





Joseph E. Campbell, Th.D.

**THE
PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS
CHURCH
1898-1948**

The Pentecostal Holiness Church

1898 - 1948

ITS BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Presenting complete background material which adequately explains the existence of this organization, also the existence of other kindred Pentecostal and Holiness groups, as an essential and integral part of the total church set-up.

BY JOSEPH E. CAMPBELL, TH. D.

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This volume is affectionately dedicated to my loving wife, whom God gave me as a real helpmeet. Her constant devotion and enthusiastic words of encouragement have been to me an abiding inspiration and challenge to do my best as a servant of Christ my Lord.

THE PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH ITS BACKGROUND AND HISTORY 1898-1948

An Abstract of the Thesis

The following presentation of the background and history of the Pentecostal Holiness Church is divided into three main parts.

PART I, "Why the Pentecostal Holiness Church and Other Kindred Pentecostal and Holiness Groups Exist." An attempt is made to explain and justify the existence of these groups. This explanatory background material has been divided into two sections.

Section I deals with "The Divisive Forces Giving Rise to New Sects." This section has been sub-divided into five chapters, each of which deals with some underlying factor present in society, which tends to give rise to and foster the existence of successively rising sects.

Section II deals with "The Evolution of Denominations" and presents historic examples of the recurrent cycle in the development from a despised outcast group which gradually evolves to denominational "respectability."

PART II is concerned with the formal history of the Pentecostal Holiness Church and is divided into three sections as follows:

Section I, entitled "Background and Early Beginnings" presents the early history of the Church, indicating its parent stem and ancient roots, and its early beginnings as an organization until its consolidation with the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church in 1911.

Section II deals with its "Organized Efforts and Expansion," showing the various eras of its historical development in the following named chapters—"Consolidations"; "New Developments"; "Growing Pains and Reverses"; "Coordination and Cooperation" and "Organizational Developments."

PREFACE, *Continued*

Section III, called "Departmental Developments in Summary," is a series of separate chapters summarizing in a more comprehensive manner some of the material which has been previously mentioned.

PART III gives special attention to two important phases of the history of the Church, The History of Education and Publications in the Pentecostal Holiness Church.

Section I presents "The History of Education in the Pentecostal Holiness Church."

Section II deals with "The History of Publications in the Pentecostal Holiness Church."

Because of the relative importance of the developments in these two fields of endeavor a more comprehensive account of these historic developments has been presented.

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**THE PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH
ITS BACKGROUND AND HISTORY
1898-1948**

by Joseph Enoch Campbell, A.B., B.D., Th.M. Th.D.

This book is the largest, and one of the most outstanding volumes ever to be published in the ranks of the Pentecostal Holiness Church. It contains a rich treasure-house of facts concerning trends, issues and personalities involved in the beginning and development of the Pentecostal Holiness Church. The reader's interest will be greatly stimulated as he follows the author's unique presentation of a religious movement that fights its way up from obscurity to recognition.

The author answers the question as to why various Pentecostal and Holiness movements came into being and justifies their continued existence. For this reason the volume will meet with wide acceptance among the membership of all full-gospel churches, both Holiness and Pentecostal.

He makes the heroes of faith to relive in the rather voluminous historical data that he has carefully scanned from many source materials. These materials, along with the author's travels, contacts and personal interests, add zest and authenticity to the volume.

It comprises verbatim the thesis written by the author as a part of the requirements for his Doctor of Theology Degree. This degree was awarded him in 1948 by the Union Theological Seminary of Richmond, Virginia, where the thesis has been placed on file. Because of its academic endorsement, it will therefore be in demand as a reference volume in seminaries and in Bible colleges.

The volume will be especially appreciated by those who know and those who would like to know about the Pentecostal Holiness Church. Those who are members and know the church will

INTRODUCTION *Continued*

want to become acquainted with their organization, and those who do not know, but desire to, will enjoy learning what is here written about it.

Therefore, being a close personal friend of the Reverend Joe E. Campbell for many years, I take great pleasure in introducing *The Pentecostal Holiness Church, 1898-1948, Its Background and History* to the English reading audiences of the world.

R. O. Corvin, President
Southwestern Pentecostal Holiness College
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Part I

**WHY THE PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH
AND OTHER KINDRED PENTECOSTAL
AND HOLINESS GROUPS EXIST**

Section I

DIVISIVE FORCES GIVING RISE TO NEW SECTS

Introduction

There are at present 256 separate religious sects extant in the United States. These variegated religious movements have found in American soil a fertile place in which to grow. The national policy of religious liberty for which we stand has created this congenial atmosphere. Elmer T. Clark has this to say about it, "The principles of religious freedom, untrammelled, access to the right of individual interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, and the privilege of worship according to the individual conscience, which were promulgated by the Protestant Reformation and found their fullest expression in America, have given rise to a multitude of religious sects in this country."¹ Mormonism and Christian Science are the only distinctively American contributions. Clark also points out the noteworthy and significant fact that only a comparatively few of the many existing denominations are really indigenous to American soil; but that the vast majority of them are exotic religions which have been imported from Europe, at least in the parent stem. Such information is contrary to the conventional idea among many who regard sectarian diversity as a peculiarly American phenomenon.² It is also significant to note that practically all of these sects are geographically localized. According to Clark, "Only eight are represented in each State by at least one Church, and only 58 are so represented in half of the States; 70 are found in from one to six States, and 18 are concentrated in one State only. No State has all of the denominations. Illinois leads in this regard with a representation of 144 of the 212 organizations."³ (Since Clark's book, the total number of organizations has increased to 256, as noted above.) Differences of opinion have often caused these groups to split. These differences have at times been absurdly trivial. Strange and fatu-

1 Elmer T. Clark, *The Small Sects in America*. (Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1937), p. 7.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 13, 14.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 14.

ous teachings have been concocted and made to represent the most extreme vagaries of the human mind. Apparently anything that simulates the truth is time and again espoused by a goodly number of devotees who are often more zealous and zestful than those who are the votaries of the real truth. This fact has been glaringly demonstrated in such cults as the Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-Day Adventists, Mormons, and Christian Science. In each of these "isms" their respective leaders have written books to supplement the Holy Scriptures, which books have been accepted by their followers as being divinely inspired, on a parity with the Holy Writ. Wyrick puts it in somewhat crude but descriptive language in these words, "The American people are dumb; tie a bell to an idea, and they will follow it."¹ This is particularly true if such an idea is centered around some outstanding personality with leadership qualities.

While it is true that religious freedom gives birth to many sects which would be better unborn, it is also true that it prevents the truth from becoming static. It gives opportunity for neglected truths to be emphasized when needed. Vagaries in religious thought challenge the Church to present the orthodox position. In that sense the Church owes a debt to heretics who have helped it to formulate its creeds. When the Church has failed to emphasize its doctrinal position new sects have had their inception in order to take up the neglected task. Pierson Parker avers that, "The very name of 'Protestant' means one who testifies, on behalf of a forgotten truth. That was the meaning of the Reformation, and in turn has been the motive behind the rise of every Protestant denomination since the sixteenth century.

"The same process is going on today. Christian truth is never embraced in its totality by any individual, nor by any group however large. Something is almost certain to be overlooked. When the neglect grows too glaring, voices will be heard in protest and, especially under today's religious freedom, groups will withdraw to form their own institutions wherein to promulgate the newly discovered emphases. True, such a movement nearly always overstates its particular teaching. This is why we call it a cult.

¹ Herbert M. Wyrick, *Seven Religious Isms*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1941), p. 65.

Always, however, the cult stands as a reminder to the Church at large of a task which the Church itself ought to be about."¹

Latourette expresses somewhat the same view: "Some sects," he says, "were born of envy, strife and personal ambition, but of the larger ones the great majority sprang from fresh expressions of the Christian impulse."² His view appeals as being a more nearly accurate and comprehensive analysis of the problem of a divided Christendom. To offer any one of these factors, however, as a sufficient interpretation of the rise and growth of sects would be a gross over-simplification. Each of these factors, and still other interpretations have in them valid elements which an adequate explanation cannot afford to ignore. The perennial problem of divisiveness among denominations has increasingly challenged the best intellect of the Church to provide some workable solution to promote Protestant unity. In more recent years Church leaders have openly lamented this unfavorable situation and have sought through a widespread ecumenical movement to consolidate various denominations. The possibility of such denominational unity is a consideration which will be dealt with more directly and comprehensively in a later chapter, after we have first come to recognize the principal root-cause which activates this ecumenical movement.

In the chapters which immediately follow in this section an attempt will be made to analyse the root-causes which tend to produce new sects, and to demonstrate the necessity of such new religious groups. The Catholic Church usually makes the charge against the Reformation that it has been the source of all kinds of evil in producing disunity and discord. The Roman hierarchy, however, has never been willing to make any allowance for those who may differ or take issue with any of their autocratic, dictatorial policies. No justification is allowed for any deviation from their prescribed course—mapped out according to papal design. Such an attitude no doubt arises out of either ignorance, personal bias, or an attempt to cover personal guilt. All good Catholics, to be good Catholics, must surrender their right to do individual religious thinking and submit to the corporate body

¹ Randolph Crump Miller, Editor, *Interseminary Series*, Volume II, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1946), p. 181.

² Kenneth S. Latourette, *History of the Expansion of Christianity*, IV, p. 41.

of the Roman Church to do their religious thinking for them. It is therefore only natural that Roman Catholic criticism would lack the symmetry of a well-rounded appraisal. The Reformation was somewhat the occasion but not the cause of the existence of multifarious church groups. Not merely for the purpose of recrimination but in the interest of the whole truth the fact should not be overlooked that spiritual decay and disintegration were already manifest before the time of the Reformation and constituted the root-cause which necessitated reform. Encyclical letters have been issued intermittently through the years to justify Romanism by condemning the Reformers' motives. It is an historical fact, however, that separations from the Catholic Church occurred before and since the Sixteenth Century Reformation, even as late as 1870.¹ The point is that the Roman Catholic Church in spite of her complacent attitude could well discover a lack of unity, peace and harmony within her immediate ranks rather than attempting to assign the total responsibility to Protestantism.

