas of Warner's doctrine that it was, in effect, the same as that of the Roman church, yet, as his critics said, applied to a little splinter of narrow fanatics.

Nevertheless, if anyone cared to be truly critical in dealing with such an obscure and humble man, he would as a critic of historical theology be bound to acknowledge that there was a world of difference between Warner's doctrine of identity and that of the Church of Rome, the doctrine of the Roman church being nothing more than a caricature of the position held by Warner.

The difference might be illustrated in this way. A chemist shows you two glasses of water. One,

he says, is salt, "because I took it out of the Atlantic Ocean." Another he says is salt, "because I tested it and found salt in it." Now regarding the flask of water said to be salt because of its connection with the Atlantic Ocean, we are entitled to ask whether this connection is such as to insure its quality. Naturally we are inclined to think it must be salt if it was taken out of the Atlantic Ocean. Nevertheless there still remains room for grave doubt. Was this water taken out of the Atlantic Ocean near the shore where the river Amazon runs into the sea? It is well known that at that point the vast flood of sweet water from that mighty river pushes the salt water out to sea for quite a distance. At that point water taken out of the Atlantic Ocean would not be salt. To call it salt because it is literally sea water is merely a figure of speech. In reality its relation to the sea is modified to such an extent that, although it may literally be called sea water, it is actually not salt water. So we say of the Church of Rome. It lies at that point in the sea of Christianity where the rivers of worldliness and apostasy flow in so far that, although literally and in form a Christian organization, it is not a fair example of the identity of the visible and invisible church.

### *Congregations of the Redeemed Make the Church*

Warner's test is far different. He says that if a congregation is actually redeemed and if that

congregation is not barred off from the whole company of believers by some self-exclusive rules of its own, then that congregation is an example of the identity of the visible and invisible church, even though some of its professed members may not be perfect examples of Christianity any more than were some members of the church at Corinth.

It was Warner's doctrine that any congregation like this was in fact nothing else but a church of God, whether it had ever heard of Warner or not. The reformation which Warner preached was directed to the purpose of restoring the whole Christian community to such a status of spiritual and organic unity that the church would indeed be one in the evening of the world's history, just as it had been one in the days of the apostolic church. The quality of this ideal community was a condition of spiritual integrity which Warner defined but did not manufacture synthetically. It was a condition of spiritual health whose specifications Warner described but which might be reached by a congregation or by a thousand congregations who had never heard of him.

This doctrine was novel in the modern Christian world. In fact, it had never been taught in Protestantism except for a few brief months in the early fellowship of the Society of Friends. They, however, soon gave the doctrine up as being impossible of carrying out in their struggle

to defend themselves against the hostility of the state church and of the government of the England of their time.

### *The Redeemed Community Must Be One*

The doctrine of Warner might be restated in this form. From where we stand, Christ's principal work is that of redemption and Christ is the redeemer. But a redeemer is not one merely in name. To be a redeemer Christ must actually redeem lost men. When Christ redeems man he creates a redeemed community, but a redeemed community is also a redemptive community. Such a redemptive community is called the bride of Christ and even the body of Christ in the New Testament. Now the welfare of the redeemed community is fairly equal to the urgency and value of the work of redemption, being so necessary thereto. Therefore in Warner's view the reformation of the redeemed community to its ideal standard of New Testament unity was a work no less valuable than salvation work, for it was a necessary preparation for the church's work of evangelism.

The church discipline of the local congregation is worthy of study in this connection, but I shall postpone that inquiry to the next lecture.

It is well known by all theological scholars that evangelical Christianity has been extremely conservative ever since the days of Martin Luther.

Therefore within Protestantism it has been men like Schleiermacher and Ritschl who have developed novelties in Protestant theology. We shall not find these novelties in any great evangelist of the evangelical movement from the days of Spenser down through Wesley, Whitefield, and on through the evangelists to Warner himself. Only in George Fox is there found an exception to this rule, and space forbids a discussion of him.

Also on account of lack of space, it is not necessary to discuss the various theories of the church, except that we must note that Warner held the almost universal ecclesiology of both Roman Catholic and Protestant theologians; namely, that all of the redeemed constitute the body of Christ, the church. At this point he departed from the Anabaptist theory which was that the kingdom of God comprises all the redeemed, whereas the church is the local congregation formed by groups of believers on the basis of a covenant of fellowship. Thus they held that there is one kingdom but many churches. This doctrine, of course, Warner denied.



### Lecture III

## THE ASCETIC DISCIPLINE OF THE NEW REFORMATION

WHEN JESUS CHRIST said, "Except a man deny himself and take up his cross and follow me he cannot be my disciple," by that doctrine and by his own example he laid the greatest burden of anguish and unnecessary pain upon the life of men that was ever laid upon them by any single person. So thought Swinburne, the famous English poet, and so have spoken many other modern rationalists and atheists. From the standpoint of the committed Christian, such statements are the basest slanders and moreover they will not bear any kind of critical examination in face of the misery which drunkenness, crime, and loose and vicious living in general have brought upon mankind. There is, however, enough truth in the statement that Christians have created much misery by a misunderstanding of the duty of cross bearing to warrant our careful investigation of the subject.

First of all, there is an amazing amount of ignorance regarding the nature and meaning of the

ascetic discipline preached and practiced by Warner and his colleagues. In this connection remember that probably not one of these pioneers ever used the term "ascetic discipline." Perhaps "measuring up" was the most common term to describe this discipline, and it is certainly true that many preachers regarded the ascetic discipline as far and away the most important part of the whole message that they preached. Here please pardon a digression.

About forty-six years ago at one of our greatest camp meetings attended by many thousands of outsiders, on a Sunday afternoon I heard one of our best-educated ministers (he was an M.A.) preach for two hours on the subject of why we should avoid the use of pepper.

I give this illustration as evidence that the ascetic discipline occupied a very foremost place in our preaching.

### WHAT IS ASCETIC DISCIPLINE?

But let us stop long enough to ask, What is the meaning of ascetic discipline? I am afraid that many theologues of our time have a wrong conception of the meaning of ascetic discipline. We are often told that asceticism is a process of self-destruction which belongs to non-Christian mysticism. This mysticism has as its objective the identification of the individual soul with the universal oversoul of the world—the God of panthe-

ism. Doubtless this view is true of heathen asceticism, but it has very little value in the study of Christian asceticism, for Christian asceticism is not directed to the destruction of the physical life but rather to its proper discipline. In fact, the word "ascetic" comes from the Greek and originally meant an athlete. Christian asceticism, then, is the practice of a spiritual discipline intended to train the Christian believer in a more effective, skillful, and successful life. It may be described as Christian self-denial and disciplinary training for Christian service and life.

This understanding of the meaning of Christian ascetic discipline should help solve many of our problems and should show us why it is often necessary for a Christian to give up things which are not necessarily sin if thereby he may cultivate greater Christian efficiency.

In the eighteenth century the Deists of England laid down the proposition that it was a sin to demand that a man give up anything which was not sinful in itself. This theory plays havoc with Christian ascetic discipline. All of us have seen young students give up many desirable things in order to devote themselves to one supremely desirable thing such as getting an education. The medical student, the student of engineering or of art, and in fact the learner in any exacting and valuable science or art is obliged to give up many good things in order to cultivate the best. This

truth is the logical basis of normal Christian ascetic discipline. I have heard young people exhorted that they would never have to give up any good thing in following the Lord, whereas the simplest mind ought to understand that no excellence can be obtained in any field without giving up many good things. Furthermore, the cultivation of all good things is the road to confusion and mediocrity in any calling.

From the standpoint of these reflections it seems apparent that any Christian fellowship must be able to train its followers in a very pronounced ascetic Christian discipline. In fact, the subject is so deeply important that it must be a great cause of regret that it is nowadays so completely neglected. This neglect is largely due to the fallacy that no Christian need ever give up anything except sin; then this principle immediately plunges us into a war of words regarding what is and is not sin. A far more fruitful approach would be to discuss ascetic discipline from the standpoint of the various ends to be served by various types of ascetic discipline.

