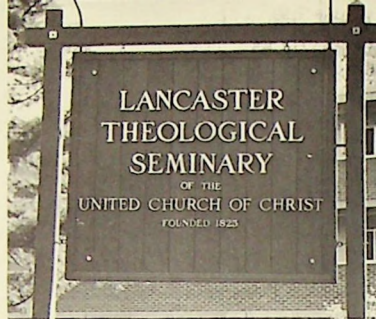


Deep



LANCASTER  
SEMINARY

BULLETIN



#### A NOTE TO THE READER

The information in this booklet supplements the 1968/69-1969/70 catalog printed in September, 1968. Copies of this catalog may be received by writing to Richard T. Schellhase, vice president for development, Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa. 17603.

The Lancaster Seminary Bulletin is published four times a year in September, November, February and May by the Lancaster Theological Seminary, 555 W. James Street, Lancaster, Pa. 17603. Editor: Richard T. Schellhase.



It is a sign of changing times that a two-year catalog printed a year ago needs a supplement. Powerful words are needed to describe these days—explosion, implosion, alienation, acceleration, gaps. We are confronted by unprecedented knowledge and technology, by international frustration, by pollution of man's living space, by stubborn gaps that separate mankind and by militance where there was submission. The prevailing secular mood seems at first like a denial of the Christian faith. These are difficult times for the Christian church, for mission and for ministry.

Yet the times are full of hope. Beneath much of the frustration is a basic dedication and a persistent honesty that will not compromise. People of all ages, and especially the young, refuse to go along with the thoughtless ways that we have been too willing to accept. Dissent from these ways may well be an expression rather than a denial of Christian faith.

One who would be a minister today must find his own identity and work out his own style. An imposed identity or a borrowed style will not do. Lancaster Seminary invites students to assume responsibility for their own development. The Seminary frees students for this task in a variety of ways. They choose courses in an elective curriculum. They are voting members on faculty and staff committees. They have increasing influence on the shape of the curriculum, including a new provision for student-initiated courses.

I hope you will join in this enterprise of finding self and vocation. This supplement to our catalog brings information concerning changes at Lancaster Seminary during the past year and indicates directions in which it intends to move.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Lee J. Gable". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lee" being particularly prominent.

LEE J. GABLE  
Dean of the Faculty



## PRIORITIES IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

In seeking to fulfill its task of helping prepare professional leadership for a church which must minister in a changing present and in an unpredictable future, the program of Lancaster Seminary is open to change and under constant review. In order that change may be responsible, it has been necessary to establish some priorities. Five priorities, guidelines for responsible change, have emerged.

1. *Theological education should be ecumenical.* To prepare ministers for an ecumenical future calls for more than a course on ecumenism, and more than exchanging professors. Both students and faculty need to be involved in a setting where students and faculty of other confessions are working side by side.
2. *Theological education should take place in interprofessional and interdisciplinary contexts.* The problems that threaten and the possibilities that challenge do not lie within traditional fields of theological education. Resolution of today's problems involves law, medicine, public administration, social work, the physical and life sciences. This leads Christians to a new view of ecumenicity, one which includes the world of work with its professions as well as other religious bodies.
3. *Learning takes place best through involvement with reflection.* In academic study this requires the student not merely to understand the conclusions which others have reached, but to grapple with the problems himself so that he reaches conclusions of his own. In Christian witness this requires the student not merely to learn about the ministries of others but

to become personally involved in some of the crises of our time. He must find out for himself what Christian ministry means in the face of racial tension, urban society and international frustration.

4. *Seminary and church must become partners.* They have closely related tasks. The school which trains professionals and the church in which professionals work should assist and learn from each other.

5. *The student is central.* The focus must be on the kind of learning that will equip the student for ministry in the decades to come. Therefore he must be set free to take a responsible role now both in the campus life and in the curricular enterprises of the Seminary.

## INTENSIVE SEPTEMBER PROGRAMS

In addition to the six semesters which have traditionally constituted the professional degree program, Lancaster Seminary has developed three intensive September sessions. Each deals with a broad and important part of church and ministry. Each brings students and faculty together for extended periods of time in a common task. The result is far deeper understanding, relationship and concern than are usually developed in theological education. The nature of these programs can best be shown by describing briefly what actually took place in September, 1969.