The Catholic Church and the Reformers clashed at two points concerning the doctrine of the Scriptures: the veneration of tradition to supplement the Scriptures and the decisive authority assigned to tradition. If tradition has greater authority than the Scriptures, the corollary of this particular church view would be to give greater authority to the Church than to the Scriptures, though they be the very word of God. The Catholic Church insists that there are three infallible entities in the realm of religious authority: (1) the Church, (2) the Scriptures, (3) and the Church's interpretation of the Scriptures, i. e. Tradition. Their contention is, that the Pope speaking *ex-cathedra* is infallible and allows for no glosses. The Church, they say, cannot err and if she did err, then those who should follow her in the error would not be held accountable.² Further comment at this point would not be directly relevant to the immediate problem before us.

As a helpful working basis from which to enter into a fuller discussion of these divisive forces it seems pertinent to make use of a list of these causes as tabulated by Francis Curran in the first

1 N. J. Monsma, *The Trial of Denominationalism*. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B Erdmans Publishing Co., 1932), p. 27.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 23 ff.

chapter of his book, *Major Trends in American Church History*. For the convenience of the reader, this material is presented in the same form in which it appears in the original source, instead of following the customary technique of using smaller type for long quotations. He lists the following causes:

1. Class divisions, as exemplified in the evolution of Evangelical sects, have been frequent occurrences in our religious history. As the original lower-class Methodists separated from the Anglicans, so the Holiness sects broke away from the later middle-class Methodists.

2. Nationalism has produced a large number of denominations. American, German, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish, Icelandic and Slovak Lutherans all have their independent synods in this country.

3. Debates over the languages to be used in divine worship have occasioned new sects. The German Albright Methodists and some Lutheran groups owe their origin to this cause.

4. Sectionalism has produced its sects. The Mason-Dixon line divides the northern Baptists and Presbyterians from the schismatic sects of the same denominations in the South.

5. Racialism has caused an almost complete separation of colored and white Christians. Over 90 per cent of all Negro Christians are enrolled in exclusively colored denominations.

6. Immigration has carried with it large numbers of new sects. In recent years England alone has sent us Darbyites, Irvingites, and other small groups. Other immigrants found the branch of their sect, established in this country by previous immigrants, changed beyond recognition; therefore they founded their own sects. The Christian Reformed Church is an example of this type.

7. The problem of polity has partitioned sects. The Evangelical tendency toward congregational polity has caused many schisms from the Methodists.

8. Administration of the "Sacraments," particularly Baptism, has caused friction within sects, and has resulted in their final fracture. The River Brethren with their singular doctrine of the "Sacrament" of footwashing, broke into factions over its administration. One sect insisted that the same man should wash and dry the feet; the other that one man should wash and another dry.

9. Quarrels over the forms of worship have ended in schism.

The "unscriptural" use of organs in the Church was a major cause of separation of the Churches of Christ from the Disciples of Christ.

10. Disputed "moral" questions have broken sects asunder. The Mennonites have proved especially susceptible to fine distinctions in settling moral problems. New Mennonite sects have originated in disputes over the morality of top buggies, horse trades, even the cut of the minister's coat.

11. Opposition to "unscriptural" novelties, such as Sunday Schools, missionary societies, and an uneducated ministry have caused schisms, particularly among the Hard Shell or Landmarker Baptists.

12. Individual church leaders, moved by ambition or even less laudable motives, have led their personal following out of the established sects and have founded new denominations according to their own taste. A number of holiness sects have been established by such leaders.

13. Theological disputes have precipitated a number of schisms.

The unity of churches has always been destroyed by arguments on the relative merits of Calvinism and Arminianism, Unitarianism versus Trinitarianism, Fundamentalism versus Modernism.¹

While this list of causes is on the whole an adequate expression of the various reasons for Protestant divisions, they are nevertheless presented from a Roman Catholic viewpoint. Hence, for that reason they fail to justify any division, even such divisions as would result in constructive benefit. No allowance is thus made for legitimate expression of valid individual differences. Father Curran has yielded to the inclination to make one man an exact copy of another. Monsma, assuming a counter position, aptly points out that, "Different men have interpreted the Bible differently. And here lies the fountain head of denominationalism. As the rays of the same sun cast different hues through the varicolored panes of the cathedral window, so the Word of God is not reflected identically by different souls. Indeed the cause of this variation is not to be looked for in God, nor in His Word, but in the different mind structures of human beings. Human beings are

¹ Francis X. Curran, *Major Trends in American History*. (New York: The American Press, 1946), pp. 14-16.

endlessly variegated. As no two blades of grass, nor two leaves, are exactly identical, so no two human beings are exactly alike."¹ The logical conclusion which he reaches is that the Reformation made way for the Bible to be reflected by a host of individuals, instead of by a coagulated and uniform tradition. The difference, therefore, did not lie in a failure to accept the great truths of the Scriptures but rather in the significance attached to these truths and the emphasis placed upon them. While it may appear that our differences would thus become more apparent; actually, as we make our particular denominational emphasis, we are thus coming to express the whole truth of God more accurately.² To emphasize these differences would also tend to express the whole truth of God more adequately.

The crux of Monsma's conclusion is stated as follows:

It is true that present day denominationalism took its inception from the Reformation and its principles. It may seem as if Protestantism has made a muddle of ecclesiastical authority upon which it insisted. Still—aside from excrescences for which Protestantism cannot be held responsible—denominationalism and not Roman Catholicism works for the unity of the Church.³

We might well add that no church has a right to exist as a distinct body unless good and legitimate reasons justify its existence. It should either augment the corporate body of divine truth by emphasizing some neglected doctrinal truth or by introducing some legitimate phase of revelation. Such a norm can well be applied to measure every denomination's right to exist.

We shall now turn to a more extended consideration of these divisive forces, each in their turn, to establish the necessity of the existence of various sects or religious groups. We will deal first with the factor of theological differences, which necessarily tend to produce new sects. In the closing chapter of this section summary reasons will be advanced to explain and justify the presence of the Pentecostal Holiness Church, based on the pertinent observations which have thus been made.

1 Monsma, *op. cit.*, pp. 42, 43.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 43-48 et passim.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 48.

Chapter I

THE THEOLOGICAL FACTOR AS A DIVISIVE FORCE

LIBERALISM, A DIVISIVE FORCE

"In 1890 the 'liberal' was debating whether there were two Isaiahs; in 1930 the extreme 'modernist' was debating whether there was a personal God."¹ This striking declaration by Dr. Atkins, in his book, *Religion In Our Times*, serves to introduce the important subject which we propose to treat in this initial chapter. The presence of "modern religious liberalism" is indubitably the root-cause for the spiritual apathy and indifference which characterizes a major segment of the church world which we know. The purpose of this chapter would likely be made more perspicuous if we were to assign to it the sub-title, "Chaotic Conditions in Contemporary Christendom."

Theological factors of various types, shades and colors have always been present to divide Christians into separate groups throughout the history of the Church. Such has especially been the case since the time of the Protestant Reformation. It may, therefore, appear that undue emphasis is being placed upon liberalism as a divisive factor and too little emphasis upon other causes which also deserve attention. While these other causes are recognized, this particular cause for division will be somewhat amplified because of its peculiar relationship to the inception of the Pentecostal Holiness Church and other kindred groups.

It is true that *modern liberalism*, at the time Holiness and Pentecostal sects had their inception, had not come to be recognized as prominently as we view it today. But it is also true, however, that this new theology was in its inchoate stage of development. Such a conclusion is based on the fact that the Social Gospel, The New Psychology of Religious Education, and the trend toward Ecumenicity were at the time each an incipient force in the Church. While all three of these manifestations have a valid emphasis, it will be demonstrated in our later analysis and appraisal of them that these new trends root in liberalism. It is not our contention,

¹ Gaius Glenn Atkins, *Religion In Our Times*. (New York: Round Table Press, Inc., 1932), p. 86.

however, that either the parent groups or the new sects produced by them were able at the time to discern the influence of liberal theology as a divisive factor. This is a conclusion which is possible only as we view them in the perspective of history. So, while this particular factor is admittedly not the only theological factor which enters into the picture, it will be emphasized as the principle root-cause for division. This emphasis will be better understood when we come to consider the closing chapter of this section.

A DEFINITION

The term "Liberalism," as it will be used herein serves a multiple purpose in that it will be used loosely to include *rationalism*, *humanism*, *naturalism* and *modernism*. The use of any of these terms may be understood as substantially including all or any of the others.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSIDERING LIBERALISM

This subject, in the sober judgment of many thinking Christians, constitutes a grave problem of far greater magnitude perhaps than any of us fully realize. Liberal theology has, since its inception, tended to destroy the historic beliefs of many Protestant churches. This is an admitted fact, admitted even by those who espouse its teachings as will be seen in the following quotations. "The philosophy of religion has within the last generation undergone a revolution," says Professor Edward Caldwell Moore, of Harvard University.¹ George Holley Gilbert, a defender of modernism, speaks of the vast transformation which the Christian faith is surely and in part silently undergoing.² Dr. K. C. Anderson, pastor of a liberal church writes: "Liberal Christianity is a radical departure from the creed of Christendom."³ It is the common knowledge of all those who possess even a meagre amount of spiritual discernment that there is patent within the church some subtle force which seems to attenuate and emasculate our Christian witness and rob us of that spiritual vitality and virility which symbolized Christianity in its pristine form.

¹ Edward Caldwell Moore, *The Spread of Christianity in the Modern World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1919), p. 84.

² George Holley Gilbert, *The American Journal of Theology*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1910), Vol. XIV, p. 271.

³ John Horsch, *Modern Religious Liberalism*. (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Ass'n., 1924), p. 12.