Looking back over the history of our work, it sometimes seems that the ascetic discipline which we used to develop saints was at times as erratic and unfruitful as if we had set a boy to learn carpentry in order that he might become a surgeon. However, if mistakes were made, it was in

the application of the principle, not in the principle itself.

### THE MOOD OF MARTYRS

It frightens us when we ask ourselves, Would we actually find martyrs very agreeable people with whom to live? Theoretically we always suppose that martyrs, being the deepest Christians, must necessarily be the most pleasant ones with whom to company. But such a supposition presumes that we ourselves are also of the deepest order of Christian experience. Rubbing shoulders with the martyrs might dispel that view. I personally met, and heard reports about, some of the confessors and near martyrs of eastern Europe. This information combined with what I learned among the pioneers strengthens the impression that martyrlike Christians are likely to be deeply inclined to asceticism.

There is every reason to believe that in the martyr ages of the church from the Day of Pentecost until the rise of the imperial church in the fourth century the Christian community was deeply sacrificial, much inclined to asceticism. And there is evidence that this asceticism took such forms as vegetarianism, plain dress, celibacy, and abstinence from all amusements. We do know that during the Middle Ages the classic form of Christian asceticism was poverty, chastity (celibacy), and obedience to ecclesiastical authority.

Luther rejected all this. Whereas Augustine had been able to combine his doctrine of free grace with the practice of a rigid asceticism, such a course seemed illogical to Luther. He ate until he became very fat. He married a wife, he drank intoxicating liquor. And he loosened the bonds of ascetic discipline in Wittenberg until the disorder became so great in his own university town that Luther was burdened with melancholy in his old age, and actually, like Tolstoy in a later day, ran away from home on occasion because of his disgust and disappointment with his followers.

Calvin, on the other hand, did not make this mistake. He burdened Geneva with the sternest Christian ascetic discipline of any civilized community outside a monastery in modern times. The results, however, were of the best. Geneva flourished in every excellence, and people of the highest type flocked to the city from all over Europe in order to enjoy life in the most morally progressive city on earth.

The neglect of ascetic discipline, together with the fury of religious wars, almost destroyed the religious value of the Reformation in Lutheran lands until the rise of the pietistic revival. The pietistic revival was characterized by an insistence upon personal regeneration and active evangelism. It immediately adopted a strong pattern of ascetic discipline, which in fact has been handed down through the revival movement among the

evangelical churches to the present day. This pattern differs from that of Roman Catholicism in the following ways: It forbids gambling, drinking, dancing, and the theater in all forms. It forbids fine dressing and, under Wesley, jewelry and expensive clothing. It forbids gay conduct, licentious and boisterous behavior, and even jesting and humor on occasion. It was, and is, a stern pattern of life.

#### REFORMERS FOLLOW ASCETIC PATTERN

There is no manner of doubt that this ascetic pattern was followed more or less closely by all the early Protestant churches of America. But by the time of Warner it had been pretty well outworn in all the rich Protestant churches of the land. Since these were the people who often persecuted Warner's followers, it seemed only natural to suppose that the discipline which they had rejected was a mark of true Christian character.

Therefore the pioneers of this reformation, partly of necessity but largely of choice, accepted a very heavy yoke of ascetic discipline as one form of bearing the cross of Christ. Alcoholic liquor, tobacco, dancing, shows, gambling, fine dress, jewelry, joking, sports, and games except for physical exercise were avoided. Even courtship was a pleasure denied the committed Christian. If you ask how we got married, I can only say that we believed in miracles.

## *The Emphasis on Plain Dress*

The denial of jewelry came from the Methodist teaching, so also the plainness of dress. Before Wesley the Quakers had enjoined plainness of dress, but Wesley bitterly condemned them for wearing expensive cloth even though cut in a plain pattern.

John Wesley's teaching on dress is given by Dr. J. W. Bready as follows:

“These Scriptures manifestly forbid ordinary Christians, those in the lower and middle ranks of life, to be adorned with gold or pearls or costly apparel.’

“Gay, gaudy attire, Wesley taught, ‘engenders pride, and where it already is, it increases it’; and ‘breeds and increases vanity’; it ‘begets anger’; and tends to ‘create and inflame lust.’ ‘Every shilling,’ he says, ‘which you save from your own apparel, you may expend in clothing the naked and relieving the necessities of the poor’; and ‘everything about thee that costs more than Christian duty required thee to lay out, is the blood of the poor!’ Then, pointing the tenor of his message, he asks: ‘Is not your dress as gay, as expensive as theirs, who never had such warning? Are you not as fashionably dressed as others of your rank that are not Methodists?’ ‘But I can afford it,’ comes your reply. ‘O lay aside that idle, nonsensical word! No Christian can afford to



waste any part of the substance which God has entrusted to him.' 'Let me see before I die,' he pleads, 'a Methodist congregation full as plain dressed as a Quaker congregation. Only be more consistent. Let *your* dress be *cheap as well as plain*. Otherwise you do but trifle with God and me and your own souls. I pray you, let there be no more costly silks among you, how grave soever they may be.' Just here, to Southey and his set, lay the rub. They were too refined to desire loud, foppish apparel; they wanted a habit 'rich, not gaudy,' but always costly as their purse could buy. To Wesley, by such indulgence, they were 'making themselves accountable for all the want, affliction and distress, which they may, but do not, remove.' ”\*

The Free Methodist Church, organized in 1860, denied men the necktie, at least in parts of the Middle West, and it was possibly from these that the custom reached us. B. E. Warren told me personally that on one occasion a man who was an inquirer visited in the community and attended the meetings for several days, meanwhile condemning Warner for wearing a necktie. At last he challenged Warner, affirming that he would give up his sect if Warner would give up his necktie. In that way the custom of discarding the necktie originated among us. Though I believe that

---

\*In *This Freedom—Whence?* The American Tract Society, 1942; pp. 178 ff. Used by permission of the Free Methodist Publishing House.

this story is true, I also think that the then current ideas concerning pride in the holiness movement, combined with the fact that the reformation work proceeded mostly in the rural districts, created an atmosphere in which a man wearing a tie was supposed to be dressed up beyond the bounds of Christian humility.

It must be borne in mind that the earliest representatives of all the great Protestant sects were mostly called from the very poorest classes of European and American society, and the pattern of plain dress was perfectly indigenous. Sixty years ago anyone who went well dressed to church in many a rural community was almost certain to be criticized for pride, regardless of the denominational connection of the church. America was Christianized by what were then the small sects of Protestantism, and these carried everywhere the pietistic pattern of ascetic discipline. The reformers inherited this pattern and merely sought to sustain and promote it in a growing culture which tended constantly to break it down.

The doctrine regarding sports was of the same cloth. The old Methodist discipline demanded of preachers never to be idle and never to be triflingly employed. By a stern pietistic interpretation this requirement ruled out sports, and a holiness college would employ a military drill as a means of exercise and physical training rather than athletic games. However, N. H. Byrum said that ath-

letic games were played by Gospel Trumpet Office workers back in the 1880's. Though games were not stressed in later times, nevertheless much attention was given to physical exercise at the Gospel Trumpet Home.

### *Attitude Toward Medical Help*

I think that the denial of medicine to the sick may be included under the category of ascetic discipline. This form of asceticism has a very old history. There is good evidence that the subject was debated in the rabbinical schools of Palestine two hundred years before Christ. Ben Sirach, as early as 175 B.C., enters the debate with the following opinion:

“Cultivate the physician in accordance with the need of him,

For him also hath God ordained.

It is from God that the physician getteth wisdom,  
And from the king he receiveth gifts. . . .

God hath created medicines out of the earth,  
And let not a discerning man reject them. . . .

By means of them the physician assuageth pain,  
And likewise the apothecary prepareth a confection. . . .

My son, in sickness be not negligent;

Pray unto God, for He can heal. . . .