*Juniors* had a broad exposure to church and culture. They began their study in Lancaster with a bird's-eye view of the church in its cultural setting, exploring the current scene in the city of Lancaster, especially among the innovative churches and community agencies. The second week was spent in western Pennsylvania where they lived at a campsite, visited churches and small communities, talked with pastors and laymen, and probed for the meanings of what they saw and heard. Next the class went to Baltimore, lived on the campus of St. Mary's (Roman Catholic) Seminary, and were exposed to the life of the inner city. The final week was spent in Lancaster where professors and students reflected on their month together and sought to unify their understandings of the church and its ministry.

*Middlers* were in a Seminar on Human Relations and Change, working with teams of trainers secured through the National Training Laboratories, Washington, D.C. Though most members of the group had been together



the previous year, through their "T-Group" experience they became aware of themselves and of one another in strikingly new ways. They explored the implications of this new understanding for themselves personally, and for their work with others. A new concern for community emerged, which led Juniors and Middlers to search together for ways in which the September relationships might enrich Seminary life through the balance of the year.



Seniors were in Central America, seeing at first hand the ways in which church and society function in five countries: Jamaica, Panama, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Honduras. Coming into contact with government, society, missionaries, Central American churches, and even hurricane weather, they gained a new sense of the urgency and the difficulty of Christian mission. They also gained a new sense of one another.

## INVOLVEMENT MINISTRIES



What is often called field work or field education at other seminaries is now called "involvement ministries" at Lancaster Seminary. These forms of learning are elective and open to wide variation, the student having initiative in determining what kind of experience will be most useful.

Students are strongly urged to include involvement ministries in their curriculum planning. This gives them the opportunity to balance activity and experience in the church and world with classroom learning. Two credit hours may be earned upon satisfactory completion of each involvement unit per semester.

Students who register for involvement units select areas of experience which will provide additional needed exposure in an area of competence or

strong interest or new exposure in other areas of interest or needed experience. With the assistance of the faculty member responsible for supervision of involvement, students identify compelling interests and needs and help to find community locations where they can become vitally involved in volunteer or paid work, observation, training and evaluation.

Involvement may be with churches or church-related agencies and organizations or with non-church activities and groups. Examples of such ministry include preaching, teaching in the church, pastoral activities, campus ministry, church and community renewal, antipoverty and civil rights programs, community organization, youth and young adult activities, interim and supply work in churches, institutional service, action research and program development, service to persons with special need.

Involvement credit can be earned during regular semesters, over the summer or during intern or involvement years (6 hours of credit for a 12 month year). Involvement units during the academic program year include regular participation in self-determined seminars which may utilize seminary or other resource persons. Those conducted during a summer or year away from the campus include outside supervision, record keeping and a reflective paper assessing its contribution to the student's theological and personal development. Student and faculty work together to keep the program changing, both in nomenclature and in format, to meet the changing times and changing needs of education at Lancaster Seminary.

## PAN AMERICAN

INTERLINE CHECK-IN





## INTER-SEMINARY COOPERATION

For some years, Lancaster Seminary has engaged in cooperative programs with other seminaries. The result has been to strengthen all the seminaries and to offer greater resources to their students.

In cooperation with Crozer Seminary, Chester, Penna., the Crozer-Lancaster Plan has developed. Students of each school are permitted to take courses offered by the other. This is done each semester by scheduling selected Lancaster courses on Tuesday afternoon and evening and selected Crozer courses on Wednesday afternoon and evening. Similarly, summer and September programs are mutually helpful. The two schools join in many other ways, including libraries functioning under one director, a joint director of continuing and lay education, faculty retreats, and consultation on faculty selection and lectureships.

The Inter-seminary Seminar (see Course ST 351) has involved students from eastern Pennsylvania. This year the Inter-seminary Seminar is divided into three geographical units. Lancaster works with Crozer (Baptist), Gettysburg (Lutheran) and St. Mary's (Roman Catholic) seminaries. Three students from each school, working with two faculty members, are dealing with the question, "What is man?"