MEN REPEAT OLD ERRORS

Dr. John R. Moose, Professor of Church History at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, in the course of one of his lectures, made a simple but strikingly significant statement which this writer has never forgotten and has had occasion to verify repeatedly. He said, "Churchmen would not fall into as many errors as they do, if they were only familiar with church history." He meant, of course, that many of our errors are a repetition of the self-same errors which others in the history of the Church have made.

These "old errors" are often disguised by an unfamiliar garb and are therefore not recognized. Sometimes they are couched in specious terminology and at other times traditional terminology is used to convey erratic ideas which are quite foreign to those ideas customarily thought of. In other words, liberalism utilizes the terminology of orthodoxy and reads into evangelical speech a content which is often the very opposite of its evangelical significance. The teachings of modernism manifestly demonstrate this tendency. "The most offensive feature of religious liberalism," says Horsch, "is that it uses, as a rule, the old Biblical expressions and claims to be Christian theology—an improvement on the old faith; all this in the face of the fact that modernists, as we have seen, recognize the great chasm which separates them from Biblical Christianity. It is as if within a political party which was founded on the principle of protective tariff there arose a new party which defended free trade, but insisted on retaining the old party name and connections, advancing the excuse that the protective tariff principles, when properly interpreted, mean free trade."¹ Horsch further adds these timely comments:

It would indeed be useless to deny or belittle the radical contrasts between the old Bible faith and religious liberalism. So great and fundamental are these differences that, if one is Christianity, the other must be something else. It has been said that modernism has changed all the doctrines of the old faith as held by Christendom from the beginning. The fact is—modernism sets aside doctrines and disowns them. Indeed Christianity has more in common with Judaism and some other non-Christian religions than with modernism.²

1 Horsch, *Op. Cit.*, p. 17.

2 Horsch, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

Machen plainly charges that modern liberalism is diametrically opposed to Christianity.¹ Ernest Gordon in his book, *The Leaven of the Sadducees*, aptly and ingeniously sets forth the fact that modern criticism and modern theology are largely a recrudescence of the eighteenth century deism. In parallel columns he shows that the ideas of the deists are the same as those of present-day modernists. Dr. Fosdick's and Tom Paine's writings are shown in parallel. Similar comparisons are made of the writings of other modernists with those of other deists.² In each instance these writings are shown to represent man's attempt to work out his own salvation independent of God and His revealed plan of redemption.

MEN ATTEMPT TO SAVE THEMSELVES

In a recent address delivered at the Union Theological Seminary of Richmond, Virginia, Dr. John A. MacKay, a man of eminent qualifications and great profundity of thought, said, in effect:

Sin has always manifested itself in man to cause him to seek to elevate himself to the level of God and thereby dispense with the need of God to effect his salvation. Man is prone to absolutize things about him rather than to accept God as the Absolute. Hitler sought to absolutize 'power', some seek to absolutize 'beauty', others 'culture' or 'refinement', still others 'race' or 'economic class'. Man is constitutionally disposed to seek some summum bonum other than God Himself. He persists in the attempt to make his final goal of living something other than God. When we view the abyss of our day we discover that all these absolutes have been tried and have failed. There is left no other absolute which has not already been demonstrated as worthless. There is, therefore, left no absolute upon which man can depend. He has through his rejection of God, thrust himself into void and outer darkness. He has no standard and no sense of values. He does not know where he is, nor the way out of where he is. He has abandoned the real God for some human god. It is the task of the Church to show him the way out.

The sum total of his remarks adds up to saying that throughout history man has attempted to substitute rationalism, humanism and naturalism for God's revealed plan to achieve his salva-

1 J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism*. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924), p. 5.

2 Ernest Gordon, *The Leaven of the Sadducees*. (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Assn., 1926), pp. 212 ff.

tion. He has sought something to "do" that through his own efforts he might gain eternal life. We have before us an age-old example of this common error in the experience of Cain. He was a religious man, but his worship was made to accord with his own ideas instead of God's plan. He brought an offering unto the Lord from the field. It was the fruit of his own labors. God rejected it because it was a "*bloodless*" offering. It seems to the rational thinking man that Cain's offering of the fruit of the ground, might have been more acceptable, but it was not. It constituted the "*way of Cain,*" and not the "*way of God.*"¹

Before continuing a further development of the subject, a word of explanation may avoid the possibility of giving offense. It is recognized that those who are in error are often men of sincere religious convictions who are prompted by an ardent desire to do good, but have unwarily been led into devious paths. They, like Cain, are religious and on the whole are sincere worshipers, but they have substituted their man-devised way for God's way. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."² Some have referred to all modernists as apostates. We often use the word "apostates" indiscriminately and with too little consciousness of its derogatory implications and condemnatory meaning. Churchmen should seek to emulate the example of Christ who hated sin but loved the sinner. But while He was never activated by animosity, He was never perfidious in failing to speak the unvarnished truth regardless of whom it involved.

RATIONALISM, AN OLD ERROR

Since the time of Christ, the Church has unfailingly been threatened with and molested by those of various circles who, under the guise of true religion, have opposed the simple gospel of salvation by faith as set forth in the Holy Scriptures. Out of a sense of self-sufficiency, and sometimes arrogance, divine authority has been rejected and the attempt has been made to provide salvation on some rational basis.

The rationalists (or modernists) of Jesus' day were the Sadducees. They rejected everything of a supernatural nature. This

1 Genesis 4:3; Jude v. 11.

2 Proverbs 16:25.

is evinced by their disbelief in a corporeal resurrection. They sought to adjust themselves exclusively to the natural forces about them. They would, therefore, accept nothing that they could not verify with rational proof. They reduced faith to embrace only those things which they could intelligently apprehend. Such an attitude takes the heart out of religion and limits it to the finite capacities of the human intellect. God is reduced to the finite concept of human limitations. This is the essence of humanism.

The Judaizers, in Paul's time, sought to substitute the keeping of the Law (their works) for salvation by faith. Paul set forth the futility of such an idea. He taught them that their works were an adjunct to their faith and not the essence of faith itself. Works are the evidence that saving faith has been exercised. In other words, our faith is shown by our works.

The Gnostics in subsequent times, also, sought by their own works to substitute knowledge for simple faith. This philosophico-religious movement is but another manifestation of rationalism. Its central doctrine advocated emancipation through knowledge.

Take another example, that of Erasmus and his humanistic teachings in the sixteenth century. He began at the same place Luther began and admittedly wielded an influence of recognized value for the amelioration of society. But Luther parted company with his program when he perceived that he sought to bring about man's salvation by other means than those divinely instituted in the doctrine of justification by faith. Learning is a vehicle to produce faith, but is never to be used as a substitute for it.

Deism, an eighteenth century teaching, also attempted to dispense with the need for God. Deists laughed at the idea of personal religious experience and a personal fellowship with the Supreme. Muncy writes:

In all sections of colonial America the light of true religion was all but snuffed out. Immorality was rife in all classes of the population and there was corruption in both church and state. The appearance of deism in America and social life. This philosophy denied the revelations of the Old and New Testaments and taught that the voice of nature was sufficient to guide men in religion and morals. The deists taught that God is, that He created the universe, but that He withdrew himself from it. He is above His creation, they said, but not in it. He is related to His creation as the dot is to the 'i'.

Such a conception of God's relationship to the universe makes Him of very little account in the lives of men, neither His blessing nor His judgment upon human conduct is possible. That he could or would enter into fellowship with man is unthinkable according to this conception.

This type of philosophical thought spread over the colonies during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Many prominent Americans held this view when George Whitefield made his evangelistic tours of America just prior to and during the Great Awakening. Decadence in religion and immorality in daily life were the moral fruitage of it.¹

LIBERALISM ANALYSED

In this cursory and somewhat superficial manner we have attempted to cite these historical instances of rationalistic and liberalistic religious thinking which have occurred repeatedly since the time of Christ. We now come to the consideration of the latest recrudescence of such teachings, manifested in the form of German rationalism which made its appearance, roughly, about the middle of the nineteenth century. Because this consideration is one of prodigious proportions with respect to its vital relationship and importance to our generation, we must of necessity allocate to it a deserving amount of space and attention. It would, however, be beyond the limits of our purpose to do more than consider in a general way some of the aspects of the nature and fruit of this teaching, noticing particularly how it acts as a theological divisive force among Christians. Such an investigation is fundamental to a clear understanding of current religious trends. Special attention will be given in a separate chapter to the "shoots" of liberalism which are distinct manifestations of this common root-cause, e. g., in *The Social Gospel*; *The New Psychology of Religious Education*, and *The Ecumenical Movement*; pointing out how these influences are diametrically opposed to revivalism and personal religious experience. In conclusion, some suggestions will be made in each case as to the Christian attitude which should be maintained toward modern liberal theology and its advocates. With patience, let us make a somewhat careful study and analysis of these latent influences which demand our solemn thought and attention.

In humble recognition, it is acknowledged that many of the most profound scholars of our day are numbered among the ex-

1 W. L. Muncy, Jr., *A History of Evangelism in the United States*. (Kansas City: Central Seminary Press, 1945), p. 26.

ponents of modernism. Among them are many men of sterling character and unimpeachable morality. On the whole they possess a most magnanimous, tolerant and brotherly attitude, especially toward those who hold opposing views. It should be kept in mind, however, that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty."¹ And that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."² Paul encountered intellectual giants in his day who sought to reach God through rational, intellectual achievement and were unable to understand the simple story of a Cross, Vicarious Sufferings, and a Blood Atonement which was to be appropriated by simple faith. He said to them, "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."³ "Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say his flesh; And having a high priest over the house of God; let us draw nigh with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast to the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)."⁴

LIBERALISM'S IDEA OF SALVATION

Liberalism presents an entirely different way of salvation, a salvation found in man and not in the act of God. It ridicules what they term "subtle theory of the atonement." That, to them, is foolishness. Elaborate modern efforts have been made to get rid of this Bible doctrine in the interest of human pride. The Cross is thought of as a convenient symbol, and Christ's death as a mere example of self-sacrifice for man to follow. These teachings contain an element of truth but fail to reveal the real meaning of the Cross. They also fail to show how God hates sin and how we too should hate sin. The Cross displays God' love in giving His Son

1 I Corinthians 1:27.

2 *Ibid.*, 2:14.