And to the physician also give a place;

Nor should he be far away, for of him there is need.

For there is a time when successful help is in his  
power;

For he also maketh supplication to God,  
To make his diagnosis successful,  
And the treatment, that it may promote re-  
covery.\*

In view of the fact that this book had been popular among the Jews for generations, I sincerely believe that Jesus alluded to its teaching with approval when he said, "They that be whole need not a physician but they that are sick" (Matt. 9:12). In other words, Jesus himself asserted plainly that the sick needed a physician, and this teaching so impressed the evangelists that it is repeated in each of the Synoptic Gospels.

However, there was strong teaching to the contrary even in the Apostolic Age. Philo Judaeus, famous Jewish Hellenistic philosopher (20 B.C.-A.D. 54), positively condemned the use of doctors and medicines on the grounds that this practice indicates lack of faith. Philo wrote:

"If anything against their will befalls doubters, they flee, because they do not believe in a helping God, to the sources of help which the occurrence suggests—to physicians, simples, physics, correct diet; to all the aids offered to a dying race; and, if anyone suggest to them, Flee in your miseries to the sole physician of the ills of the soul, and

---

\*The Wisdom of Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) 38:1-14 (Charles translation).

leave the aids falsely so-called to the creature subjected to suffering, they laugh, and scoff, and say, Good Morrow!—and are unwilling to flee to God if they can find anything to protect them from the coming evil; to be sure, if nothing that man does suffices, but everything, even the most highly esteemed, shows itself injurious, then they renounce in their perplexity the help of others, and flee, compelled, the cowards, late and with difficulty, to God, the sole Saviour.”\*

As evidence that most theological doctrines are very old, I submit that I have heard this same argument repeated many times by preachers who never knew there was such a person as Philo.

Karlstadt (Andreas Bodenstein), Luther's colleague in the University of Wittenberg, believed that it was a sin to use medicine. Luther certainly believed in divine healing, since he prayed for the healing of many of his associates and won numerous victories in this field, but he did not agree with Karlstadt on the sin of using medicines. The famous theologian Horace Bushnell may be said to have added to the weight of authority against the use of medicine, for he cites approvingly the testimony of a friend of his who testified that he had committed a sin by intending to use medicine, and that when he confessed this sin and asked for his son's healing, his prayer was heard. (See *Nature and the Supernatural*, p. 481.)

---

\*From *De Sacrifici Abel*, Mang., I, 176, 23 ff.

Throughout the literature of the subject, the divine healing authorities vacillate, some claiming that the use of medicine is sin, others ignoring the subject as irrelevant to the question of healing, and still others holding that the use of medicine is entirely consistent with miraculous healing.

The pioneers of this reformation held very strictly to a complete denial of the use of medicine under any circumstances. Some said that it was a sin to put a cold cloth on a fevered brow. If a man like Horace Bushnell could testify to his belief in many healings, it seems perfectly fair to say that these pioneers experienced many healings of the most wonderful nature. From a human standpoint, however, there were also many failures—not failures of God, of course, but failures of the expectations of the brethren.

I have known lifelong invalids whose plight seemed to be caused by the lack of medical care. My mother was one of these; she died a helpless cripple by the loss of both legs and in a state of partial blindness. It often happened that children died without medical care. In such cases the parents were sometimes persecuted, and it was one of the anxieties of the time that through the loss of the life of a close relative one might not only suffer the deep grief of the separation but also the shame and sorrow of a public prosecution with the possibility of a prison sentence. Certainly this fact made the denial of medicine a

truly ascetic discipline, although no person to my knowledge was ever convicted and sent to prison on such a charge, from the days when Dorothea Trudel was prosecuted in Switzerland early in the nineteenth century and defended by famous attorneys and theologians, down to our own time. Nevertheless, the strain was great upon the accused, and I have never known the effect to be beneficial to the church in any discernible way.

My own belief is that divine healing is not inconsistent with medical treatment because God uses means in supplying our physical needs—food, clothing, lodging, and so forth—and there is nothing inconsistent with using means for the benefit of our body in other respects. Moreover, the promise of healing is conditioned upon the fact that all men must die and the promise of bodily redemption is not to be fully realized until the resurrection. To my mind, this is as complete a solution of the mystery of delayed and denied healings to the believer as may be expected in this world of mystery where faith and not knowledge must be our guide.

#### SOME REFORMERS INVITED PERSECUTION

No doubt there is a sense in which persecution may be regarded as a part of the ascetic discipline. Certainly it is a part of the cross of Christ, being a form of suffering avoidable through denial of Christ. Doubtless we tread on dangerous ground

when we attempt to judge the consciences of holy men with the consecration to martyrdom by saying that they did not sufficiently avoid the causes and challenges to martyrdom. If one would study the martyr ages of the church, approaching them in the spirit of our modern, cheap, selfish compromise, it is possible that the lofty mountains of the church's heroic testimony might flatten out until we could assert that no martyrdom was ever necessary. By a little compromise, a little evasion, a little concealment, and a little conformity, all the bloody sweat, the anguishing tears, the bitter suffering, the creaking racks, and the flaming fires of martyrdom might have been avoided. We must wonder what kind of church would have emerged from such a weak, evasive, and ultimately tricky testimony as that would have been.

At the same time, loving and honoring them though we do, it seems to be a judicial appraisal of their conduct to say that many times our pioneers challenged and invited persecution. I have talked to B. E. Warren who told me that when lying under a house in Alabama beside D. S. Warner as they hid from the mob, he had a very clear conviction that Brother Warner had brought on the persecution by the rash language which he used in his preaching. Actually, of course, we might admit this statement to be a fact, and yet ask ourselves whether that preaching would have



been just as effectual and fruitful if it had lacked the boldness and resolution which it contained.

### *The Attack on Babylon*

One of the greatest causes of the mobs was the reformers' attacks on Babylon, meaning, of course, the denominations of Christendom, not excepting the local representatives. This attack was based on the apocalyptic language of the Book of Revelation. Far from being a novelty in Christian history, this application of the symbolism of Revelation to the current scene had been popular for ages. As early as 991 the Bishop of Orleans at the Council of Rheims branded the pope as Antichrist. So did Grosseteste, the thirteenth-century bishop of Lincoln, and Savonarola. This view was held by the Albigenses, the Waldenses, by Wycliffe, by the Lollards, and by the Hussites. Even St. Bernard branded the pope as the "beast" of the Apocalypse. This was the view of Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Melancthon, on the continent, and of Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper, and Jewell in England. The Lutheran Church put this view into their early creeds, as it also stands in the dedication of the Authorized Version to King James I. I cite these facts as an illustration of the use of the symbols of the Book of Revelation. It was the constant habit of George Fox to assail the "sect houses" as "Babylon."

Actually Warner never challenged the "Baby-

lon" of his time with anything like the boldness with which George Fox performed that task. It was a custom with George Fox, founder of the Quakers, to march boldly into a "sect house," which meant the meeting place of any of the churches of his time, either of the free church or of the Church of England. There he would stand up and assail the "sect priests" with the harshest, most abusive language. This generally ended in a riot in which Fox was beaten unmercifully with books and whatever was at hand and promptly sent to jail for a long term.

While apparently Wesley's language was not so provocative, nevertheless he was hounded by mobs often led by members of the clergy. This also was the experience of the early Methodists in their pioneer activities in the American wilderness. Warner was certainly following in the footsteps of great leaders in arousing the mobs.

### *Conflict with Social Prejudices*

George Fox believed that he had received a revelation commanding him to keep his hat on in the presence of his superiors as well as his inferiors. He also was commanded, he thought, to call all men "thee" and "thou" without any courtesy titles. The result of this conduct was often embarrassing and sometimes almost tragic in its consequences. William Penn, a famous Quaker, was a member of the aristocracy. There-

fore his meeting with King Charles II was bound to create a severe social and mental strain. King Charles, a trifling and frivolous man, solved the problem by remarking, "In the king's presence someone must take off his hat; since you will not, then I will take off mine." In the presence of a great man like William Penn such a humorous solution was possible, but in other cases times without number, royalty and aristocracy were deeply insulted by this custom of the Quakers.