Juniors in September had both ecumenical and inter-seminary experience. They spent a day with St. Vincent's (Latrobe, Penna.) Seminary and were in residence for a week on the St. Mary's (Baltimore) Seminary campus. Other kinds of inter-seminary cooperation include retreats, special conferences and the work of the Inter-Seminary Movement.

In addition to these types of cooperation, Lancaster has engaged with other seminaries in planning for integrated and long-range cooperation. Three such enterprises are currently being developed. It is expected that one or more of these will lead to programs which will further enlarge the resources which are available to Lancaster students.

## CURRICULAR CHANGES

The major curricular changes which have been made since the printing of the two-year catalog are noted here, in the order in which courses appear in the 1968/69-1969/70 catalog.

The most significant curricular change provides for *student-initiated courses*. Interested students may inaugurate a course. They are responsible for the structure of the course, including professors they may want to invite to participate in it, for conducting class sessions, and for evaluating student performance. Each such course must be approved by the Academic Affairs Committee, made up of students and faculty. Arrangements must be completed prior to the registration deadline for the semester involved.

*Biblical Language.* Courses OT 110 and NT 110 are now offered in the first semester of each year and receive 3 semester hours credit. Courses OT 112 and NT 112 move to the second semester.

*Biblical Theology.* New Testament theological emphases are incorporated into courses in the department. Specific focus on Old Testament theology is provided through Course OT 121, a 3-hour course in the first semester, taught by Dr. Elizabeth Achtemeier. This replaces the former course ONT 121.

*Worship.* Course CH 222, The Worship of the Church, will be taught during the current year by Dr. Francis Williamson, professor of religion and music at Albright College. The revised description follows: Major perspectives in the history of Christian worship; categories of meaning and presence integral to the acts of worship; liturgical renewal and experimentation in relation to the mission of the Church in a pluralistic society.



*United Methodist denominational requirements.* The United Methodist Church requires work in the history, theology and polity of that denomination. For the current year, Lancaster and Crozer Seminaries are making joint provision to meet these requirements. In the first semester, Dr. David Steinmetz, an ordained United Methodist minister and associate professor of church history at Lancaster Seminary, offers at Lancaster CH 251, United Methodist History and Doctrine, carrying four hours credit. The course description: A study of the Methodist societies in England and the developing Church in America. Special attention will be devoted to the theology of John and Charles Wesley and to the role of Asbury, Otterbein and Albright in shaping United Methodism in America. Introductory lectures; readings in the sources; papers.

During the second semester, Dr. Theodore Weeden, an ordained United Methodist minister and professor of New Testament at Crozer Seminary, will offer a course on United Methodist polity at Crozer.

*Field Examinations.* When the elective curriculum was instituted, field examinations were established in order that students might demonstrate that they had achieved basic competence. An alternative method is now provided. A student may choose to demonstrate his competence in a field by completing, with minimum grade of C, a specified number of courses in that field. The specific courses for that student are selected in consultation between the student and one or more faculty members from the field.

*September Sessions.* The student who satisfactorily completes a September program receives four semester hours credit.

## CHANGES IN ADMISSIONS POLICY

Two changes in admissions policy have been made as part of the continuing stress on quality in theological education at Lancaster Seminary. All applicants are required to take the Graduate Record Examination and to have the scores forwarded to the Admissions Committee. Also, each applicant is expected to have a 2.5 cumulative average in college. An applicant with less than a 2.5 average, but with a degree from an accredited college, is eligible under certain circumstances for admission on probation.

## EXPENSES

The total cost to the Seminary, exclusive of room and board, for educating a student is approximately \$3,800 a year. Income from endowment and gifts from the Church and friends of the Seminary make possible the following schedule of fees: \$750 tuition for the full year; or \$35 a semester hour for part-time students.

Room and board for single students varies from \$790 to \$860 a year, depending on the type of room. The rent schedule for married students ranges from \$585 (for houses on Pine Street) to \$855 for two bedroom apartments with all utilities furnished from September 1 to June 1 occupancy.

Details concerning other fees, scholarships, grants-in-aid, loan funds and work awards are included in the 1968/69-1969/70 catalog (pages 16-21). A schedule of financial obligations for students who withdraw is on file in the office of the Business Manager.







David C. Steinmetz, associate professor of church history at Lancaster Seminary, delivered this sermon at the Baccalaureate Service for seniors held in the seminary chapel on June 1, 1969.

## THE MAKING OF A THEOLOGIAN

Ecclesiasticus 2:1 "My Son, if you come forward to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for temptation."

The students sitting around the table were talking. At the moment I was doing nothing more than listening. The topic under discussion was the seminary's vision of its task and what the students felt was deficient in that vision.

"You know," one student said, "the seminary is training us to be theologians in residence in the local parish. I'm not sure I buy that image."

"No," chimed in another student. "The faculty doesn't seem to realize that we have rejected them as the model for ministry in the local parish."

"Ministry has to be functional," added still a third. "It has to be structured around the felt needs of people."

I sat at the table, trying to look inscrutable and feeling mystified. Certainly the theological task was not the only function for which these men were being trained. But it was by anyone's standards—except the most radical—a central function of the parish ministry. For the next forty years, if these students stuck it out, they would talk in public about God, perhaps in elementary terms. But even elementary talk about God is theology.

That is not to say, of course, that there were not reasons I could think of why students might be reluctant to take up the theological task. They had wandered for three years in a wilderness of technical terms and jargon—*Heilsgeschichte*, *magisterium*, hypostatic union, Christ-event, *ex opere operantis*, new being—much of which they had only understood after a long struggle and all of which is foreign to most parishioners in Reading or Allentown or Altoona. Their own

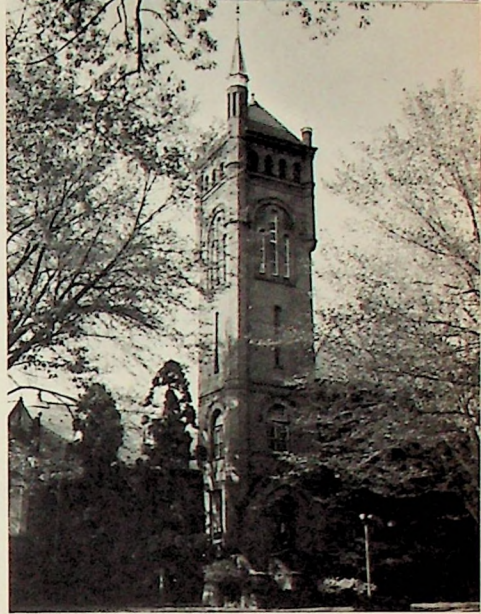
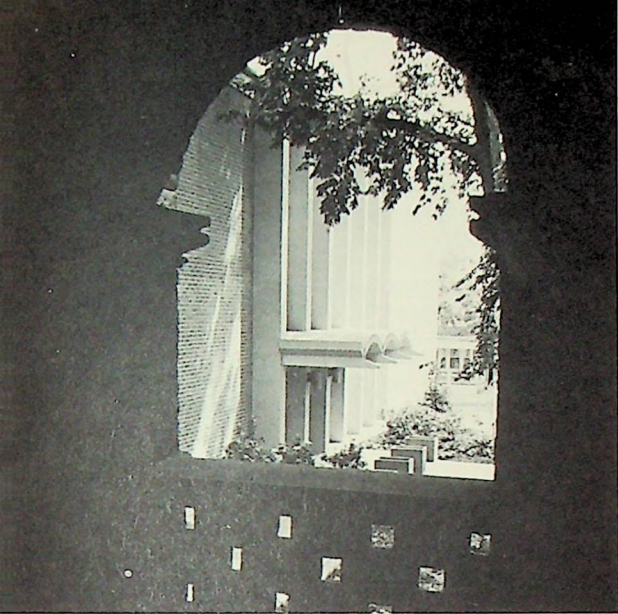
involvement in the parish had taught them that very few people are troubled about the kind of questions which are daily fare in the theological seminary. The parish, after all, is not interested in theological questions; it is interested in theological answers. If a theologian—such as Bultmann—has raised a valid theological question, but has given an inadequate answer, the parish will reject both, question and answer. Of what possible use, then, is a technical theological vocabulary in such a parish? Why struggle to master the tools for critical exegesis when the average layman still believes that the Pentateuch was written by Moses and rejects the theory of a second Isaiah? Haven't students been trained in skills which they will not only never be asked to use, but which might very well be opposed if they were used? Isn't it the case that students have been trained for life in the university rather than for life in the world?

It is a fair question and not one which can be shunted aside as anti-intellectual or pietistic. There is a gap between the seminary and the parish which exists in fact and not simply in the imagination of students. It is a gap which drives increasing numbers of bright students to reject the parish for the university and compels many compassionate pastors to reject the university and its theology for the parish.

It is a real problem and not an imaginary one. And yet the whole debate seems to me to be on an indefensible basis. The seminary insists on the necessity and usefulness of certain academic disciplines and is suspicious—with perfect right—of the kind of cheap faith which never troubles itself with questions and which glosses over all the hard problems with a pious "let us pray." There is such a thing as loving God with the mind and any Christian who has not yet come to see that has not grown very far in the Christian faith. The parish on the other hand observes that mastery of intellectual disciplines is not the same thing as faith and notes—with perfect justification—that the seminary often harbors the kind of gnostic pride which dispenses with elementary trust in God and which risks absolutely nothing, not even tenure, for the kingdom of heaven. We are justified by faith, not by data. If we are not saved by our contributions to the Community Chest, neither are we redeemed by our contributions to scholarship. Karl Barth's dream of the angels laughing at him while he pulled a little wagon behind him loaded down with his multi-volume dogmatics is the only appropriate attitude of the Christian scholar to the works of his hands. "Angels can fly," as G. K. Chesterton observed, "because they take themselves lightly." No one can be a child of God who does not regularly laugh at himself.

The seminary insists that faith must be critical and responsive to the data of the various academic disciplines. The parish insists with no less fervor that men are justified by faith and not by mastery of those same disciplines. Both are right in what they affirm and wrong in what they deny. Faith must be critical, but it must be faith; it must take risks for the kingdom of heaven. Faith must be faith, but it also must be critical. Not every risk is a risk we are impelled to take for the sake of the kingdom. It is possible to leap blindly into the lap of the devil as well as into the arms of God. Faith is not credulity and the Bible does not praise the gullible man.

All this is a way of saying that theology is essential to the life of the Church.



I reject the notion that theology is a bloodless mastery of data, or that the calling to engage in theology is antithetical to the calling to commit oneself in faith.

Theology is not a neutral discipline like the study of aerodynamics. The subject of theology is not God in himself and not—as Feuerbach thought—man in himself. Those are topics for philosophical speculation perhaps, but not for theology. Theology is concerned with God in his relationship to man and man in his relationship to God. The subject of theology is not a neutral knowledge of God—as if such a neutral knowledge were even possible! The subject of theology is God in his dealings in judgments and grace with man.

Theology is never reflection about God in himself. The really important thing in theology is that this God stands in a relationship to me. I am touched by him, forced by him to a decision, saved through him. Otherwise I do not theologize, but only speculate about religious topics. I could put it this way: theology is applied knowledge, not a pure science interested in things in themselves. Theology is an ellipse with two foci. Where I am not included in my reflections about God, there is no theology but only speculation. Only insofar as God reveals himself to me, only insofar as I am confronted by this God and my faith is awakened, can theology be engaged in at all. Everything which stands outside the circle of light cast by revelation is impenetrable darkness. Outside revelation I only encounter the threatening riddle of my own existence.

The essence of God consists in the fact that he is *my* God. I cannot think of the Godhood of God as something unrelated to me. Otherwise I am thinking of a myth or fable. I can only think of God as One who is good to me, as either my Judge—the Lord who lays waste about Him—or as my merciful Father. Christian Theology is reflection in time and therefore time-conditioned about the God who is *my* God and who has made himself accessible to me in Jesus Christ.



Theology is a practical science. And therefore the mastery of theological disciplines is not theology but only the passageway which leads into the chamber where theology takes place.

A senior asked me the other day why I was preaching on the making of a theologian. He said I should have preached on that subject before the senior class began to study at Lancaster, not as they are finishing. The assumption is, of course, that three years of study in Bible, Church History, Systematic Theology and the practical disciplines have made theologians of the graduating class of 1969. In my judgment that is an open question. The seminary has provided you with certain interpretive tools, it has formed you in the Christian tradition, it has attempted to make you sensitive to the areas of need in our world. But it has not made you a theologian. It has left you, so to speak, in the antechamber. Whether you will still pass through the last door and become a theologian is really up to you. It is not an issue which has already been decided.

What makes a theologian is not the conceptual grasp of certain academic disciplines but rather life in the reality toward which those disciplines point and to which they are the door. If the parish was wrong to suggest that you should not submit yourself and your naive ideas to the crucible of critical reflection, the seminary is wrong if it suggests that the task of theology has been completed when you have been supplied with certain data and certain skills. I have not become a theologian until my being has been placed in question by the Word of God, until I have been destroyed by the left hand of God's wrath and re-created by the right hand of His mercy. Until then I am a dabbler, but I am not a theologian.

"My son," says our text, "if you come forward to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for temptation." Martin Luther, whom no one will accuse of Pietism, observed that a theologian is made by *meditatio, tentatio, oratio*—meditation, temptation and prayer. It is a very hard word for us to accept. As sex was a taboo subject for our grandfathers, so death and piety are taboo subjects with us. Other generations were fearful of appearing "loose"; we are fearful of being thought either "morbid" or "pious." And so we brush that triad of meditation, temptation and prayer aside as the relic of an outdated piety, and lose ourselves in yet another book on hope or in yet another action

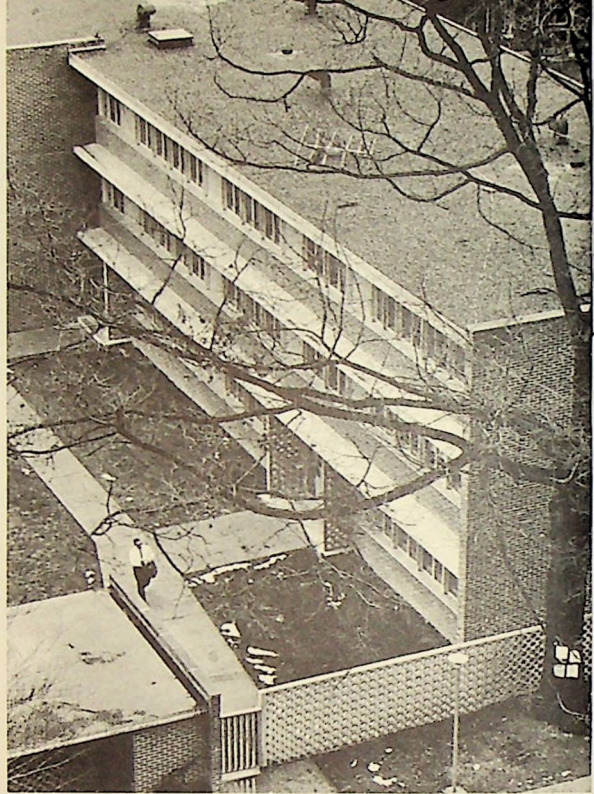


project. We preoccupy ourselves with the furniture of the antechamber or scurry back through the corridor into what we believe will be the clean air of simple faith or unreflecting action. But it is never possible in the spiritual life to progress by regression to an earlier stage of faith; and what does not grow withers and dies.

The walls of the chamber in which theology occurs are inscribed with these words: meditation, temptation and prayer. They may be ignored, but they cannot be by-passed. Eberhard Bethge in his biography of Dietrich Bonhoeffer noted that Bonhoeffer first became a theologian, then a disciple and finally a contemporary. For Luther all three are bound up in the one word, theologian. Theology is a serious matter in which life itself is at stake, *my* life as a contemporary man. And so he insisted again and again on the triad of meditation, temptation and prayer, and repeated the text from Ecclesiasticus 2:1, "My son, if you come forward to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for temptation." There is no way past this triad, but only a way through.

1. *Meditation.* Theology begins with the Word of God which has been spoken to us. It does not begin with the self and the self's religious experiences. Theology does not start in an encounter with God within myself as He speaks to me in His own still small voice. That is where the Pietists and the mystics often go awry. My religious experience is not divine revelation, for that would mean that God is bound to the sensitivity and strength of my inner experience. An individual would in that case have a right to excuse himself before God if he had no such religious experiences. He could say, "Unfortunately, I am not religious by nature. It's my wife who is the religious one in our family." And so on and so forth.





Mystics and Spiritualists do not define the Word of God from the Word of God, but rather make man's receptivity their point of departure. But it is precisely the fact that God's Word is not dependent on my inner life and the strength of my religious intuition that it has universal validity, that it unmasks the universal guilt of man. Spiritualists and mystics are wrong. God's Word is always something which comes to me from without, as an external Word which works on my inner life. It is a spoken, written, preached and heard Word. Faith never springs up spontaneously in man. It is always an answer, man's response to God's speaking.

It is, I think, not an exaggeration to say that we have forgotten how to meditate on the Word of God. Too often we see the biblical text only as a subject for analysis, not as a Word directed to me.

In part, the difficulty we find in meditation is a result of a loss of naivete. Naive faith talks very easily in the second person to and about God. Young people around a campfire at the end of a summer conference use easily such terms as "the will of God for my life" and can pray in simple, direct language.

At seminary we shift from second to third person. We no longer say "God wants me to" but rather "the implications of the kerygma demand." We no longer talk about the "will of God for my life" but about "the biblical message" — a phrase which has the third person built into it.



We cannot and should not go back to the language of simple faith—which is no longer our language. But neither can we live for very long in the arid land of “he” and “it.” We dare not reject the tools of biblical scholarship, but we cannot be satisfied merely to polish them. We must use them to fight our way back through the text to the language of personal encounter. We must learn how with a critical and not with a naive faith to address God once again as “Thou.” We must learn to hear the Word in the text which lies before us. With the very tools with which we have mastered the text, we must in a new way open ourselves to the mastery of the text over us. The theologian must learn to meditate, to hear the Word of God spoken to him.

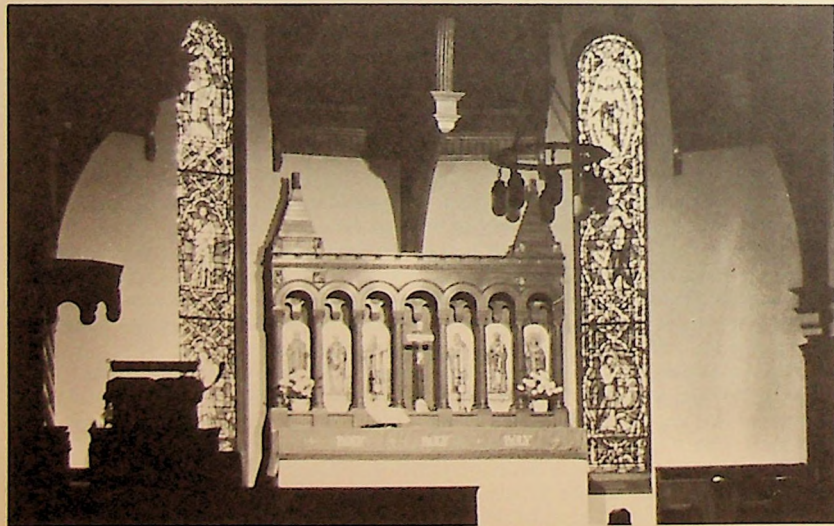
2. *Temptation.* The Word which is spoken must be appropriated. But it cannot be appropriated without temptation. Temptation is the desire to be unfaithful to God, to resist the Word which is spoken to me. There are, of course, many ways in which temptation comes to us. But the two most dangerous temptations are the temptations to security and despair.

Ministers are often lulled into a sense of security through a deadening familiarity with the outsides of holy things. Teachers of religion are sometimes seduced by the conviction that those who deal with holy subjects are superior to people who do not, as if chairs of theology are higher than chairs of history or biochemistry. There is a kind of pride in having the truth which has lost the sense of terror in the presence of absolute mystery. There is a kind of gnostic delight in theological knowledge which no longer shrinks in the pres-

ence of the judgment of God's law. The demands of the law are demands which we relay to other people but which are no longer felt to be demands on us. God's law is no longer taken seriously as a claim upon our lives. As professional clergymen we have a kind of congressional immunity which allows us to legislate for others what we ourselves are free to ignore. The call to lose oneself, to risk all for the kingdom of heaven, is a call to the laity, who, we delight in observing, do not obey it. We dismiss the exhortation to pluck out our eye or cut off our hand as so much oriental hyperbole, or we engage in theological rationalizations of the absolute claims of the gospel. We sooth our conscience with cheap grace and pronounce absolution upon ourselves without repentance. There is a very dangerous temptation to security.

But there is also an even more dangerous temptation to despair. We forget that God's wrath is only his penultimate, never his final Word. We overlook the fact that under God's no is always a deeply hidden yes. We take God's demands with such seriousness that we forget his promises. We are so crushed by the ethical standards of the kingdom that we forget that we are never justified by the purity of our response but only by faith.

The most common form of this despair is despair over the Church. We observe in the Bible that the Church is an army and forget that it is a hospital as well. And therefore we are disillusioned when the Church does not march to the battle but only, somewhat belatedly, hobbles there on crutches. There is a heresy abroad in the land that the Church is well and knows what the gospel is and has only to apply that gospel in the world—which has come of age and is so well that it is difficult to see why it needs the gospel either. But the Church is not well; it has never been; and will never be. The whole have





no need of a physician, but only the sick. And the Church is filled with the sick. Moreover, the natural tendency of the Church is toward infidelity. It will abandon the gospel if given half a chance and must be reminded over and over again by Word and sacrament what demands have been laid on it by God and what has been given to it in the gospel. There is a desperate need in our time for the proclamation of the sovereign grace of God to the Church. I do not hear the grace of God proclaimed in the churches which I visit—only works-righteousness—and I do not have the feeling that my experience is unique.

Protestants, as the late Gustave Weigel once remarked, are always rebelling against their grandfathers. We have entered a period of radical criticism of all institutions and not simply the institutional Church. However, Protestants are, quite apart from that fact, peculiarly prone to iconoclasm and to the mistaken belief that it is possible to begin *de novo*. That much of what the average Protestant parish does is irrelevant to the needs of the world and that the local congregation is in need of reformation I willingly admit. But I have also not forgotten that it was precisely in that kind of imperfect parish that I was confronted with the reality of God through the gospel. We must, I am afraid, in all our zeal for reformation learn to have a little patience with ambiguity. The genuineness of the Church's confession, which is real, is hidden under the ambiguity of its sin. The Church is just and sinful alike. It is not one or the other. It is both at once. It is the sensitive soul, who does not really understand justification by faith and who divides the world into black and white, into just and unjust, who will always be in despair over the Church. The hope which the gospel affords is a hope in spite of the Church, not because of it.

3. *Prayer.* I must reply to the Word of God which is spoken to me, and which I am always tempted to dispute or abandon. I remember, in Drew Seminary, one of the students came back with a question which had been posed to him during a hospital visit. If God knows all our needs before we pray, so ran the question, why pray? That question stumped the fourth floor of Hoyt-Browne dormitory. Clearly God was some kind of heavenly quartermaster. And if all the requisitions were known in advance, why should we fill out our own requisition forms and submit them through channels.

Luther posed a similar question in his Smaller Catechism. Why do we pray that God's kingdom come, his will be done, even though his kingdom will come whether we pray for its coming or not. Luther responded that *we pray that it will come to us*, that we will be included in its coming. God is working his purpose in history whether we are in on it or not. But we pray that we may be included.

Prayer is not the submission of a series of requests. It is, to use a well-worn word, a dialogue, personal encounter and communion. God has spoken our name. "Adam, where art thou?" Prayer is response to the Word spoken to us. And unless we respond, the Word is spoken in vain.

Theologians are not made by seminaries, though seminaries lay the necessary foundation. They are made by meditation, temptation, and prayer. Therefore, we are not yet, but are only in the process of becoming, theologians. We are like the 10 year old boy who has inherited his 18 year old brother's clothing. The trousers belong to us, but they do not yet fit. Our conceptual reach has exceeded our experiential grasp. We must grow into the faith which we profess.

"My son, if you come forward to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for temptation." There is no way around this salutary testing, but only a way through.