3 I Corinthians 1:21.

4 Hebrews 10:19-23.

for our sins. Liberal theology ignores the dreadful reality of guilt and makes persuasion of the human will all that is needed for salvation. Liberalism speaks with disgust of those who believe in the shed blood for remission. In contrast, the Bible teaches that "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission."¹ And that "It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul."² Sin to the modernist is a trifling matter. They make no atonement necessary and no sacrifice necessary to pay the debt of retribution we owe for our unrighteousness. They affirm that real moral order already exists and that society and man can save themselves independent of outside help by stimulating into action the resident good inherent in them and thereby overcome evil. To them there is no fear of hell, for God is a God of love. They fail to recall that Jesus spoke of "everlasting fire and outer darkness." Heaven, to them, is actually reduced to a place where sin is. In reality heaven is practically dispensed with entirely by virtue of the fact that they reject the supernatural teaching of the resurrection which precludes the necessity of such a place being in existence.

Because they reject the Creation Work of God and the Supernatural, they reject also the necessity of the New Birth, since it is part of the creative work of God and is supernatural. But man is not merely "sick"; he is "dead." Life must be given to him in the New Birth, after which he must grow and develop. It is a matter for the individual and not for the corporate body of society as a unit. Modernism seeks to effect through natural means a renaissance. *This is plainly the old error of Erasmus.* Liberals say that Christians isolate themselves and that they should discard the time-worn idea of "other-worldliness" and come to recognize with them that religion should be the function of the Community or State. It should deal with business men, politicians, "Christian Americanization" of immigrants, industrial relations, and international peace. Religion has come to be regarded more and more as a means to a higher end. Missionaries desired at one time to save men from eternal damnation but now they seek to change the social order, to make a better world. This present world is the center of thought of the modernist.

1 Hebrews 9:22.

2 Leviticus 17:11.

LIBERALISM'S IDEAS OF GOD

Modern liberalism rejects the teachings of Jesus who taught that we become acquainted with God through nature, moral law and through the Scriptures. They insist that a knowledge of God is realized only by feeling His presence. The universal fatherhood of God through this teaching, in the sense which they have in mind, is not taught in the New Testament. Such a peculiar and intimate relationship is the prerogative only of those who are His children by redemption. Liberalism teaches an immanence of God which, in its final analysis, is sheer pantheism. Man is thought of as part of a mighty world process which in the aggregate is God, ranging from minuscule units of earth to massive units in the heavenly sphere. The Incarnation, to them, is a symbol of the general truth which they teach that man, at his best, is one with God. This concept of deity represents still another attempt on man's part to bring God to his own level and to achieve his salvation somewhat independently of God's help.

LIBERALISM'S IDEAS OF MAN

Man is thought of as righteous and having no need of repentance. To him is ascribed no creature limitations. No gulf therefore is thought of as existing between the creature and the Creator. Man is not a sinful creature under condemnation; for there is, they say, actually no such thing as sin. They ignore the disturbing fact of sin. (The denial of the fact of original sin is manifestly the same error into which Pelagius fell and serves as another example of the fact that men are prone to repeat the errors of their predecessors. A clear knowledge of this error in church history would obviate the necessity of repeating the same error). They reject the work of the Supernatural and thus fail to account for a consciousness of sin—the removal of which would require a supernatural act. It is the preaching of the law of God in word and deed that reveals transgressions, but it takes the supernatural Spirit of God to produce conviction and effect regeneration.

LIBERALISM'S IDEAS OF THE SCRIPTURES

Modernism denies the divine inspiration and authority of the Scriptures; it denies that the Bible is of a supernatural origin, and that its avowedly supernatural contents are true. In support of its naturalistic attitude, modernism denies the infallibility of

Christ who most clearly attests the inspiration of the Scriptures. There are, of course, degrees of liberalism ranging from the Kenosis theory to rank Unitarianism. The former would rob Christ partially of His divine nature.

LIBERALISM'S IDEAS OF PERSON OF CHRIST

Modernism denies the essential deity of Christ. To substantiate such a denial, it repudiates the cardinal doctrine of the Virgin Birth, thus reducing him to the level of man, making him at best only an emasculated ideal. It rejects His vicarious death and the fact of His corporeal resurrection with all the implications of these tremendous facts. It rejects the doctrine of the personal return of the Lord Jesus in like manner as He went away. It substitutes human reason for divine revelation, and the wisdom of man for the Wisdom of God.

LIBERALISM'S IDEAS OF DOCTRINE

In short, it removes all the objective standards, and current need of doctrine, either of truth or of morals, and makes man a law unto himself. Not all modernists have accepted the logical implications of modernism; but they are all on the way and in due course of time will arrive at the stage known as Unitarianism, and that is only about one station this side of agnosticism.

The absence of strong and vigorous doctrinal teaching has opened the way for Eddyism, Spiritualism, etc. Liberalism has robbed the supernatural in religion and has substituted the guesses and conjectures of science. The vagaries of Fosdick or Vedder or Shailer Matthews or of any other modernist can never dispel the vagaries of Mary Baker Eddy. The Liberals' denial of a corporeal resurrection and a life beyond the grave opened the way for Spiritualism. It is the natural child of rationalism and unbelief. When Saul rejected the word of divine revelation he then turned to the witch of Endor. Indifferentism about doctrine makes no heroes of the faith. It would never produce a Luther nor a Niemoller nor any of the martyrs of the Christian faith. When Luther was called into question at the Diet of Worms and offered the opportunity to recant, he firmly and steadfastly said, "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise, God help me, Amen." He had doctrinal convictions which he refused to abandon.

In our day we are passing through a period of church history which might well be termed an "era of watered-down theology." It is considered distasteful by many and impious by not a few for churchmen to assume firmly any avowed theological position. To possess a strong, virile, lusty faith is no longer considered a virtue to be extolled. In modern circles one is considered uncharitable to manifest any disposition to be dogmatic about his or her religious beliefs. It is sometimes feared that to assume such an attitude might inhibit progress toward denominational unity, or that it might cause a poor showing to be made in the column of church statistics. Needful controversy is often avoided in the interest of denominational unity and ecumenicity. While these are unquestionably worthy objectives to seek to achieve, they become of relatively insignificant value when once we awaken to realize the enormous and terrific price involved in their procurement. It would be of negligible value to gain the material advantage and intellectual acceptance of the modern-day scientific mind at the tremendous cost of violating our faith or stifling our time-tried convictions. Biblical doctrines cannot, and must not, be abandoned in the interest of peace. There is a conspicuous absence of doctrinal preaching which is directly traceable to the influence of liberalism.

Dr. B. R. Lacy, in his book, refers to a significant incident in the outstanding ministry of Dr. John L. Girardeau who preached about the middle of the nineteenth century. He writes of him:

One evening while leading the people in prayer, he received a sensation as if a volt of electricity had struck his head and had diffused through his whole body. For a while he stood speechless under the strange physical feeling. Presently he began exhorting the people to accept the Gospel. They began to sob, softly, like the falling of rain; then, with deep emotion, to weep bitterly, or rejoice loudly, according to their circumstances. It was midnight before he could dismiss the congregation. The meeting went on night and day for eight weeks. He was accustomed to say that he could always count on those who were converted in that meeting.

His sermons during the meeting, as shown by his notes, were very instructive. He dealt with the great doctrines of sin, regeneration, faith, justification, repentance, and such subjects. None of those who went through these meetings ever forgot his wonderful preaching.¹

¹ Benjamin Rice Lacy, Jr. *Revivals In The Midst of The Years*. (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1943), pp. 113, 114 et passim.

While this is a remote incident relating to a comparatively obscure individual whose ministry was somewhat localized; it, however, serves to bring into focus an example of the kind of doctrinal preaching which is on the whole so tragically neglected in our times. Carroll states that "The evangelical Christianity of today is not polemic."¹ The modernists of our day never deal with these great and vital doctrines of the Christian faith. Such teaching as Dr. Lacy describes once characterized the ministry of the preachers who lived before the baleful influences of German rationalism had come to affect current religious thought.

We have stooped to conquer in that we have sought to harmonize an Infinite God's Word and divine revelation with finite man's theory and postulates in the realm of his scientific discovery and exploration. Some are content to hear the pious sound of traditional phrases without making any inquiry as to their implications. In short, the Church, in part, has developed into what some have come to regard with a somewhat boastful intellectual pride as, liberal.

Christianity in some quarters has been enervated and emasculated and perverted and watered-down. It no longer advocates the pristine dogma "once delivered to the saints." By the process of rationalism some have darkened their conscience in telling themselves that the "old time" religion of Paul needs a new interpretation adapted to the modern thinking of our scientific age. Some have come to consider themselves "too intelligent" to accept God's Word as infallible. By the application of scientific methods of exegesis as employed by higher criticism, liberals have become smug in their own conceit—"increased with goods and having need of nothing." Thus we see the picture of the Laodicean church which the ascended Christ described as being neither cold nor hot, but wretched, naked and blind. The great redemptive religion hitherto known as Christianity has become diluted and lukewarm, devitalized and impotent.

Not a few churchmen have come passively to acquiesce in a vague, vapid, undogmatic belief. They have relinquished the older orthodoxy and admitted liberal theology which embraces certain

1 H. K. Carroll, *The Religious Forces of the United States*. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), p. lxxxiii.

subtle, underlying, basal tendencies that mold indefinite attitudes and vitiate vigorous doctrine. A spirit of laxity and indifference prevails. Such a spirit disparages definiteness and authority and fosters an attitude of spineless, watered-down passivism. There is hence no animated life and fecundity but a formal deadness and inactivity. It is significant that most dead churches are opposed to fundamentalism. Curran makes this observation:

The recent history of Protestantism in the United States is particularly noteworthy for two major developments. The first is the final abandonment of the older Protestant Orthodoxy, in some instances by the official declaration of the sects. The second, to which the jettisoning of the Protestant creeds contributed, is an ecumenical movement which aims at the consolidation of all denominations in a single church and which has already effected mergers of a number of Protestant denominations.