Fortunately, shall we say, the pioneers of this reformation never went to such extremes. However, their rejection of the necktie was a pretty fair equivalent, especially when the movement pushed into the cities and young men entered university classes and sought positions in the white collar industries of the country. The net result was that there were comparatively few young men, or young women either, in our fellowship, for the young women were repelled quite as much by the ugliness of the prescribed dress for girls and women.

Probably we should not class going against race segregation as a form of asceticism, but it may be treated most easily under this head, and it actually imposed more social ostracism and minor persecution than almost any other custom of the saints, especially in the South. In Alabama a mob raided the campground, dynamited the premises, and drove the preachers off with threats of

death. Some of the persecuted waded long distances through water and others escaped disguised in women's clothes. This was because of their failure to enforce segregation of the races.

Looking back to the beginnings of this reformation, it seems evident that worldliness was understood to apply to the current life of the people without very strict reference to the ethical quality of that life. In other words, worldliness was not defined as the sinful behavior of men, but rather as whatever was the common custom of the times, especially within the ranges of art, music, beauty, and the enjoyment of life.

#### ASCETIC DISCIPLINE APPLIED TO MINISTRY

The custom of supporting ministers by faith alone without any contract or formal provision may well be regarded as a phase of ascetic discipline, because it occasioned more unnecessary suffering to the ministers than perhaps any other ascetic practice of the time. The idea of faith support and faith institutions is doubtless indigenous in Christianity and as such is likely to emerge at any time. But the first marked example of faith institutions I have found is that of the famous pietist scholar, August Herman Francke (1663-1727). Francke became a professor in the pietistic university of Halle. There he founded a number of very useful institutions on faith and ran them by faith in answer to prayer. When he

died 2,200 children were being educated in a faith school which he operated. He also had an orphans' home run on the same principle. He was followed in this kind of work by George Mueller (1805-1898), a product of the German universities. Mueller went to England and founded a number of orphan houses in Bristol, all of them supported by faith. Through the years Mueller prayed out \$7,500,000.

These examples were enforced in America by the experience of the early Baptist preachers who made a practice of preaching without salary and living by their own work, mostly farming, in the early days. Out of these precedents the pioneers of this reformation elaborated a doctrine and practice of traveling and preaching by faith without taking collections or asking anybody for money.

The first step away from this practice was to take up offerings by having people march around and drop their money into the collection box. Passing the basket was the next step and after that a fixed salary. I believe that the analogy between trusting God for healing without medicine and trusting God for food and living expenses without salary was also a factor in the development of the theory that the minister should be supported without salary and without offerings. In any case, it made his life so hard that practically no minister could be a pastor unless he sup-

ported himself by some other work, and often the evangelists were so poverty-stricken that they could not present a respectable appearance in the pulpit, and their homes were often very austere. Perhaps this is one reason why so many of their children drifted from the church and religion.

The austerity and simplicity of the lives of the pioneers were reflected in their church worship which was by intention extremely free and unconventional. The theory was that where a group of ministers were together, all should wait to discover to which one the Lord had given the message. That person would then arise and preach. Sometimes there was actually a race to the pulpit, the first man standing therein being the preacher of the day.

### THE BURDEN OF CONGREGATIONAL JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE

Another feature of church life in the early reformation days was certainly taken over from Anabaptist and Mennonite practice. According to the theory of the Anabaptists, every Christian is a member of the kingdom of God, but each congregation is a separate church organized by a band of believers on the basis of a covenant of fellowship. This covenant of fellowship must be observed by each believer. Moreover, he has a

certain responsibility in aiding his brethren to keep the terms of this fellowship.

It seems fair to say that this one factor of Anabaptist doctrine and practice has caused more mental anguish and suffering than any other element in Christian history excepting only the Inquisition itself. Among such churches as the Dunkards, a man might be excommunicated from his church, and then his family would not be permitted to eat with him any more throughout his whole life unless he submitted to the leaders of the congregation. Throughout the long weary years of rearing his family, this man would have to sit at a separate table from his own wife and children. Menno Simon himself even advocated the cessation of the marital relation between husband and wife as a part of the excommunication sentence.

Study of the doctrine of the Church of God reformation which bases church membership in communion with the mystic body of Christ should have convinced anyone that excommunication for trivial reasons was contrary to the very principles of the reformation itself. Nevertheless this practice crept in among us and brought with it much sorrow. It must always be the case that if the congregation is to enforce a rigid pattern of ascetic discipline, then divisions are inevitable.

The Mennonites have been very diligent in this practice. Congregations have split over the small-

est matters of ascetic discipline. In one congregation a split was made because the young men adopted a new fashion in trousers. They were promptly expelled, and another congregation arose. In this way the Mennonites have multiplied into 122 different sects and factions in the United States alone, and it is as plain as day that if the reformation follows this policy which is actually contrary to its fundamental theology, then it must give up its hope of unity and resign itself to becoming a hotbed of factionalism instead of an exemplar of unity.

#### THE DISCIPLINE OF LIFE

Undoubtedly, it was the intention of the ascetic discipline of the reformation to produce a disciplined life and quite certainly this is a worthy ideal. From time immemorial it has been found necessary to apply a rigid discipline to human life in order to produce the soldier, the scholar, the skillful workman, the trained administrator, the competent teacher, and the able professional man, whether in medicine, law, or theology. It is the unspoken assumption of the advocates of Christian ascetic discipline that a Christian experience is a gift of God. A definitely consecrated Christian is the fruit of discipline exercised throughout a lifetime, and his training is of greater value than is any other type of training, just as skill in Christian living is more valuable



than skill in any secular calling. In my opinion the only question is whether in any specific instance the discipline involved contributed to the spiritual development desired. Here, however, it is important to remember that a vast amount of negative discipline—that is, the denial of many innocent things and even some good and desirable things—becomes essential in order to find time and strength for the cultivation of the highest spiritual interests.

The ascetic discipline of the early pioneers was not always easy to dissect out of the hard pattern of their pioneer struggle for existence. Thus, an older man who had lived a grinding life of poverty where physical labor was necessary for perhaps fourteen or fifteen hours a day in order to maintain existence, would, when converted and launched into the ministry, perhaps regard intellectual pursuits as a form of idleness. There were not wanting those who condemned reading the newspaper as a waste of time and a sin against God. Under such circumstances, reading a work of fiction or giving any attention to art was quite out of the question.

Undoubtedly, the pattern of piety which came out of the lonely and toilsome life of the wilderness was one of extreme asceticism. The Christian person must not wear fine clothes, jewelry, nor any adornment. Sometimes the extremes here met in amusing paradoxical fashion. For instance,

one conference of some women in the East decided there should be no gores (whatever they are) in the front of a dress, but it might be gored in the back in order to make a comfortable fit. My wife tells me seven gores were the limit in 1912. About the same time another conference of Christian women in the West met and decided that there might be some gores in the front of a dress in order to make a comfortable fit but there must be no gores in the back.

In the same way, men could wear a bow upon the ribbon of their hats, but they dare not transfer this bow to the front of their collars. One preacher in Missouri reported that a butterfly lodged on his collar button and stretched its wings out over the edges of his collar one night in such a fashion as almost to cause him to be renounced because the brethren believed he was wearing a neat bow necktie. Another brother saved the preacher's reputation for orthodoxy by rising and grasping the butterfly, dislodging it from the front of his collar, and sending it on its way to freedom, thus showing the suspected minister as quite devoid of such worldliness. One of the foremost of the pioneers (S. L. Speck) told me that he lost faith in the antitite doctrine and on going to a wedding among outsiders he donned a necktie. When he reached the wedding, to his dismay and astonishment he met one of the most rigid of

women preachers who almost caused his excommunication.

At its worst, however, our discipline concerning dress was never so radical as that of the Quakers, the River Brethren, the Amish, and other ascetic sects. As soon as the men put on the necktie it was no longer possible to identify a fellow member by his dress. The women, however, struggled with the problems of ascetic discipline in dress for a much longer time, inasmuch as the changing of fashion and the custom of bobbing the hair have kept debate alive for them down to the present time. Paul's admonition to the women of Corinth to wear a veil in public has all been turned into a discussion of long or short hair, a subject which was not on the Apostle's mind at all, except merely as an illustration of his reasons for enforcing the wearing of the veil.

#### ASCETICISM AS A CONDITION OF INSTITUTIONAL EXISTENCE

Hitherto, I have referred to the extreme discipline of the narrowest and most rigid sects. However, the student of the subject should bear in mind that the two oldest forms of the Hebrew-Christian tradition among us today have brought down from ancient times ascetic customs which are probably as heavy to bear as those which we followed in the old days. Take the Jews for instance. In a Jewish restaurant where Kosher food

is served, you may not eat butter or milk with your beef, because it stands in the Torah, "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk" (Exod. 23:19). This law is extended to forbid the eating of milk and meat of any kind at the same time. Also, the orthodox Jew is not permitted to ride in an automobile on the Sabbath at the present day; neither may he turn on an electric light on that day. These are a few examples, not to mention the burden of circumcision, abstinence from pork and all the long list of forbidden things in Judaism. When we go to Roman Catholicism, the picture is similar—no meat on Friday, nor on all the days of Lent, celibacy for all the clergy and for all the church's dedicated womanhood. To this may be added the thousands of minutiae concerning fasting, confession, and the like.

Here we see two of the largest and most influential religious groups in modern, liberal civilization which practice painful and laborious forms of asceticism which they have carried down from immemorial time. Nevertheless, these institutions continue to grow and develop among us. In many cases, they grow much more rapidly than do the liberal types of religion that reject asceticism altogether. This raises the question whether some form of asceticism is not really necessary for the continued existence and perpetuation of a religious institution or social group. In fact, the

Jews have faced this problem boldly. Writing in *Life* magazine,\* Dr. Philip Bernstein, a Reformed Jewish rabbi and president of the largest organization of rabbis in the world, in referring to the rigid asceticism of some of the orthodox Jews, says,

“Reform Jews follow an entirely different line. They maintain that Judaism is the sum of the evolving religious experience of the Jewish people. It is and always has been subject to change. By their views, for example, the observance of ancient dietary laws is optional. The Reformers permit men and women to sit together in the synagogues; men may shave their faces; the New Year is observed for one day not two.”

But what about these changes? The head of the Reformed rabbis goes on to say:

“The net result of these changes has been a watering down of Reform Judaism. Responsible leadership has awakened to the fact that a heritage so diluted cannot sustain loyalty or be effectively passed on to a new generation. Accordingly Reform has begun to move back toward the center. Discarded traditions have been re-established; religious warmth, color, discipline, have been partly restored.”

In other words, these people long noted for their keen intellectual ability have faced boldly the fact that the complete rejection of ascetic dis-

---

\*September 11, 1950. Used by permission of the author.

cipline means the ultimate destruction of the social organism of which asceticism is an essential element of its integration.

It is my earnest hope that our movement will take a lesson from this example and give long and prayerful attention to the establishment of a wise Christian ascetic discipline which while ruling out pharisaism and mere artificial religion will contribute toward the building of strong, fine, and community-minded Christian character.

To show that my feelings do not arise entirely from the tradition in which I was trained let me offer the following quotation from Dr. F. R. Barry, a young bishop of the Church of England in his book published in 1950, *The Recovery of Man*.<sup>\*</sup> Writing on the inadequacy of the welfare state to minister to the spiritual welfare of man, the bishop says:

“In any true conception of welfare there must be a central and unswerving emphasis on the realization of the higher values and the will to promote this by the sacrifice of those that are more obvious and tangible. If people are encouraged to believe that the chief end of human aspiration is the avoidance of all pain and difficulty, all fruitful suffering or creative sacrifice, they can never rise to the stature of personality. It would of course be woolly to pretend that the mass of

---

<sup>\*</sup>Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1949; pp. 92-93. Used by permission.

the people will ever be prepared for any deliberate renunciation of the lower goods for the higher; but the example and influence of Christians must be exercised steadfastly in this direction. It may well be a special vocation for Christians to cherish an almost puritan asceticism in the laying out of their expenditure and their habits of life for the sake of higher claims. The only meaning which 'standards of life' can have for Christians is standards of living."

Henry C. Link,\* prominent modern psychologist, has echoed the same thought:

"The principle of asceticism, applied to the details of living, leads to a fuller life, not to a sterile life. The sacrifice of immediate desires and inclinations for the performance of some less pleasant task, leads to a steady increase in the individual's range of interests, likes, and successes.

"No discovery of modern psychology is, in my opinion, so important as its scientific proof of the necessity of self-sacrifice or discipline to self-realization and happiness. By nature, the individual is selfish, and inclined to follow his immediate impulses. The personality tests and the clinical experience of psychologists prove conclusively that this road leads to introversion, to emotional instability and neuroticism, to intellectual futility, to maladjustment, to unhappiness. It re-

---

\*In *The Return to Religion*, Macmillan Company (New York), pp. 33-34, copyright, 1936. Used by permission of The Macmillan Company.

quires religion, or something higher than the individual or even a society of individuals, to overcome the selfish impulses of the natural man and to lead him to a more successful and a fuller life.

“Other interests, besides religion, often influence people to sacrifice their immediate pleasures for some more distant goal, but only religion embodies this principle as the major premise of a normal life in all its aspects.”

Asceticism represents a heavy bet on eternity.



## Lecture IV

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIZATION

AT THE beginning of this lecture suffer a personal word. I stand at a crossroads of our history. Personally, I knew the pioneers who often seemed to others, at least, to regard the whole doctrine and practice of the early reformation as being an ironclad pattern of unchanging orthodoxy delivered by a complete and detailed revelation which could suffer no change. On the other hand, a younger generation has arisen, some of whom perhaps reject Warner's thesis altogether. I am called to mediate between these two schools of thought. I wish to point out the difference between the abiding and the changing, the permanent and the passing, in our message.

#### THE BELIEF IN AN INFALLIBLE PATTERN

First of all, the theory of ironbound completeness was not, as I believe, a conception of Warner himself nor of his ablest co-workers. It was nevertheless, a perfectly natural error into which to fall.

The great Roman and Orthodox communions

had held such a theory for more than a thousand years. Moreover, numerous small sects in America such as the Amish, the River Brethren, and the Dunkards held rigidly to such a pattern of Christian life and thought. One may see an example of this even today as riding in a modern automobile he passes a bewhiskered man and a bonneted woman riding in an old-fashioned buggy behind a slowly moving horse. These people are possessed of average natural intelligence. They were simply born into an ironclad pattern of religious dogma and practice which will not allow them to enjoy the benefits of modern science and invention outside a limited circle except at the grievous penalty of losing their religious and social bearings entirely and being set loose in a rapidly changing world of strangers and, as they think, of heretics as well.

### *Reformations Arise Among Common People*

It is not necessary to suppose that all of Warner's followers were persons of the highest gifts and attainments. On the contrary, it is necessary to remember that every development of radical or free Christianity since the sixteenth century has taken place among the poor and underprivileged, among people who had given no precious hostages to fortune—people, that is, who had no great fear of social humiliation and ostracism on account of accepting a new religious belief.

I say this has been true since the sixteenth century, for it is well known that Luther counted many princes and nobles among his following, and the Reformation in England was led by a king and supported by the princes and the nobility. Moreover, the reason for this is also well known, namely, that the upper classes in this case had strong political as well as religious motives for developing a new type of Christianity.

In the main, however, all later new religious movements were inspired by religious motives and flourished most successfully among the poverty-stricken, the underprivileged, and the toiling masses who being at the bottom rung of the social ladder had no fear of losing caste by accepting the new religion.