The rejection of Protestant dogma was the culmination of the latest struggle between orthodox and liberal Protestants for the control of the sects. The last phase began with the issuance in 1910, of the orthodox publication 'The Fundamentals', whence the orthodox received the new name Fundamentalists. The Fundamentals was a series of twelve books at the expense of two Protestant laymen who distributed, free of charge, 3,000,000 copies of the volume to ministers and lay leaders throughout the world. The series stressed five basic doctrines, the chosen field of battle of the orthodox. The fundamentals are:

1. Inerrancy and the divine authorship of Holy Writ;
2. The Divinity of Christ;
3. His Virgin Birth and Physical Resurrection;
4. His substitutionary Atonement;
5. His Imminent Second Coming.¹

ROOTS OF PRESENT DAY TRENDS

The church world has not arrived at this stage of "development" by mere chance. This is not a fortuitous happening. The rise of naturalistic liberalism had its inception because of concomitant changes which have currently come about in the modern society of which we are a part. The root of the various manifestations of so-called liberalism is in "naturalism," which denies that the creation of the world in which we live is to be attributed to anything beyond natural ordinary causes. Such a teaching rejects the Genesis account of Creation and seeks to rob God of His prerogative of Creator. Such assumptions emanate from Darwin's theory of evo-

¹ Curran, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 148, 149.

lution. His "Origin of Species," published in 1859, made little immediate impression upon the American mind outside scientific circles but through the medium of Herbert Spencer's writings came to be more widely read. Darwin's later work, "The Descent of Man" set forth in a clearer manner the implications of the first work so that even the non-scientific mind could grasp it.¹

SCIENTIFIC ADVANCES

Modern inventions have been produced in abundance during the past century. Visible achievements are before our eyes to bear testimony to our scientific thinking. No department of knowledge is exempt from the modern lust of scientific conquest. Every inheritance from the past, including our traditional religious convictions, has been subjected to searching criticism. In the process, unfortunately, many of our traditional convictions have been abandoned. Traditions are no longer sacred. We are demanding the new in religion—a religion which harmonizes with scientific development.

From what source have we derived our new theological concepts? This question is broached in order that we may be better able to appraise the worthiness of these liberal influences and to evaluate better the fruit of such teachings. Garrison draws attention to this root-cause in his comments relating to "Broken Remnants of Custom and Creed." He says,

The influence of German liberal thought was making itself felt through the return of American students from their studies abroad. The migration of American students to German universities had already begun before the war, though the stream was a very thin trickle. But before the American university had developed a graduate school of any importance, hundred of young people had gone to Germany and brought back the methods and results of German scholarship. The influence of German thought on philosophy and theology soon far surpassed that of either England or France.

Most notable of all, perhaps, was the new position which science began to occupy in the minds of non-scientists. Darwin's 'Origin of Species' was published in 1859 and the Duke of Argyle's 'Reign of Law' was a new book in 1867. Not less significant than the new ideas which these gave to scientists was the new place that they gave to science in the minds of philosophers and theologians and all who were

1 Winifred Ernest Garrison, *The March of Faith*. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1933), p. 90.

attempting to construct a religious view of the world. Taking these influences together, there was enough dynamite in them to blow up the bulwarks of the old order.¹

To note additional influences of continental Europe and German rationalism we have but to consider Garrison's further comment in this connection. He states:

Perhaps Christians of the evangelical tradition were as much shocked by the tendency to give up the old fashioned observance of Sunday as anything. The coming of the 'continental Sunday' in place of the Puritan Sabbath was viewed with alarm. The influence of the immigrants, the increase of Roman Catholic population in the cities and the general loosening of standards after the war, all contributed to the breakdown of Puritan practice, the increase of drinking tended to make this breakdown more odious to many, though the Puritan mind had always been more sensitive about Sunday than about liquor. The spectacle of German communities spending their Sunday evenings in beer gardens—which were often, in fact, pretty respectable places of family resorts according to present standards—served as a symbol of moral degeneracy.²

The first stage of the new era of science put the Christian apologists in the somewhat difficult position of having to defend religious concepts which were themselves about to undergo change through the application of scientific methods to the study of the documents upon which they were based. The results of the work of German Biblical scholarship began slowly to filter in and the study of the Bible by new methods, which treated it as a collection of literature whose date, authorship, and character were to be investigated critically, rather than as a book known in advance to be the inerrant product of inspiration, presently found a place in the minds of many of the entire course of the changing attitude towards the Bible is that given by William Newton Clarke in his 'Sixty Years with the Bible,' in which he narrates autobiographically the development of his own views through six decades.³

These deplorable spiritual conditions are to be lamented particularly in view of their more pronounced manifestation evident now in a more advanced stage of development. It seems apropos that other reliable evidence should be brought into focus to emphasize properly this deleterious, devious factor operative in the field of theological thinking. Hence, we call attention to the following information presented by Dr. Atkins. In speaking of the Church he says,

1 Garrison, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 8, 85.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 85.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 93.

It was already conscious that it had to reckon with science. It was still gravely teaching in its Sunday schools the essential cosmogony of Babylon interpreted and moralized through the ancient Hebrew sacred books, while science was assembling through patient investigation a massive body of facts and, with evolution for a key word, slowly fashioning a new geology, biology and astronomy. These challenged at every point the old creation stories of the Bible carried with them implications with which inherited religion would have to reckon. Whether the mass religious mind of America was then at all penetrated by what was going on is a question hard to understand after thirty-years—very likely not.¹

In speaking of the baneful effects of higher criticism he continues with the following information:

Few great religions have been more dependent upon their sacred books than Christianity. All its recognized backgrounds were in the Old Testament, its validity was tied up with the New Testament. It has been invested with infallible authority, every verse carried—if one could understand it—an equal accent of the Holy Ghost. The reverences and associations of the years hallowed its pages. It was religion, history and science. Preaching was the elucidation of its texts, prayer claimed its promises, and faith was sustained by its revelation. It had been however since the middle of the nineteenth century under examination, mostly by German scholars, and its parts were beginning to be traced to their sources and appraised by the historical conditions under which they were written. By the end of the century the more advanced American theological seminaries began to add to their faculties young men 'who had studied in Germany' and brought back the contagion of such ideas.

The engagements they precipitated began in less strategic sectors—the Book of Jonah, for example, which the more advanced as a foreign missionary tract of a 'vivid and dramatic sort'. George Adams Smith's studies of the prophets began to be read by thoughtful young ministers. Prophecy had always been one of the structural supports of the Christian faith. Isaiah's foretelling of Cyrus two hundred years before he appeared was proof text of the prophet's inspired infallibility. Smith assigned parts of the book to a much later author who knew about Cyrus because he was already marching upon Babylon. The theory of the two Isaiahs roused an amazing spiritual belligerency.²

By 1890 disturbing rumors were abroad. The work of a long generation of German scholars, whose conclusions challenged or recast the inherited conceptions of the Bible, reached America indirectly through Scotland, or imported directly in the mental baggage of young theo-

1 Atkins, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 38, 39.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 39, 40.

logical students who had studied abroad. The best of them became the teachers of a new generation.¹

Young people came home from college distressed—or—puzzled—their parents by erudite references to 'J' or 'E' and such ministers who had no use for 'J' or 'E' began to preach about the godless tendencies of modern education.²

Dr. W. W. Sweet avers that in no period in the history of the American church has there ever been so rapid a change in the theological scene as we have witnessed in our generation. He attributes this fact to the revolutionary changes which have taken place in the political, social, economic and religious climate. He points out, with others, the disturbing fact that American theology is more or less sterile. Denominationalists have come to share the general opinion that theology only served to keep Christians apart, and a religion "of" Jesus rather than a religion "about" Jesus has come to be the great vogue. Thus has the social gospel emerged upon the scene in greater prominence.³

We of this scientific age have unconsciously come to rely upon our own ingenuity and creative strength to provide for ourselves nostrums to cure sick society. We have lost sight of the power of God as an indispensable factor necessary in our social set-up. As Dr. John R. Large, Pastor of the Episcopal communion of Wilmington, Delaware, stated recently in a personal interview, "Churchmen have come to worship scientific gadgets and are no longer conscious of their need of a Higher Power." Religion has come to rely upon scientific pathological procedure which issues from man's effort to save society.

Men, with an elevated conception of their own abilities, and feeling their own self-sufficiency, living in the age of the comfortable, have designed their own fair-weather theology. They have not only exalted themselves but have reduced the Creator to some sort of vague impersonal being instead of the transcendent Being whom Isaiah, in a vision, saw as high and holy and lifted up. Then, in turn, he saw himself in utter dependence. Hence, we have resorted to psychiatry, social sciences, and variegated types and colors of means for social cures. While these sciences

1 *Ibid.*, p. 90.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 105.

3 William Warren Sweet, *The Story of Religion in America*. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1939), pp. 585, 586.

occupy a valid place as sciences, they are not to be used as substitutes to take the place of God's spiritual work in the New Birth. "Ye must be born again." This dictum applies, not to society, but to individuals in society.

To enter into a full treatment of the subject of modernism would comprise a thesis of considerable dimensions within itself. While our discussion of this subject of such grave importance has been necessarily limited; it is the author's hope that its readers will be able to comprehend a sufficient portion of its far-reaching implications to safeguard themselves from the subtle onslaught of its encroachments which threaten to undermine and destroy the very foundation of our Protestant faith.

Billy Sunday was stern in his denunciation of "liberal preachers." Though we may not appreciate altogether his invective pronouncements against them, we cannot but admire his zeal for what he believed to be truth and right.

Atkins writes of him,

The Rev. William A. Sunday, whose infinite variety age apparently, cannot wither, nor custom stale, said in Memphis, Tennessee, in January, 1932 that: 'The liberal ministers are a lot of Judases and deserve the fate of Judas They are a lot of pussy-footing, white-livered, yellow softies If the church would teach the virgin birth, the literal resurrection and the second coming of Christ, the evangelistic fires would burn once more and do more good in this Christ-hating, God-blaspheming world than all the disarmament conferences and league of nations.'¹

Atkins, in commenting on the wide chasm between these two factions in the Christian world, says, "No bridge of words, or dispositions either, strong enough to bridge the traffic of a united Church has as yet, been built across the gulf. Doctrinal differences have furnished evangelical Protestantism with cleavages of its own. The gulf between the 'modernist' and the 'fundamentalist' is actually as deep as between the sacramental and evangelical churches, and the interchanges from opposite sides far from irenic."²

¹ Atkins, *Op. Cit.*, p. 149.

² *Loc. Cit.*

Chapter II

THE THEOLOGICAL FACTOR AS A DIVISIVE FORCE (Continued)

A. THE SOCIAL GOSPEL

In the preceding chapter we have sought to bring into focus and to emphasize some of the serious implications resulting from modern liberal theology. Now, in the present chapter, it will be our purpose to indicate and consider three significant manifestations which are largely the outgrowth of certain of these liberal teachings. When comparison is made with the old theological concepts which have previously guided our religious thought, it is evident that these new views are definitely tainted by the unsavory influences of German liberalism. We will first analyse the bases and relative value of what has come to be designated, The Social Gospel.

THE CONCEPT OF GOD

Our theological concept of the nature of God and man's relation to Him largely determines the doctrinal system to which we subscribe. It is only natural to expect that man's doctrinal concepts will tend to center around the basal idea as to the nature of God. Dr. Sweet points out the significant fact that economic conditions and the changes in our economic order cause some corresponding change in our attitude toward God and our conception of Him. He illustrates this idea in the following statements:

Theology is not final truth handed down from above, but grows out of man's condition; it comes out of human background. It is what men think about God and their relationship to Him; and this is conditioned on man's feeling of need. In times of prosperity we are liable to over-emphasize man's part in salvation; when all human efforts fail and wars, famine and pestilence sweep the world, then we tend to emphasize the need of a great God who can do all things man finds himself unable to do.¹

It is a patent fact that with the advance of scientific knowledge which has brought with it improved living conditions and the

¹ Sweet, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 584, 585.

comfort of modern conveniences, man has come to feel somewhat independent of God and has virtually come to think of himself as his own God. Sweet also makes this observation :

The emphasis in theology during the immediate post-war years was an entirely different kind than that noted before. There was then much talk of the scientific approach to religion and 'scientific religion' was much extolled from many a cultured pulpit. Those were days when every branch of learning coveted some tie-up with the word science. It was indeed the charmed word. Belonging to this emphasis upon scientific religion was the emergence of the New Humanism. The extreme New Humanist abolished the supernatural and denied the existence of any God other than the God resident in 'the human will-to-goodness'. A recent interpreter of current theology has suggested that this was a natural reaction to the experiences through which the past generation had passed and that it grew out of 'a certain healthy impatience' and indignation with too easy cures for the pains of the world. In other words, the Humanist was not willing to trust any other cure for the world's evil and pain than the will-to-goodness in the soul of man.¹

He points out further, how the prosperous twenties affected religious bodies just as it did business, they overexpanded. Costly churches were built as well as denominational colleges. Congregations vied with one another in erecting churches of size and elegance on important corners. It is only natural that such lavish expenditure would create new worship atmospheres. Pulpit robes and robed choirs along with new liturgical emphases and formal services became more common. Personal religious experience ceased to occupy the prominent place it had once held. There came to be a growing feeling that Protestants must recover the art of objective worship if it was to invoke in its worshippers the awareness of reality. The emphasis upon the social gospel turned many a Protestant pulpit into a "soap box" for the proclaiming of social issues. People became emotionally starved and increasingly drama-minded. Mention is made of Professor Fred Eastman's survey of religious drama activities in the United States. It seems that among 451 churches, because of the changing architecture and liturgical emphasis, ninety-one per cent of them utilized dramatic plays to hold the interest of their people.² This new emphasis rep-

1 *Ibid.*, p. 587.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 578, 580 et passim.

resents a transfer of religious fervor from the erstwhile individual religious experience, which has been virtually outlawed to an emphasis on social ethics.

KARL BARTH'S CONCEPTION

The name of Karl Barth came to be popular in America during the last years of the prosperous era with the appearance of his "Word of God and Word of Man" in an American translation. Barth, by some, is considered too extreme and reactionary in his theological thinking; while by others he is characterized as the greatest thinker since Schliermacher. He is credited with having saved Protestantism in Germany. At the center of his theology stands a God high and lifted up, totally apart from man. The wide acceptance of this exalted view of God, Sweet says, is but the natural reaction against a watered-down God. Books began to be written which were calculated to check the sliding of Protestant teaching and preaching into humanistic paths. Without these writings and their influence it is feared that the Protestant church would have been doomed. Barthian teachings tended to bring into fresh focus, the neglected emphasis upon personal religion. He held that the transcendent God is still concerned about saving individual souls, but allows the world for the most part to shift for itself. God alone, he contends, can transform the structure of society; but He is not interested in society, His concern is to attend and assist the individual soul in its passage into eternity, for the victory of God is achieved "not in history, but beyond history." In contradiction to the liberal views, Barth considers every attempt to correct evil conditions and to right wrongs in human society as "not only futile but presumptuous." The liberal's doctrine of Divine Immanence is thus seen to be directly opposite to the unknowable of God of the Barthians.¹

Thus, it is seen that our view of God definitely determines our doctrinal thinking. The influence of liberal theology has measurably manifested itself in the emphasis on the Social Gospel. But this tendency to preach a social gospel was incipient and was an inchoate force several decenniums prior to the decades since the twenties, as will be pointed out.

1 Sweet, *Op Cit.*, pp. 584-590 et passim.

Atkins states that "the nineteenth Christian century bequeathed to twentieth century Christianity four distinct tasks: (1) the adaptation of the inherited faith to the conclusions of science, (2) critical history and the new psychology, (3) the examination and re-interpretation of its sacred books, (4) the discovery of a changed appeal, the Christian recasting of society."¹ "Anyone of these four," he adds, "was challenging enough to demand the whole force and intelligence of Christianity."¹

SOME CHARACTERISTIC TRENDS

Here is as good a place, perhaps, as any for this writer to affirm that there are many distinctly valuable teachings associated with the social gospel which are a needed emphasis in Christendom. Its emphases cannot be wholeheartedly accepted, however, since a dominant portion of its advocates are indisputedly liberals who reject the New Birth as a supernatural experience and deny the fact of personal or original sin. It has been demonstrated that their teachings of the Immanence of God are the outgrowth of their own sense of self-sufficiency and elevated conception of themselves. Its votaries reflect an attitude of being able to work out their own salvation somewhat independently of God's help. Their disbelief in a literal resurrection and the personal appearing of Christ in a second advent has caused them to over-emphasize this present world and to neglect the needed emphasis upon, "other-worldliness," which has characterized the teachings of best saints of all previous ages. Because the resurrection and future advent of Christ are cardinal doctrines, and are vital to genuine religious experience, they cannot be relinquished for the sake of unity nor for any other reason.

Atkins' comments are significant here. He says:

The doctrinally conservative were suspicious of the social gospel or positively hostile. It was associated with a theology they suspected and tarred with the same stick. It was, they thought and did not hesitate to say heatedly, a deflection from the true gospel, a devise of those who had no essential religious message to find something to preach about. Which was true enough to have an edge to it.²

1 Atkins, *Op Cit.*, p. 46.

2 *Op cit.*, p. 65.

Principally due to the fact that liberals have rejected the supernatural and have therefore neglected to teach the necessity of the supernatural new birth, they have been forced to look in various directions to find something about which to preach. Atkins points out that the social gospel has thus been a life preserver for twentieth century preaching. Ministers, sensitive to the bearing of science and psychology upon their inherited beliefs, were getting hard pressed to find anything to preach which bore creatively upon life. The curricula of seminaries were recast to train social gospel ministers and hymn books were revised to coincide with this new emphasis.¹

He illustrates the changes made in the conventional-type hymns which are interesting examples of this changed emphasis:

'There is a land of pure delight' has gone from up-to-date hymn books. The devout no longer stand on 'Jordan's stormy banks'; they wait for the green light

'Where cross the crowded ways of life

Where sound and cries of race and clan.'

And something has gone. The old hymns sung by quivering voices and read by dim eyes which had no need of the text were the marching music of pilgrims for whom earth and its shadows were only a stage on the road to heaven, there eternal day would exclude the night and pleasure banish pain. This confidence in one form or another has hitherto been the sustaining power of all religion.²

Dr. T. T. Shields, in an address on Modernism delivered at the Calvary Baptist Church of New York City, of which William Ward Ayer is pastor, stated, "I believe that it would not be an exaggeration to say that not more than one per cent of the ministers who have accepted the modernist's position have originated the ideas they have espoused." Mention is made here of his remark in order to add the statement that there are many fine Christian brethren of excellent character who have doubtless become the exponents of the social gospel without having recognized the destructive force of modern liberalism in which it roots; and who should not be severely criticized but patiently informed in the spirit of Christian love and brotherliness. Reason and persuasion should take the place of sternness and rebuke.

¹ Atkins, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 60, 65.

² *Ibid.*, p. 61.

CONTEMPORARY APPRAISALS

Dr. M. R. DeHaan makes the following categorical statements in his stern denunciation of the Social Gospel,

There is not one verse in the scripture which states that this age will end in a revival that will see all men saved. There is not one verse in the Bible to give the faintest encouragement to the unbiblical teaching that the so-called 'leaven' of the Gospel will finally permeate society and the teachings of Christ, the Golden Rule and the Sermon on the Mount will so change the hearts of men that they will all come to know Christ and the millennium will be here. This has never been the program of God. Instead, according to Acts 15, He is calling out a people. The very word 'church' in the Greek means a 'called out company.' The word is ecclesia, from two other words: ek, meaning 'out' and kaleo, meaning 'to call.' God is calling out a few here and there to make up the body of His elect Church. There is no wholesale salvation. At Pentecost there were 3,000 saved but this was only a 'drop in the bucket' compared with the tens of thousands who were celebrating the feast in Jerusalem on that day.

Many people believe the gospel has failed because after nineteen hundred years of Gospel preaching the world is yet unconverted, yea seems to be farther from God now than ever before. They imagine that something must be wrong because nineteen hundred years after the Prince of Peace came we are engaged in the greatest and most demoniacal war of all time. The Post-millennialist who had been preaching a so-called gospel and education and reform has abandoned his dream and taken refuge in the rickety and still more untenable theory of Amillennialism. This results from his failure to understand the mystery of the body of Christ. It was never God's program to convert the world in this dispensation. On the contrary, the Bible teaches clearly that this age will end in apostasy and wickedness, war and destruction. God's program does not call for conversion of the world now, but the opposite. This is the very point of James' speech at the first council at Jerusalem. Though we have quoted him before, look at his words again:

Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name (Acts 15: 14).

This verse says nothing about the conversion of the world. Rather, He is taking out some from among the Gentiles. These are members, of the body of Christ. They are the mystery members, from every tribe, race and nation who by faith in Jesus' shed blood are made partakers of His grace and constitute that comparatively small group of true born-again believers in every age. Then He tells us that after that body has been taken out He will return.

After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up (Acts 16:16).

Following the taking out of the Church, the Lord will restore the kingdom of David and Israel, and then will come world revival and conversion, as is plainly stated in the next verse:

That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world (Acts 15: 17-18).

How strange that men with open Bibles should still dream of a better world and federation of nations and universal peace without the re-establishment of the kingdom after the personal return of the King.¹

While Dr. DeHaan has apparently not recognized any value at all to be derived from the preaching of the social gospel, it is fair to add that he would perhaps be willing to admit its relative value, but that he is bitterly opposed to the liberalism out of which it emanates.

Earle V. Pierce has this to say against the watered-down theology of the liberals:

The Church can and must proclaim sound doctrine if it is to have revival and life for its evangelistic and ethical tasks. The coldness of the dead theology which Dr. Cutten deplored is not its greatest evil. It was cold because it was dead. It has denied the very truths which are the life of Christianity. Liberalism in religion has had long enough time to prove its nature and power or lack of it, and it is the lack which has been proved. Evangelism and the services of prayer have dwindled and have disappeared under its blighting influence, as many have confessed. Many times in the history of the Church there has been a cold and sterile orthodoxy, but that has been because of spiritual decadence of the people; the truth has been there, but it has lacked life. But where truth as well as life has been lacking, the Church has made a sorry exhibition of paralysis of its vital functions.

For many years doctrine has been decried. It is a healthy and hopeful sign of returning sanity that quite generally it is being recognized that doctrine is the very soul of life. Next to prayer, the need for today is a reproclaiming with great conviction the basic, cardinal, fundamental dogmas of the Church of the supernatural (or superphysical, if you please) powers of God, as manifested in the production of His Word, the Bible, as exhibited in the person and work of His Son, as shown in the regeneration wrought by the Holy Spirit. People are manifestly hungry today for a true sincere, and earnest exposition of the great truths of sacred Scriptures.

The philosophy of unproved and unprovable evolution has developed the poison of materialism until the "soul of society" is stagnated.

1 M. R. DeHaan, *The Second Coming of Jesus*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1944), pp. 109-111.

There needs to be a great transfusion of the blood of Christ, for bloodless theologies have brought on a pernicious religious anemia. T. R. Glover, before he left us, sent forth an alarm that those hymns exalting "the blood of the Lamb," which he says is "the central point of all history," have largely disappeared from our hymnals. For great revival there is needed great preaching, and great preaching is the proclamation of the great truths of God and of His redemption of us through His Son. Every great revival has come through the re-emphasis of great neglected truths. There has been a woeful decadence in the preaching which produced the victorious Church of former days. Men can eloquently ring the changes of the day and of social cures, but this can never take the place of preaching the great word of redemption through the crucified and risen Son of God. The evangelists of the world have been the evangelists of the Word.¹

While these quotations are unusual in length they are deemed as essential for an adequate and clear understanding of the subject.

ITS ASSOCIATIONS AND UTILITARIAN ASPECTS

In the complex society of current times we have unconsciously, but gradually, come to emphasize those aspects which tend toward socialism. Socialism seeks to narrow the range of human personality and accommodate it to fit the total program of society. In the process, our individualism is being submerged. Private initiative is stifled by the utilitarianism which came into vogue in the middle of the nineteenth century as an adjunct to German liberalism. Higher aspirations are being lost. Such is reflected in the evident scarcity of truly great Christian leaders of equal calibre to those of past generations. Our spiritual decline seems to be inversely in proportion to our material and scientific advancement. The social gospel appears to encourage in the realm of religion this same tendency to submerge the individual and utilize him as a cog in the wheel which turns the social community of which he is a part. The emphasis of the social gospel is thus seen to be not on the individual's worth, nor on individual salvation or ethics, but it is almost exclusively on society as a corporate unit.

We Americans have observed continental Europe on the march as they, with blind enthusiasm, have followed the "lock-step" political philosophies advocated under dictatorships. Communism

¹ Earle V. Pierce, *The Church and World Conditions*. (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1943), pp. 117, 118.

in Russia, Nazism in Germany, and Fascism in Italy represent types of socialism in which the individual has become a mere cog in the wheel. He exists merely to extend the total program of utilitarianism designed to bring the greatest happiness to the greatest number in society. Their aims were realized substantially by means of the best time-proved method, the state-controlled public-school system where their constituency came to know and revere their particular political philosophy.

All this may seem rather remote but it is fundamental to any understanding of religion in our times. For it was in this manner that liberalism came into vogue among our religious institutions which were destined to produce such manifestations as the social gospel. As has been pointed out, before we had developed respectable graduate schools our students habituated themselves to these new ideas by repairing to German universities where they imbibed German liberalism. These more highly educated graduate students were naturally chosen to occupy chairs in our institutions of higher learning, where they wielded their academic influence and molded an unwary generation into patterns according to their own design. A gradual infiltration of liberal theology came to crystalize into theological concepts which ultimately have produced the status quo of current times with its damaging effects which virtually defy alteration.

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL'S INADEQUACY BEGINNING TO BE RECOGNIZED

Studious observers in the conventional churches are coming to recognize the advances which are being made within the ranks of competitive sect groups which have been heretofore looked upon with a somewhat disdainful attitude. They have begun to study their policies and techniques in the hope that their findings will point the way out of their spiritual dilemma. While pursuing this course of action of research and inquiry they have overlooked the basic underlying fallacy, which if it goes uncorrected, will persist in retarding their spiritual progress and will ultimately spell failure, disintegration and death. Undue emphasis has come to be placed upon the physical well-being of man at the sacrifice of his spiritual need which only God can satisfy through faith on the part of the individual—not through the mere physical betterment of society.

Muncy presents a fine summary of the inadequacy of the social gospel. He writes:

There are some grave dangers in present trends. The greatest danger lies in shallow thinking that men may fit into a Christian social order who are not themselves Christians. Unregenerate men are not stable foundation stones for the new structure. Another peril is that Christians and Christian leaders may lose sight of the individual in an effort to deal with men en masse. A prominent leader said recently, that there is very little conviction for personal sin in society of today and there is much conviction for corporate sin. Men as individuals are not directly responsible for much of the evil of our time. This leader concludes that preachers ought to condemn the sins of groups—the capitalists or labor organizations or political parties. This is true but our Lord's witness must never forget that men as individuals are sinners against God and must repent and believe individually. It is well to condemn corporate sin but it must be remembered that corporate sin is but the sum of sins of all members of the group. One may preach about sins of capitalism with earnestness and convincing logic but no capitalist will repent until he faces the fact that the sin of his own life is the root of the whole matter.¹

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL TENDS TO CHANGE AN UNCHANGING GOSPEL

The methods of presenting the gospel are necessarily revised and altered to adapt the gospel to an ever-changing society but the essence of the gospel itself remains the same. Dr. Archie Ray in his thesis, "Sowing In Many Waters," on file at the Union Theological Seminary, centers his whole discussion around the theme—that there are many ways of presenting the gospel but the gospel itself is constant. The gospel is as immutable as the God who gave it by inspiration. It is intended for men of all ages, climes and races. This fact does not close the mind to new truth but insists that the corporate body of Biblical truth itself never diminishes or increases. Man has no prerogative whereby he is licensed to add to or take from God's revelation. When man has disregarded this simple law which God has enacted to preserve His redemptive truth, others have been chosen who will faithfully prosecute His program.

Garrison, in referring to the various forms of evangelism resultant from efforts to adapt it to the changing demands of the public ear, mentions a number of evangelists to illustrate the widely differing types of appeal but adds that:

1 Muncy, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 184, 185.

Evangelism not only revived the methods that had been effective in pioneer days but freely adopted new methods to catch the public ear; but it stood fast against any invasion of modern thought into the area of Christian doctrine. In general, the evangelists have resisted the 'new view of the Bible' and emphasized individual salvation by obedience to its commands and belittled and often denounced the newer stress upon the social gospel.¹

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL IS BASED ON LIBERAL THEOLOGY

While there are conflicting differences of opinion as to the jurisdiction of such criticism, it would seem that the liberals' repudiation of vital Christian doctrine would necessitate a firm counteracting of its teachings. John Horsch makes a sweeping summary statement which commends itself as being worthy of quoting here. He says:

Modern theology rejects the Bible teaching on man's sinfulness and the Biblical conception of the world. The 'exceeding sinfulness of in,' the existence of Satan and his kingdom, and the need of supernatural salvation are denied. For the Bible message of 'personal reconstruction' the social gospel substitutes the call to social reconstruction. For true spiritual religion we are offered a substitute having no other purpose than to make the world a decent place to live in. The new gospel is the gospel of eternalism. It is assumed that favorable external conditions will bring about the moral regeneration of society and that human nature will respond automatically to its better environment. Salvation is to come through civic, economic, social and political remedies. (Certain defenders of the social gospel tell us that until man's economic desires have been satisfied, it is both useless and illogical to preach to him morality and spirituality.) To Christianize the social order, rather than the individual, or in other words, to make the world a decent place to live in, is supposed to be the great task of the church.

The social gospel therefore lays enormous emphasis on a man's physical and material well-being. Religion is held to be nothing more than a plan for social welfare. Christianity, being considered a scheme of social improvements, is reduced to humanitarian and social endeavors. It is interpreted in terms of materialistic humanitarianism. Education and sanitation take the place of personal regeneration and the Holy Spirit. True spiritual Christianity is denied.

The social gospel is in fact religiously indifferent. It holds that the difference between Christianity and other religions is in degree, not in kind. Yet the social gospel comes under the cloak of religion. We are told that the spirit of loyalty and devotion shown toward modern

1 Garrison, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

social endeavors deserves the name of religion and Christianity. "The man who enters thoroughly into the social movements of his time," says Professor Edward Scribner Ames, of the University of Chicago, "is to that extent genuinely religious, though he may characterize himself quite otherwise (i. e., though he may be an avowed unbeliever)."¹

Such liberal teachings would allow a Bob Ingersoll, or any other man who might have made some contribution to social welfare, to be admitted into the Christian fellowship and become, therefore, a constituent part of the "body of Christ." Such teachings are, of course, inadmissible among orthodox worshippers. While there are varying degrees of liberals and hence notable exceptions, in the main, its advocates to some degree, as a rule, fall into the class described.

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL DESERVES A LEGITIMATE EMPHASIS

Atkins points out that there are some who blame the reformation for the creation of capitalism and an acquisitive society. This, however, is untenable.² There has been, however, considerable neglect of social conditions on the part of the church and a failure to understand the needs of society. No careful study of this problem had been made until recent years by the Church as a corporate unit, though some sporadic efforts have been expended in isolated instances. Garrison states that eagerness for wealth in the prosperous era which followed the Civil War period of reconstruction relatively blinded the minds of both secular and religious leaders to the needs of the workers.³ The people were more shocked by strikers than by the conditions which caused the strikes.⁴ The question was whether a thing was profitable or unprofitable rather than whether it was right or wrong.⁵ There was manifestly a definite relationship between the rise of Labor Unions and the attitude of the Church in its failure to wield a wholesome and telling influence in behalf of the working men.

Washington Gladden and Rauschenbusch were pioneers in the placing of emphasis on the church's social task.⁶ Garrison con-

1 John Horsch, *op. cit.*, pp. 127, 129 et passim.

2 Atkins, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

3 Garrison, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

4 Garrison, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

5 Atkins, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

6 Garrison, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

tributes the following information relative to the introduction of this social task of the Church. He says:

Washington Gladden, born in 1836, one of the editors of the Independent from 1871-75, did his great pastoral work for the First Congregational Church, Columbus, Ohio, but a greater work still as a leader in the new movement for the socialization of religion. Theological thought was not his primary interest, but his liberal tendencies coupled with his devotion to social enterprises as not merely humanitarian but as an essential function did much to win followers of the newer views.¹

Atkins calls our attention to the more mature developments of the Church's social mission. He writes:

The lines which Gladden and Rauschenbusch opened were followed by an increasing number of religious leaders and followed deeper and more analytically. Such as these began to draw the outlines, at least, of what a Christian society ought, according to their mind, to be. In December 1908, The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America adopted what has come to be known as 'The Social Creed of the Churches.'

This was a highly significant document for three reasons. For the first time in the history of Christianity an attempt was made to define Christianity in terms of the ethics of Jesus instead of the theological speculations of the fourth and fifth century Greek-Church councils. The Creed represented the maximum agreement of the churches composing the Council on the contours of a right Christian social order. And leaving out 'Christian'—which provocative word is not in the Creed at all—it is, as far as the writer knows, one of the earliest coherent programs of social amelioration to be realized through education, legislation and industrial readjustment submitted in America. (Atkins lists the social creed in full).²

Sydney G. Dimond, in his scholarly and significant work dealing with "The Psychology of the Methodist Revival" sanely appraises and analyses the social value of the work of John Wesley. He writes:

Society is nothing but individuals in relation, and 'the proposal to banish the thought of personal salvation in the name of advancing spirituality or social progress is strange folly.'

Philosophy and psychology alike are suffering from an over-emphasis upon social evolution. It would be futile to say that the group mind or the common will would have recovered living religion in the

¹ Ibid., p. 95.

² Atkins, *op. cit.*, p. 56, 57.

eighteenth century without the work of John Wesley, or that the general effort of the community would have liberated the mind of Europe in the sixteenth century if the counsels of Erasmus had prevailed instead of the explosive methods of Luther. History has its own logic, and there is a salt and salutary quality in the religious conviction which sustains Athanasius or Antigone against the world. Moreover spiritual illumination is individual, and while the matter of Methodist church history may be social and moral, its form is individual and religious.¹

While we can never fellowship with the extreme liberal and accept teachings which are diametrically opposed to those of the orthodox, historical Christian Church, this should not blind us to the valid emphases of the social gospel which are designed for the amelioration of society. We can cooperate as a Church with any agency whose purpose it is to help our fellowman, whether it be secular or religious. The social gospel does have a legitimate place in the program of the Christian Church, but it should never be substituted for the divine and supernatural work of the Holy Spirit to produce conviction and conversion of individuals. Though it be cliché, it is ever needful to say, "Ye must be born again"!

This challenging subject with which we have dealt is almost inexhaustible in its scope and invites extended treatment; but this is not possible nor perhaps needful for our present purpose. It would seem well, in conclusion, to quote Dr. B. R. Lacy's rationally sound and impartial appraisal of both sides of the question. He says that,

The so-called Social Gospel made its appeal to many individuals and organizations which formerly had devoted their time, thought and efforts in converting the individual, building him up in the Christian graces, and extending the Kingdom through missionary efforts. Conferences and conventions which at one time consisted of addresses on evangelism, missions, and personal piety now were taken up with the consideration of the problem of race, industry, war, and other matters involving man's relationship to man in the social, political and economic order. Many think that much ground was lost in evangelism by the disputes between the advocates of the Gospel of Personal Redemption and the enthusiasts of the Social Gospel. The former deplored any preaching and effort that went beyond a Gospel for the Individual,

1 Sydney C. Dimond, *The Psychology of the Methodist Revival*. (Nashville: Whitmore and Smith, Agents, 1934), pp. 265, 266.

while the enthusiasts for the Social Message had little patience with those whose primary interest was the salvation of the soul of the individual. The mutual understanding and the adjustment of these two groups to the ideas and aims of each other may be prophetic of a new revival in which both elements will be preserved.¹

Parallel with Dr. Lacy's remarks might well be added those of Dr. W. W. Sweet who writes,

Revivalism, as it has run its course in America, has been primarily the individualizing of religion. It has often been blind to the sins of society, sins that cannot be reached by merely converting individuals. But if religion is to continue as a vital force in America, it must not lose the personal and individual emphasis. At the same time it must concern itself about the sins of society.²

Such an attitude, in the estimate of this writer, is the only one which the Christian should maintain. It must be recognized that there are Christian brethren who advocate each of these types of religious programs. But, as a solemn warning to those who have fallen onto the fatal error of rejecting the new birth, we would quote the pertinent words recorded in John 1:12, 13; "But as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man, but of God."

We come to analyse, next, the bases of The New Psychology of Religious Education and attempt to appraise its relative value as an instrument for the promotion of the kingdom of God.

1 Lacy, *Op. Cit.*, p. 156.

2 Sweet, *op. cit.*, *Revivalism in America*, p. 182.

B. THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

It would be needless to enter into a lengthy discussion to set forth the merits of educational evangelism and its Scriptural validity. It is common knowledge that the Christian Church has always recognized the value of teaching in the home, in the Sunday School, and in specialized types of Bible study. Great strides have been made in the field of Christian education. An intelligent presentation of Christian doctrine and truth is of incalculable value and of permanent benefit in preparing an individual to make an intelligent commitment as well as to bring about a mature development in the Christian way of life. There are doubtless no differences of opinion nor controversy in regard to these accepted facts. Christian nurture and education are one of the chief interests of the Christian Church.

But according to Horsch, "Modern liberalism has substituted 'religious' education for 'Christian' education."¹ Niebuhr points out that there has been a substitution of education for conversion.² Machen also discusses the relative value of the right and wrong use of religious education. His approach commends itself as being a worthy evaluation of these two types of education prevalent in the Church. He explains:

At the beginning of every Christian life there stands not a process, but a definite act of God. That does not mean that every Christian can tell exactly at what moment he was justified or born again. . . . But on the other hand it is a mistake to demand that it should be universal. There are Christians who can give the day and the hour of their conversion, but the great majority do not know at exactly what moment they were saved. The effects of the act are plain but the act itself is done in the quietness of God. Such, very often, is the experience of children brought up by Christian parents. It is not necessary that all pass through agonies of soul before being saved; there are those to whom

1 Horsch, *Op. Cit.*, p. 158.

2 H. Richard Niebuhr, *Social Sources of Denominationalism*, p. 13.