It is not well enough understood or remembered that nearly every great Christian denomination in America today, although holding churches filled with millionaires and other successful persons of high social standing, nevertheless at the beginning drew its membership from the lowest economic levels of society.

This being also the case with the reformation of Warner, very few of his followers possessed the educational training and the knowledge of the backgrounds of church history to distinguish clearly the difference between a sound principle and the complete pattern of methods which was actually improvised in order to implement it.

I say these things because I firmly believe that as a consequence of this belief in an infallible pattern literally thousands of our people have been seriously disturbed if not really upset by the manner in which that outward pattern has been broken up so badly, because our community of believers has found itself subjected to the revolutionary social changes of the age in which we have grown up.

### *Principles in Tension*

Part of the social change is due to the fact that we are essentially a thoroughly democratic movement. Even this simple fact has been hidden from many of our pioneers on account of a temporary condition which they were prone to misinterpret. When the movement was in its beginning it was almost inevitable that the leader principle should have wide appeal. Therefore, for some forty years there was a tension between the principle of democracy inherent in a radical Christian development and the principle of leadership which was essential in such a revolutionary departure from the immediate past. I think an analogy of this may be found in the vast influence of George Washington on the country at the beginning of the nation. Multitudes of the people wished to make him king. He was, notwithstanding his unselfishness, universal leader of the whole American people. It is easy to trace the development

of democratic ideas and practices in the American nation. These have progressed to a point where it is impossible to find a president who is actually and morally a leader of all the people. Often it is impossible for a leader with presidential aspirations to attain leadership even of the majority of his own party.

Like Washington, Warner was a leader, although without election and without any formal action taken by the group. He is generally recognized as the universal leader of this total reformation movement. E. E. Byrum followed him and stood firmly in the same position of leadership. But as time passed on, the tension between the leader principle and the democratic principle grew so strong that at last the democratic principle gained a recognition which greatly multiplied the number of leaders and placed their career of leadership under the control of the democratic process. This one development from leadership to democracy is probably, although quite unnoticed, the greatest change which has come among us. Not only is it the greatest change but also it is the logical source of all the other changes which have occurred in our midst.

Time and again various leaders have tried to halt the process of change and, like Joshua, cause the sun and the moon of social and religious development to stand still. D. S. Warner was the only one who was ever able to perform this mir-

acle throughout his whole life. E. E. Byrum succeeded him in this undertaking for many years but at last found the task too hard for him. To demand the exercise of such power by a modern leader is really inconsistent and unfair.

#### THE PASSING AND THE PERMANENT IN THE CHURCH

I must insist that I believe that this theme is the most important to which young students of our work can address themselves, for on every hand we hear the complaint that inasmuch as there has been change in the reformation, therefore Warner and all his insights have been utterly repudiated. Many of us have heard the old pioneers scoffed at and scorned as being no better than deluded fanatics. This argument of Warner's total infallibility is pressed by two opposing schools of thought.

On the one hand are those who believe that every detail of the pioneers' doctrine and practice is sacred for all time. When they see the natural changes of development, they cry that the old pattern has been broken and all of the reformation is lost. On the other hand, there is a school of thought which maintains that if there was present in the original reformation movement any doctrine or practice which could be improved or changed then the whole thing is obviously a delusion.

## *Illumination No Guarantee of Infallibility*

Essentially, these two theories are quite the same, and both seem to rest upon a complete misapprehension of the interaction of God and man in the plan of salvation. Here is, of course, one of life's deepest mysteries. It was pondered by Augustine and Calvin and pushed to the point where God must do everything, and absolutely no room is left for man to work. This is, of course, the historic doctrine of predestination. But it has a very strange offshoot scarcely ever noticed in this connection, namely, the idea that the human teacher whom God has chosen is supposed to lead beyond human finitude and become himself the infallible author of the infallible message.

Thus, Augustine and Calvin cannot be questioned, it is said, for they speak God's message. Out of this attitude grows the whole scheme of ironclad religious dogmatism which attaches the authority of the infinite God to the limited and human intelligence of his messenger in matters that quite transcend the limits of that messenger's illumination. In this way, the rabbis claimed the authority of Moses and the prophets, and the opinions of the popes a thousand years later were said to derive their authority from Peter.

Herein is part of the confusion regarding the doctrine of guidance. It is usually assumed that a guided man must necessarily be infallible.

Nevertheless, it is easy to see that most of them have made mistakes. The answer, as I take it, is that all Christians have guidance, but not all of them are able fully to understand it. Naturally the question is, "What good is guidance that does not guide?" The answer is that the guidance of God is like the guidance of a mother to her baby. It is a guidance which educates and which the child only gradually learns to understand. As a matter of fact, at the time when children are able completely to grasp and understand the guidance of their parents they are usually at a point where that guidance is not needed. In the same manner, when we have grown and developed to a point where we can fully understand God's guidance and God's plans we will be graduated to heaven.

The interaction of the human and the divine in the matter of salvation is well expressed by R. R. Williams, quoting P. T. Forsyth.

"It is meant that in him we have that new moral departure which all the sequels can only unfold and enrich; we have the new creation, the new humanity round which the old dies like a corn of wheat; we have the turning point of human destiny for all eternity; we have the presence and act of God decisive for that purpose, a final salvation, but not a final science of saving truth, a final faith but not a final theology."\*

---

\*In *Authority in the Apostolic Age*, p. 126. Copyright, 1950. Used by permission of The Macmillan Company.



I repeat that D. S. Warner had fine illumination in some respects, the finest and most glorious ever received since the Apostolic Age, because it contained the solution of the church's greatest problem of division and the road back to apostolic unity and spiritual health. D. S. Warner spent a lifetime exploring, experimenting, and developing methods to make that illumination come alive in a practical sense in the work of our modern world. We might liken it to the gift of tongues in the apostolic church. The gift of tongues was highly regarded. Nevertheless, the interpretation of tongues was doubtless an equally miraculous gift and from the standpoint of the congregation a more valuable one. We may liken D. S. Warner's illumination to the gift of tongues which requires of us to interpret it successfully and effectually in the troubled and disturbed democratic age of our time.

One of the greatest hindrances that troubled the pioneer era was the tendency to link the inner certitude of moral conviction, arising from the assurance of salvation, with an intellectual dogmatism about questions of theology which were deemed to be guaranteed by the teacher's personal religious experience. In all ages dogmatists have taken this road. It was this that gave the rabbis their utter unshaken confidence in their complete rejection of Christ. It was this that gave the inquisitors tranquil peace of mind as they

burned thousands of saints at the stake. It simply does not follow that, because I know that I am saved, fully consecrated, and utterly committed to God and have an unshaken conviction of the reality of my spiritual life, therefore, my interpretation of a passage in the New Testament partakes of the same quality of unshakable conviction. This confusion arises from a failure to distinguish between the knowledge of the heart and the knowledge of the head. We ignore the saying of Pascal that the heart has its reasons which reason cannot know.

I do believe, however, that the nearer we get to the cross and to the central dogmas of Christianity such as the deity and the atonement of Christ, the more intellectual certainty we are entitled to have, because the intellectual concept is here very closely connected with the vital inescapable spiritual fact.

### *Warner an Explorer of Reality*

As I have said, one of my deepest convictions is that D. S. Warner enjoyed spiritual illumination concerning the nature of the church and its call back to the unity and purity of the Apostolic Age. The point I wish to make is that although he was probably unaware of the fact, D. S. Warner was very definitely an experimentalist, a spiritual explorer of reality throughout his whole life. It was this capacity for spiritual exploration that

led him into the illumination which he received concerning the church. Having received that illumination, he spent the rest of his life trying to find ways, means, and methods of making that illumination fruitful in the restoration of the church both ideally and practically.

Here is some of the evidence. First of all, D. S. Warner and his colleagues all believed that he received his illumination in the year 1880. All of the early literature whenever it touched upon the subject, as it often did, assumed that D. S. Warner received the reformation light in the year 1880. Several of the writers found a certain embarrassment in attempting to reconcile this fact with the further fact that it was not until 1881 in the month of October that Warner actually stepped out of the Northern Indiana Eldership of the Winebrennerian church. The pioneers who entered into the matter explained it by saying that Warner really received his light on the church in the year 1880, but continued in the Northern Indiana Eldership because he did not perceive that this eldership was inconsistent with his vision of the church until late in the year 1881.

It requires only a slight touch of cynicism to regard this claim as merely a dodge made to justify a theory. To me, however, this interpretation of the matter agrees with my thesis that from the moment when Warner received his illumination

he spent the rest of his life in finding ways and methods of making that illumination effective and fruitful. If this is true, it also justifies us in the same process of spiritual exploration with its consequent change.

### *Hampering Theory of "No Organization"*

At this point we must refer to one of the most serious errors of the pioneers, namely, the assumption that since<sup>^</sup> the church is the body of Christ organized by<sup>^</sup> the Holy Spirit, led and directed immediately by Him of whom it is said that the government shall be upon his shoulders,) therefore, there should be no organization of any kind in the work of the church. It took Warner and his associates many years to overcome this initial error, and many of the pioneers never reached the solution of this problem. Some of them, even to the present day, regard all organization as evil. Of these some have conceded<sup>^</sup> that some organization is a necessary evil, but there remains an unspoken prejudice against any organization of any kind. Naturally, this leads to individualism and atomism. There can be very little co-operation among people who regard all organization as sin.

This doctrine, in fact, was the most destructive theory held by the pioneers. It hampered their efforts at every turn and kept their membership down to a very insignificant number. It made

their churches small everywhere, and, moreover, churches constantly died out and were revived again and again. When I collected data on the various congregations, I sometimes found many different reports of the time when the work was started in a certain locality. The solution was simple. In that district a congregation had been founded, died out, started again, died out, and so on, often repeatedly. There is no doubt that the antiorganization theory was one of the principal causes of repeated failures. So far as I know, Warner himself never found the solution to this problem although he undoubtedly was hampered, if not frustrated, by it repeatedly.

To be absolutely frank about it, I must say that I think the urgency of the question simply forced action in the direction of organization before a satisfactory explanation was worked out to justify the organization. This fact should not disturb any student, for it is quite characteristic of church history in all ages that certain practices originated among the people, which the theologians later explained as correlated with the continuing tradition of the church.

Be that as it may, the formula which was finally found was both simple and true as I believe; namely, the church, the body of Christ, cannot be organized as such. However, the work of the church not only may justifiably be organized but there is an urgent necessity that it should be so.

## ORGANIZATION OF CHURCH WORK NECESSARY

The Lord Jesus Christ certainly organized the apostolic company and he organized their work, sending them out two by two. Evidently he did not believe in individualistic attempts at Kingdom work, but always organized it as a co-operative project. Thus he also sent the Seventy out two by two. The apostolic company was actually an organization for Christian work within the larger fellowship of the whole body of believers; so also was the organization of the seven deacons at Jerusalem, and later the Apostle Paul organized numerous committees to collect the offerings of the church for the relief of the hungry and suffering in Jerusalem.

### *Organization of Youth Work*

One evidence of the growth of Warner's mind as he experimented with methods of Christian work was in respect to children's and youth work. At first Sunday schools were rejected because they were sectarian organizations and as such they were not permissible. The same was true of organized youth work. Children and young people were supposed to sit in the adults' meeting and derive from it whatever benefit they could. I am sorry to report that the results were extremely unsatisfactory. Notwithstanding the gradual efforts and improvements in this work,

the church lost its children and youth to an alarming extent up until the beginning of the First World War. However, steps toward improvement began early. Since Sunday schools could not be held and adult services were not entirely successful in the work for children, at first children's meetings were held by adult workers.

No doubt these meetings did a world of good, and doubtless many old people among us today were converted and trained in these children's meetings. As an illustration, I was perusing an old copy of the *Gospel Trumpet*, when I found a report by D. S. Warner concerning a children's meeting he had held in which a number of children were converted. Pencil'd upon the faded page was the writing of F. G. Smith stating that he was one of the converts in that meeting.

The whole thing was very impressive, indicating that Warner had passed over quite casually an event in which the person later to become third editor of the *Gospel Trumpet* was converted, a dramatic occurrence which he would remember forever.

Sunday schools were at last permitted while the Gospel Trumpet Company was at Moundsville. At first all the people, young and old, met together in one class and had a lesson out of the Bible. Later came classes with lessons from the Bible and finally a children's paper, *The Shining Light*. Next were quarterlies and separate classes,

and from that time the whole pattern of Sunday school and youth work developed in both local and national organization.

### *Growth of Literature Evangelism*

Organization of literature evangelism was more successful because less hampered by dogma. The reason for this was that the early supporters of the *Herald of Gospel Freedom*, the forerunner of the *Gospel Trumpet*, became weary with carrying the load of debt and deficit and cut themselves loose from any connection with the publishing work. I have seen the minutes of their meeting made about the year 1880. They gave what little property there was to the then editors and declared officially that the church should not be tied up with such secular business.

This was undoubtedly a providential benefit to the work, as it enabled Warner to act with considerable freedom in setting forth the truths which he had received. At the same time it imposed upon him a crushing burden of poverty and toil which was almost unbearable. The question of ethical responsibility to the reformation community for the ownership of *Gospel Trumpet* property was never a very pressing one until after the passage of years. By this I mean that the poverty of the paper was so great that its ownership was more likely to be a liability than an asset. But with industry, thrift, and wise man-



agement the property soon came to be valuable, and as a result, shortly before the death of Warner, he and the other two owners, E. E. and N. H. Byrum, signed a paper to the effect that they would never take any profit from the operation of the business and that all they would ever take out would be merely the amount of money each had invested, without interest.

From that moment, before the death of Warner in 1895, the Gospel Trumpet Company became morally the property of the reformation movement. No man has ever taken a cent of profit from the publishing work from that day onward. When the Company moved to Moundsville, a stock company was organized in which the stockholders really donated their money to the work without any interest or profit or even the refund of their original donation. In the course of time, this arrangement was found unsatisfactory and all of the stockholders donated their stock without remuneration, and a nonprofit corporation was organized in Moundsville. Upon moving to Anderson, this corporation was reorganized under the laws of the state of Indiana, but from the early days in Moundsville, it was always a nonprofit corporation which did not return any profit to any person.

In fact, for some thirty-five years all labor was donated. The transition from donated labor to pay was somewhat gradual. From the beginning, the

workers received food, lodging, necessary clothing, and the supply of other needs. About 1910, the Company began to give a dollar and a quarter a week to each worker for pocket money. Then during the First World War the Company began to pay wages and salaries for all services rendered. The reason for this was that the benefits received by the workers in the form of food, clothing, housing, and living expenses actually sometimes amounted to as much or more than the workers could earn in any similar paid employment. For the sake of economy and efficiency wages and salaries began to be paid.

### *Emergence of Ministerial Assemblies*

It is the habit of modern students to seek for the economic cause of every historical event. Over against this is the attitude of many Christians to ignore all such questions in matter of religious concern. Where one man sees a rise in wages in a certain town as contributing to the development of a church there, another man sees only that the Lord blessed the congregation richly. We must ask, Is it sinful to take all pertinent considerations into account? If we do consider contributing causes, we are bound to admit that the development of the ministerial assemblies was partly due to the custom of the railroads' giving half fare to ordained ministers who were properly endorsed by their ecclesiastical organizations.

The first ministerial assemblies in our work were held quite casually in camp meetings or revivals. At first they had no geographical limitations. A ministerial assembly was called without rule or plan. It was not long, however, until ministerial assemblies were called in the winter at a time when camp meetings were out of season. These winter assemblies were restricted largely to the ministers, and so year by year the ministerial assemblies continued to be held and to grow.

Then in 1917 it was decided to organize a ministerial assembly at Anderson, Indiana, during the camp meeting and call it the General Ministerial Assembly of the Church of God. I was elected as the first secretary. Immediate steps were taken to place all the boards under the control of the General Ministerial Assembly which was done, nominally, at least. The General Ministerial Assembly, meeting at Anderson, actually preceded nearly all of the state ministerial assemblies. As a matter of fact, these were almost always modeled upon the General Assembly, for from the beginning of the General Assembly, ministerial assemblies began to be formed along state lines, and from year to year their organization of the work within their areas has continued to develop rapidly.

From the time when Warner began his work with the *Gospel Trumpet*, it was his privilege and

responsibility to name his associates. This custom was followed for many years. Wherever any conflict arose or any minister's standing was in question, the accused minister would be tried by a local group of ministers, a sort of casually gathered ministerial assembly. Nevertheless, the editor of the *Gospel Trumpet* could always review this finding. If it should prove clear to his judgment that the minister had been dealt with unfairly, he could restore the minister to his place in the church by his own authority alone. By this I mean that if the editor continued to publish the accused man's reports, then he would continue to retain his standing as a minister, and no one could prevent it. Of course, the editors were sometimes reluctant to overrule a ministerial assembly. Often, if not always, they called in advisers at the office for consultation upon such questions. These conferences were really a sort of review, but in the end the authority rested with the editor.

When I was elected editor in chief in 1930, I saw that the rising of democracy within the church would not longer tolerate so much authority in the hands of one man. I announced promptly that every minister's standing would depend entirely upon the judgment of his own state ministerial assembly. At first there was reluctance to accept this plan. One man traveled several thousands of miles to come to Anderson

to seek my support against what he called a harsh judgment by a distant ministerial assembly. I refused to interfere, and the new system rapidly became so popular that it is everywhere taken for granted as if it were a law of nature.

### *The Rise of Boards*

As has been indicated, the Gospel Trumpet Company was the first of all the boards, and I think it has never received the credit due it for voluntarily surrendering its autonomy to the General Ministerial Assembly. This was a great act of self-sacrifice and of faith. Many people were very much afraid to take such a step as this, fearing to put the comparatively large property of the Gospel Trumpet Company into the charge of what seemed like only a mass meeting where not democracy but demagoguery might possibly at times prevail. Nevertheless, the Company took the step and the success of the project since then has justified the faith of those who moved in this direction. It has sometimes been said that the membership of the Company does not change often enough. In reply to this I would say that I was looking over the records the other day and discovered that of the twenty-four members who were in the Company when I came in, only three persons remain.

The history of the Missionary Board is a good illustration of our historical aversion to organi-

zation and the difficulties which this neglect has caused us. Our first missionary work began in 1897 when Gorham Tufts was sent to India to distribute famine relief and to make connection with native converts there. From that time until 1909 the missionary work was quite unorganized and almost entirely individualistic with the exception that the Gospel Trumpet Company through its editor managed whatever work was done. In June, 1909, the Ministerial Assembly chose seven brethren to act as a missionary board, but their work was still pretty much in the hands of the Gospel Trumpet Company. Later, the Board was increased to eleven members and finally reorganized and settled in its present independent form with fifteen members.

The college grew out of the Gospel Trumpet Company where it was first set up as a department of the company and called the Anderson Bible Training School. The Board of Church Extension and Home Missions was set up about 1920, and so on with the other boards.

At first each board made independent appeals for support, but these appeals not only suggested competition, but they also had the effect of contradicting and canceling each other. Therefore, in June, 1927, a co-ordinating committee composed of representatives of each of the boards and called the Associated Budgets Committee was set up. This committee functioned until June, 1941,

when it was reorganized and called the World Service Committee of the Church of God. It represents an effort to co-ordinate all the educational, missionary, and other connectional activities of the congregations which must be done in co-operation.

#### DIVISIONAL MOVEMENTS AND THEIR OUTCOME

This would probably be the best place to make note of the organized defections from our fellowship.

##### *The Anticleansing Heresy*

The first organized division in our work was the only one to grow out of a strictly theological controversy, inasmuch as the other divisions were largely caused by differences of opinion regarding the ascetic discipline of the church. The division of 1899 was caused by a debate over the doctrine of entire sanctification as a second work of grace and as a cleansing from the remains of the carnal nature. Critical investigation would doubtless disclose that the protagonists of this movement were persons who had grown up in a religious environment alien to the doctrines of Wesleyanism. In any case these leaders denied that any such experience of cleansing from the carnal nature was possible after conversion. The debate waxed warm and the division came

promptly in the Moundsville general camp meeting in 1899.

I have made some studies which indicate that more than half of our leading ministers went away from us in this movement, and among those going away were many of our most fluent and influential ministers. Notwithstanding this fact, the divisive movement quickly died out. By 1906 we had more than regained our losses, and among the number of ministers were several of the leading factionalists who had returned to full fellowship with us.

This divisive movement was called the anti-cleansing heresy. One of its most conspicuous leaders was W. A. Hanes who started a paper in which he and his colleagues battled strongly against the doctrine of entire sanctification as a second work of grace and a cleansing from the remains of the carnal nature. Eventually, however, Mr. Hanes gave up his paper and became a minister among the Disciples of Christ. Other leaders of the movement scattered, some into various denominations, and as previously stated some returned to us.

### *The Break over Dress*

As soon as the reformation movement left the rural areas and began to evangelize in the towns and cities, the question of the necktie began to



be a disturbing one. It was almost impossible for a young man to get a position above that of laborer or mechanic so long as he refused to wear a necktie. This economic factor soon began to press hard on all the small city churches throughout the country. In addition was the social stigma of going without a tie in college classes and in social life everywhere. At last various individuals both laymen and ministers began to break over, and finally by the year 1914 neckties appeared on the dress of ministers and members at the Anderson Camp Meeting itself.

The issue soon burst into flame. At first the *Gospel Trumpet* tried to hold the conservative position. The editor, E. E. Byrum, published a vigorous article called "Marching Along the By-paths," in which he condemned those who had taken on the tie. But at last the pressure became too great for him, and he revised his position and stood with the majority of the ministers for a change in this matter of ascetic discipline.

The radicals dissented vigorously and began to organize another movement. They set up a paper called the *Herald of Truth* and began to organize division. Several congregations split, but the great majority stayed with the Anderson leadership. This divisionary movement carried on for some four or five years, but the leaders soon began to develop strife and division among themselves, and although the division had carried

some of our most influential leaders, it soon split up and went to nothing.

### *Charges of Heresy*

The latest organized split from our movement began about 1940. It developed out of tension and debate regarding the alleged lack of enforcement of ascetic discipline, together with charges of heresy and liberalism against the leadership of the work in Anderson. In this connection, it should be added that there were similar overtones of criticism and faultfinding regarding the strictness of doctrine in the antinecktie split. However, for the sake of simplicity, I have centered attention upon the main cause of the trouble. The latest split has not emphasized strictness of ascetic discipline as did the dissidents of 1914. However, I believe that their division arises primarily from such a motive, although it is complicated with charges of heresy and personal accusations of liberalism and latitudinarianism among the leaders at Anderson.

Study of the literature shows that there was as bitter criticism and charges of liberalism against the leaders of the time some forty years ago as has ever been hurled at them in later days.

### *Lack of Organization Ruinous*

One thing seems to stand out. The co-operative setup at Anderson enables the congregations to

work together for the carrying on of connectional projects in works of philanthropy and evangelistic and missionary service. This setup has a minimum of organization under which cohesion and co-operation are possible. The factions that have withdrawn from this co-operative fellowship so far have always been imbued with a prejudice against organization. Consequently, they always fail to develop sufficient organization to keep alive and carry on their work. Thus, their extinction is always only a matter of time, for their reaction against organization inhibits them from developing a strong organization. Since Anderson possesses only the minimum of organization necessary for survival, when they set up with less organization than that they inevitably go out of business. If they had more organization than Anderson, they would stultify themselves and automatically refute their own charges.









UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY



128 803

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY