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Recorder (Toronto Bible College), 52, no. 1 (March 1946)



Toronto Bible College RECORDER

16 Spadina Road
Toronto

Price Ten Cents
Per Annum

Volume 52

TORONTO, MARCH, 1946

Number 1

Fundamental but Not Dispensational

An Answer to Criticism

by Principal John McNicol

IT has been our principle and practice not to reply to criticism directed against the Bible College from without, and so we have never turned aside from our positive and constructive work to publish any defence of our teaching and our methods. But during the past war years friends and former students have come to us in perplexity because of rumours about the College which are being persistently circulated among certain groups of Fundamentalists. Graduates recently home from years of service in the Foreign field tell us how distressed they have been to meet with these rumours in the very churches from which they went out, and they say that they can get no explanation for them except some vague statements, unsupported by any evidence, that the College is "going off the track," or is "becoming Modernist".

In view of all this it has become necessary for the Principal, before he vacates the office which he has held for nearly forty years, to do what he has never done before. In fairness to its friends who have been supporting the College with their prayers and gifts, and in justice to its students who have been carrying its teaching into all parts of the world, he is obliged to explain the nature of this criticism and tell how it has arisen.

THE NATURE OF THE CRITICISM

Its cause can be stated in a very few words. It is due to the fact that the Principal, in leading his students through the Bible, does not follow the system of interpreting prophecy that prevails in American Fundamentalism and is taught in almost all other Bible Schools. He is not a Dispensationalist. He does not believe in Futurism, but holds the position of the Protestant Reformers.

Some twenty years ago a few articles of his appeared in a certain religious periodical attempting to show that some of the popular prophetic teaching of the day was overdoing the dispensations and missing the essential spiritual reality in Christianity. The paper lost some subscriptions because of those articles, and the writer is well aware that some good Christian people began to suspect his views even then. But there was no criticism of the Bible College at that time, and no attack upon it. This has come about in another way.

During the past decade a number of young ministers, zealously fundamental and ardently dispensational, have been called and settled in pastorates in Toronto

and other parts of Ontario. When these pastors find that prophecy is not taught in this Canadian institution as it is taught in the Fundamentalist institutions where they received their training, it is quite natural for some of them to think that the Toronto Bible College is "off the track", or is even "Modernist". They are not to blame for this, for it is evident that they have never learned of the prophetic outlook of historic Protestantism.

There are others, however, who cannot be absolved from blame. A few of our own graduates—they are only a few—who were brought up on the Scofield Bible and showed little response to the kind of training which the College tries to give its students have helped to circulate these rumours against their Alma Mater, and have even turned some young people away from it who had expressed a desire to come. Still more—some members of a great and honoured Missionary Society, of whose Council the Principal has been a member for many years, have been known to raise a question about the teaching of the Toronto Bible College, notwithstanding the fact that the College has given the Mission some of its most devoted missionaries.

These things being so, what else can the Principal do, after years of patience with his Dispensationalist friends, but accept the issue which they have forced upon him and publish a statement explaining why he rejects Dispensationalism and why it is not taught in the Toronto Bible College. This he now proceeds to do, with the full approval of the whole Faculty.

WHY WE REJECT DISPENSATIONALISM

This, too, can be stated in very few words. It is because we believe that both Modernism and Dispensationalism are extreme movements and are therefore dangerous. Both movements have departed from the essential reality that lies at the heart of Christianity, and both tend to undermine the very foundation of the Christian Church. Modernism does this by going to one extreme with its rationalistic theory of the Bible and its naturalistic evolution. Dispensationalism does it by going to the other extreme with its parenthetic theory of the Church and its fantastic apocalyptic program.

We do not mean that Dispensationalists do this deliberately, for they are usually sincere and earnest Christian people. They believe in the Divine authority of the Scriptures and the supernatural verities of the Christian faith, and most of them are devoted to missions and evangelism. But they are quite unaware of the serious consequences to which their system of belief logically leads. This may be shown in a considerable number of ways.

1. *Dispensationalism was not the prevailing belief of the early church which its advocates claim that it was.*

Those who refer to Philip Schaff to justify their claim should be careful to quote him fairly. It is true that he says: "The most striking point in the eschatology of the ancient church is the widely current and very prominent chiliasm, or the doctrine of a visible reign of Christ in glory on earth with the risen saints for a thousand years." But he explains the reason for that belief in these words: "The Jewish hope of a Messianic kingdom, which rested on carnal misapprehension of the prophetic figures, was transplanted to the soil of Christianity, but here spiritualized, and fixed on the second coming of Christ instead of the first." He goes on to mention the names of several Christian writers

who held this belief, but he also refers to orthodox Christian writers who did not share it. Then he explains how it passed away. It became "so coloured in the grossly sensuous style of Judaism that it provoked opposition, first in the Roman Church and then in the Alexandrian school". It got support for a time from the heresy of Montanism and lingered on through the third century, but it never formed part of the general creed of the Church.

Neander, one of the greatest of Church historians, says this about it: "Wherever we meet with Chiliasm—as in Papias, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr—everything seems to indicate that it was diffused from one country and from a single fountain head." And also: "It was natural that the zealots for Chiliasm should in the outset be disposed to represent all opposition to it as savouring of Gnosticism." This statement throws a significant light on the attitude which the present day zealots for Dispensationalism take toward those who do not accept their views, for Gnosticism was the ancient form of Modernism.

At one time Chiliasm had many followers in Egypt, where a pious bishop named Nepos wrote a book in defence of it. After his death a country minister named Coracion became the head of the party, and there was danger of a schism in the Egyptian Church because of it. Then the good and great Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria dealt with the matter in a way that provides a model for modern controversialists. Here is the way Neander tells the story:

"He called together those of the parochial clergy who supported the opinions of Nepos, and, moreover, allowed all laymen of the churches, who were longing after instruction on these points, to be present at the conference. The book of Nepos was produced; for three days the bishop, from morning to evening, disputed with those pastors on the contents of the book. He patiently heard all their objections, and endeavoured to answer them from Scripture. He entered fully into the explanation of every difficulty, taking the Bible as his guide; and the issue was—a result which had seldom before attended theological disputation—the clergy thanked him for his instructions, and Coracion himself, in the presence of all, honestly retracted his former views, declaring himself convinced of the soundness of the opposite doctrines. This happened in the year 255." All this goes to show that if modern Dispensationalism is a revival of ancient Chiliasm it is a departure from the original orthodox belief of the Church and not a return to it.

2. Dispensationalism denies the fundamental doctrine of Christianity that there is but one way of salvation and thus attacks the historic faith of the Church.

The Southern Presbyterian Church in the United States, at its General Assembly in May, 1944, adopted a report on Dispensationalism prepared by a special committee appointed for the purpose, which was in part as follows: "It is the unanimous opinion of your Committee that Dispensationalism is out of accord with the system of the doctrines set forth in the Confession of Faith, not primarily or simply in the field of eschatology, but because it attacks the very heart of the theology of our Church. Dispensationalism rejects the doctrine that God has, since the Fall, but one plan of salvation for all mankind and affirms that God has been through the ages administering various and diverse plans of salvation for various groups.

"Your Committee wishes also to make the following statement of clarification: Most, if not all, adherents of Dispensationalism hold the Premillennial view of our

Lord's return; but not all Premillennialists accept Dispensationalism. Therefore, the Committee wishes to make it clear that it has endeavoured solely to consider the particular type of Biblical interpretation known as Dispensationalism. In view of this fact, this report should not be considered as in any sense a criticism of Premillennialism as such."

This is a significant and discriminating statement. It recognizes that there is a difference between simple Premillennialism and Dispensationalism. American Dispensationalists are accustomed to claim that they alone are Premillennialists, and usually exclude from their fellowship Premillennialists who do not accept their Dispensationalism.

Some fifty years ago Dr. S. H. Kellogg, an outstanding Premillennialist and at that time the honoured minister of a Presbyterian Church in Toronto, was invited to address the old Prophetic Conference at Niagara-on-the-Lake. He gave an exposition of the 24th chapter of Matthew which did not agree with the "any moment" theory of the Lord's return held by the other speakers. When he finished they gathered about him and declared that he had taken away their hope, and although there was no more finely equipped Biblical scholar and teacher among them (witness his volume on Leviticus in the Expositor's Bible), he was never invited back again.

The late Dr. H. W. Frost, the saintly founder of the American Branch of the China Inland Mission, told the writer many years ago of his own experience. In his early life he had accepted the views of J. N. Darby, but as he went on with his study of the Bible he found himself disagreeing more and more with Darby's teaching about the rapture and the imminence of the Lord's coming. When he finally saw that he would have to announce his change of view, he went down on his knees and wept, for he knew that, although he still remained a Premillennialist, it would mean his exclusion from the fellowship of many of his former friends.

3. Dispensationalism subverts the Divine unity of the Bible and dislocates the Divine procedure of redemption which it records.

No system of Biblical interpretation can be true which represents law and grace as different methods of salvation used by God in different ages, each excluding the other and contrary to it. If this were the case it would mean that God has taken opposing and contrary attitudes toward men at different times. In the last analysis this kind of teaching reflects on the character of the sovereign God and makes Him changeable.

So far from being opposing systems, law and grace, as revealed in the Scriptures, are parts of one harmonious and progressive plan. The Bible represents them as different stages in the one Divine purpose and plan of redemption which comes marching down the ages. To make them different methods of salvation is to break that unity and dislocate that plan. When John declared that "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (Jno. 1: 17), he was not contrasting law and grace as opposite systems, but representing them as two related parts of one system. The law given through Moses was a shadow, but Christ was the substance. The law was the pattern, but Christ was the reality. The grace which was behind the law and had been in operation since the very first promise in Eden came to light through Jesus Christ so that it could be realized.

Something must be wrong with a prophetic theory that has to represent the Gospel which Paul preached as a different message from the Gospel which the

original Apostles of the Lord were sent out to preach. The one, it is said, is "the Gospel of grace", and the other is "the Gospel of the kingdom". The one offers salvation from sin, with its spiritual blessings, as the free gift of God on the condition of faith. The other announces the Kingdom, with its material blessings, on the legal terms of repentance and obedience. The one supersedes the other as a temporary parenthesis, and has for its purpose the gathering out of the Church. The other will be taken up again, so it is said, after the Church is removed from the world, and has for its purpose the establishment of the Kingdom upon the earth.

If this distinction between Gospel messages were true it would mean, not only that God takes a different attitude toward men in different ages, but also that He offers a different kind of salvation. Redemption itself changes and becomes a different thing as the dispensations go on, and the Author of it could not be "the same yesterday, and today, and forever". But this is not the redemption that comes to light in the pages of the New Testament. The Gospel announced there is one and the same message from the beginning to the end. It is the good news that God Himself has undertaken the salvation of men—"that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. 5: 19). It has different aspects, of course, according as it is regarded from different points of view, but there can be only one Gospel.

Paul himself made no distinction in the Gospel message and used the two expressions interchangeably. When he was giving his farewell message to the elders of Ephesus, he said that the ministry he had received of the Lord Jesus was, "to testify the gospel of the grace of God," and, in the very next sentence, he described his ministry among the Ephesians as, "preaching the kingdom of God" (Acts 20: 24-25). The last glimpse we get of the Apostle in the Acts reveals him "preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ" in his own hired house in Rome (28: 30-31). Evidently Paul thought that the way to fulfil the great task of evangelizing the Gentiles to which he had been called was to preach "the Gospel of the kingdom".

While Dispensationalists believe in the inspiration and Divine authority of the Scriptures, yet their method of approaching the Bible is perilously like that of Modernists. In both cases the approach begins by assuming a subjective theory of the structure of the Bible. One man, reading the Book of Isaiah and applying his subjective theory, decides that the last twenty-seven chapters could not have been written by the prophet but must have come from a later day. Another man, reading the Gospel of Matthew and applying his subjective theory, decides that the Sermon on the Mount was not meant for the Church to-day but for a future age when the Church is gone. These two methods are essentially the same, yet the one man is a Modernist who claims to be "a critical scholar", while the other man is a Dispensationalist who claims to be "a prophetic scholar".

That method of dividing the Scriptures is not what Paul meant by "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2: 15). When the Apostle gave that instruction to Timothy he was referring to the Christian minister's duty to treat the Word of God truthfully without falsifying it. He was to "cut a straight path" through it, as the word really means, without deviating from it to one side or the other. It is quite true that those who divide up the New Testament in this way have no desire to undermine the authority of any part of the Word of God and are far removed from the Modernists in their view of its inspiration. But this is only another instance of the truth that extremes often meet.

4. *Dispensationalism displaces the Cross from its central position in the Divine scheme of redemption.*

It is not that Dispensationalists deny the Atonement, but that they fail to realize the profound significance of the death of Christ in the whole process of God's redeeming purpose. The distinction they draw between "the Gospel of grace" and "the Gospel of the kingdom" is an evidence of this, for while the Cross is the basis of the former it seems to have no place in the latter. But the chief evidence of their displacement of the Cross is to be found in the way they explain "the confirming of the covenant" in Dan. 9: 27.

The evangelical commentators of the Reformed Churches saw a prophecy of the Cross of Christ in the heart of this verse. According to them it was the Messiah who was to "confirm the covenant with many", and this was the "new covenant" already foretold and described by Jeremiah (Jer. 31: 31). They heard Jesus echoing the very words of this prophecy at the Last Supper when He spoke of His blood of the new covenant as being "shed for many" (Matt. 26: 28). They believed that it was the Messiah who was to "cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease", and they saw that Jesus had done this by His death, thus fulfilling and bringing to an end the whole Mosaic system of sacrifices.

The critical commentators of modern times, however, following the lead of German rationalism and disbelieving in predictive prophecy, deny any reference to the Cross in the passage and explain it as referring to a covenant made with the Jews by their great persecutor Antiochus Epiphanes in the second century B.C. This is the interpretation now generally adopted by Modernists. Dispensationalists take up this view of "the covenant", but put the fulfilment in the future. Passing by the Cross altogether, they declare that the author of the covenant will be the Antichrist, who will make a covenant with the Jews to restore their temple sacrifices for a seven year period ("one week"), and in the midst of that period will break the covenant and launch upon them "the great tribulation".

With all due respect to his Dispensationalist friends, and he has many of them, the writer has to confess that he does not know, in all the history of Biblical interpretation, of a more preposterous piece of Scripture exegesis than the Scofield Bible note on that verse. According to it we are to believe that, in answer to Daniel's long and earnest prayer for the pardon of his people, the archangel Gabriel was sent to give him a general announcement about the coming of the Messiah, and then—not to tell him what the Messiah would do for his people, but to hand him a special prophetic blue-print for the Antichrist. And yet it is upon this exegesis of that verse alone, that blue-print, that the prophetic system of Futurism is built up and Dispensationalism's whole program of future events is based. Nearly all the Book of Revelation is squeezed into that "one week". The writer has also to confess that he was astonished on one occasion when a prominent advocate of Dispensationalism, after the old evangelical Protestant interpretation of this verse had been explained to him, acknowledged that he had never heard of it before. One would have thought that the teachers of Dispensationalism should have explored the whole field of prophetic interpretation before being so dogmatic about their own view.

5. *Dispensationalism discards the New Testament method of interpreting Old Testament prophecy, the method used by the inspired Apostles.*

Dispensationalists say that we "spiritualize" the prophecies. Well, that was just what the apostolic writers did. To spiritualize the prophecies is not to explain them away, but to find their fulfilment in the unseen spiritual world which lies

behind the whole Biblical revelation. Dispensationalists materialize that world by interpreting the prophecies "literally" and keeping them down on an earthly level. That was exactly what the Jews did. By looking for earthly fulfilments alone they missed the redemptive element in prophecy, and so they did not recognize their Messiah when He came.

The inspired writer of Hebrews spiritualizes God's promise of Canaan to the patriarchs, and shows that they knew quite well that the earthly land was not the final content of that promise but only the frame in which it was set. Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God". They all confessed that they were "strangers and pilgrims on the earth", and that they desired "a better country, that is, an heavenly" (Heb. 11: 8-16).

The Apostle Peter, in the sermon he preached on the day of Pentecost, spiritualized God's promise to David regarding his throne. Peter's mind had been freshly enlightened by the gift of the Holy Spirit which had just been poured out that day, and he saw the real significance of that promise in the new light. Quoting David's words from the 16th Psalm, he explained them in this way: "therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ." (Acts 2: 30-31.) Obviously Peter meant that David knew full well that God's promise to him went far beyond the mere perpetuation of his earthly kingdom and the establishment of his earthly throne.

The Apostle went on to explain that Jesus ascended David's throne when He was "by the right hand of God exalted". David was chosen as king because he was a man after God's own heart who would fulfil all His will (Acts 13: 22). He founded his kingdom on the will of God, and that made his throne a type of the heavenly throne from which the will of God is administered. That throne is now occupied by Him to whom all power in heaven and earth has been given, who must reign, Paul says, till He has put all His enemies under His feet (1 Cor. 15: 25). And yet Dispensationalists would bring the King of glory down to earth again and place him on a "literal" throne in Jerusalem which an atomic bomb could blow off the face of the earth in a moment.

6. Dispensationalism departs from the analogy of Scripture in the way it deals with unfulfilled prophecy.

It regards prophecy as history written beforehand, and as intended to give us a program of world events connected with the Lord's return. When we test this view of prophecy by applying it to the prophecies that have been fulfilled in connection with Christ's first coming, we find that it fails to fit them.

The whole earthly life of Jesus from Bethlehem to Calvary was marked by numerous fulfilments of special predictions which are pointed out in the course of the Gospel narratives, and yet it would have been utterly impossible to draw out from these Old Testament predictions the plan of His life beforehand. The Prophets did not profess to be forecasting the life of the Messiah when they were speaking of His coming. The Apostles did not regard what the Prophets wrote as pre-written history. To them prophecy was a light shining in a dark place until the day should dawn and the day star arise (2 Pet. 1: 19).

It was intended to mark the path by which God was fulfilling His purpose of redemption by setting up guideposts along the way which could be recognized by those who were looking for redemption (Luke 2: 38). It foretold events that

were to happen, but it did not describe them in the way they were to happen or lay down any program which the fulfilment would necessarily follow. The same thing may be said about the predictions that have been so remarkably fulfilled in the destruction of the great cities of the ancient world, Nineveh, Babylon, and Tyre. These events were foretold with great fulness of detail, but it would have been quite impossible to construct out of these details any account of the fall of these cities before the events took place.

Now if this is true of the prophecies that have been fulfilled in connection with the first coming of Christ, we are not justified in assuming that it will be different with the prophecies connected with His second coming. To deal with them as pre-written history is to depart from the analogy of Scripture. When Jesus told His disciples that it was not for them to know the times or the seasons which the Father had put within His own power (Acts 1: 7), He meant that God had not limited Himself to any date or committed Himself to any program in carrying out His great purpose declared in the prophecies about the Kingdom. There is no subject on which dogmatism is less becoming than the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy.

7. Dispensationalism misrepresents the significance of the blessed hope of the Church.

It divides the return of the Lord into two stages—a coming "for the saints" and, after an interval of some years, a coming "with the saints". When Christ comes "for the saints", the rapture of the Church takes place and we are to expect this to happen "at any moment". The argument for this theory of the Coming is, that we could not obey the Lord's command to "watch" if we thought of anything as still to happen before His return, and therefore all unfulfilled prophetic events must be placed beyond the event for which we are to watch and in an interval between two stages of the Coming.

But this was not the way the Apostles understood the command to watch. None of the apostolic writings are more aglow with the blessed hope than the Epistles of Peter, and yet he knew that the event could not take place at any moment, for the Lord had told him that he was to live to old age and die by martyrdom (John 21: 18-19). Paul's letters to the churches show that he taught his converts to have the expectant attitude toward the Lord's coming, and yet he was given a large task to accomplish before that event could take place—he was sent "far hence unto the Gentiles" (Acts 22: 21).

The "any-moment" theory encourages a false experience. It turns the corporate hope of the Church into a personal hope for the individual Christian—the hope of escape from the necessity of dying. If this were its real significance, then it would mean that all the saints who have passed away since the first days of the Church were disappointed in their hope. About a generation ago, an aged and devoted minister, whose preaching had been marked by repeated emphasis on the imminence of the Lord's coming, lay at the point of death in a Canadian city. He felt it his duty to bear witness to his belief by issuing a public statement that he did not expect to die but was still waiting for the Lord's return. A week after that he passed away. The result was that many of his ministerial friends, who honoured him for his godly character and evangelical zeal, felt that the very doctrine of the Second Coming for which he had stood so prominently had been proved false.

This is not the attitude we find in the New Testament. The early Christians

never considered the matter in that way at all. They did not set the event of the Lord's coming over against the event of their own death in the sense that they hoped the former would anticipate the latter. As a matter of fact they did not fear death at all. For them death had lost its sting, and all that it could do to them now was to put them to sleep in Jesus. Whether the Lord's return would take place in their own life-time or not gave them no concern. It was the triumphant assurance of it that was their true hope, and in the joy of that they could endure tribulation and suffer death.

The New Testament saints were not merely looking into the future along the level of time for the return of Christ; they were also looking into the unseen, and standing face to face with the heavenly order. The event lay in the future, of course, but its springs were within the veil. These lay, not in the affairs of this world, but in the world of eternal reality and ultimate power where their Master was. He would come "in the clouds of heaven", releasing new powers from that heavenly world in another supernatural event and carrying His redeeming purpose to its goal. This is what Paul meant when he described the Christian attitude in this present world as, "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit. 2: 13).

8. *Dispensationalism has played into the hands of the Roman Papacy with its theory of a future Antichrist.*

The term "antichrist" occurs in Scripture only in the Epistles of John (1 John 2: 18, 22; 4: 3; 2 John 7), and there it is applied to false teachers who deny the Incarnation. It is used now in a very different sense, as the name for the great foe of Christ foreshadowed in "the little horn" of Dan. 7: 8, who speaks great words against the Most High and wears out his saints, and in "the man of sin" of 2 Thess. 2: 3, who sits in the temple of God and assumes the place of God. The Protestant Reformers believed that both these prophecies were fulfilled in the Roman Papacy, and their interpretation was amply justified by the facts of history. In harmony with this they regarded the Book of Revelation as symbolizing prophetically the history of Christianity from the days of the Apostles onward, and they found in the course of it both Pagan and Papal Rome.

As long as this teaching prevailed the power of the Roman hierarchy was kept in check in Protestant lands. But about a century ago a different kind of interpretation was introduced. The Book of Revelation was pushed into the future, and the doctrine of a future Antichrist arose. Gradually the Protestant view was suppressed and the new view was popularized. To day, in North America, the Protestant view has almost disappeared, while the Futurist view, chiefly through the influence of the Scofield Bible, two million copies of which have been issued, has captured the Fundamentalist Movement and is propagated by nearly all the Bible Schools.

With what result? One need only point to the fact that responsible Church leaders are now raising their voices in alarm at the way the Papal hierarchy has wormed its way into places of influence and power behind the politics of both these Protestant lands. This has been going on all these years while the eyes of multitudes of good Christian people have been turned away to look into the future for a hypothetical Antichrist. It is not the Roman Catholic people who have done this; they are only to be commended for their devotion to their church. Nor has it been done by the Church of Rome as a church, for that church has produced many saints in the course of its long history. It could exist without the Papacy,

and indeed before the Protestant Reformation it made some serious attempts to curb the Papal power, but failed. The real Antichrist is the Papal system alone, which now completely controls Roman Catholicism and is a political as well as a religious power. It is the most thoroughly organized institution on earth, and from its head in the Vatican it can make its influence felt in the farthest corners of the world and in the most secret places. It is slowly capturing the cultural life of Protestant lands.

Modernism as well as Dispensationalism has helped to pave the way for this advance of Rome during the past century. Protestantism began by finding the source of Divine authority in the Bible, and not in the Church as Rome does. As long as the pulpits of Protestantism spoke with this authority, it made headway against Rome. Then came German Rationalism undermining that authority, and as a result Modernism arose. In too many cases Modernism has weakened the note of authority in the voice of Protestantism, or silenced it altogether. But Rome continues to speak with the authority which she finds in "Mother Church", and she is not afraid to insist upon that authority as Divine. This largely accounts for the many conversions to Rome that have occurred among prominent men since that of Cardinal Newman a hundred years ago. Thoughtful men must in the end rest their religious faith, not in their own subjective experience, but in some objective Divine authority, and when that is taken away from the Bible they will turn to the Church that claims to have it. Here again we find extremes meeting when both Dispensationalism and Modernism play into the same hands, although they do it in very different ways.

THE CONCLUSION

Perhaps the greatest disservice which Dispensationalism is doing to the cause of Christ is in propagating the idea that the professing Church is apostate. This has produced a process of disintegration among the denominations, which is spreading widely and has given rise to innumerable independent and undenominational groups, who are powerless to make any serious impact upon their own local communities or help forward the general evangelization of the world. And this at a time when, more than in any other period of her history, the Christian Church should be presenting an unbroken front to a paganized world.

It is true enough that the professing Church has been suffering from a long period of spiritual decline because of the inroads of Modernism upon her leadership, but she has passed through such periods before and has recovered from them. And besides, many of her prominent teachers who have been out in the wilderness are already finding their way back again. The damage done by Modernism still remains and will continue to be seen for some time, but there is an evident desire among many responsible Christian leaders to re-establish the Church upon "a sane Fundamentalism", and they should be given every encouragement.

The greatest and wisest of modern evangelists, D. L. Moody, used to tell his converts that although the Church may not be what she should be, yet she is the only agency God has for doing His work in the world, and they should join her membership and help her with her task. This is the position we take in the Toronto Bible College. We thankfully accept all the modern light that has been thrown upon the Scriptures, and we recognize the truth of much that the Scofield Bible contains, but we believe that Modernism and Dispensationalism have been harmful to the Church, and we reject them both.

And now, having explained the criticism to which the College has been subjected and answered our critics, we shall go on with our own proper work. We shall continue to help the denominations, so far as we can, with the task which the Lord gave His Church to accomplish in the world, believing that in this way alone will His Kingdom come.

Evangelism To-day

For some time there has been apparent a swing away from two extremes to a sane, Biblical emphasis on evangelism in the local church.

One extreme was modernism, which in practice, if not in theory, denied the need of individual regeneration, and by inference denied the need of evangelism. Its services were cold, formal and lifeless, and people turned away from them because they found no heart-warming Gospel at their core.

The other extreme was religious fanaticism, which has fastened itself like a barnacle on many evangelical churches that have been carried into the backwash of unbiblical fundamentalism.

Both of these extremes have one thing in common. Both depart from the teaching of Scripture and of Christ, by emphasizing a form or a programme rather than a Person. Nowhere in Scripture is it asserted that men may be born again by adhering to a religious programme. Jesus said, "ye will not come unto Me that ye may have life," and "Come ye after ME and I will make you to become fishers of men." Paul said, "I know WHOM I have believed."

There is evident in the churches to-day a growing desire, which we pray may be kindled to a passion, for the idea and methods of evangelism set forth in the New Testament, and practised by Christ and His disciples. The idea of witness-bearing is the chief characteristic of New Testament service for God. Dr. S. M. Zwemer has called attention to this fact in a recent book on evangelism, which every minister would do well to read and ponder.

This is the emphasis on evangelism stressed in the Bible College—both in the classroom and in the practical work of the student body. We did not give up our emphasis on Biblical evangelism when rationalism suggested that evangelism should be discarded from the Church's practice. We do not propose now to depart from this Biblical emphasis, when unbiblical fundamentalism is luring men and women away from the Biblical methods of doing God's work, and oftentimes hindering, preventing and even damaging the work of the Spirit of God in the individual soul.

At present the students of the Bible College have so many requests on file for evangelistic help in churches of all denominations, that it will take two years before we can fulfil them. During the current session our evangelistic work has included visits to a number of towns and cities outside of the Toronto area. Woodstock, Kitchener, Sherbrooke, Uxbridge and Aurora are among the places visited. Some of these visits have been made at the invitation of the local Alumni group of the College.

The Evangelistic Choir, thoroughly trained by Mr. Shildrick and numbering from 30 to 45, forms the heart of this evangelistic party. The main purpose of the group is to present Christ as Saviour and Lord, by song, sermon and individual

contact. Not only is thought given to the preparation of the music and message, but also to the preparation of the student group. A student prayer meeting, seeking God's blessing on the morrow's ministry, is held every Saturday evening. There is a season of prayer in the bus, whenever the group travels outside of Toronto, and a time of prayer is engaged in when the group arrives at the designated church. Arrangements are always made to arrive at least 30 minutes before the service begins to allow opportunity for the Evangelistic choir to wait upon God. The Bible College method of evangelism is not intended to be spectacular. It is instead the quiet, reserved, dignified appeal made by a group of consecrated young people who know in their own lives Christ's power to redeem, to transform and to uplift.

The Evangelistic group has many opportunities to conduct missions in churches and mission halls within the city itself. With general acceptance, services have been conducted in some of Toronto's larger churches, and during the winter months quite a number of persons have been led to faith in Jesus Christ. The evangelistic activity of the Student body includes witness in factories, Bible clubs, Sunday Schools, children's services and at street meetings. The evangelistic emphasis and spirit of the College also encourages the students to make constant personal contact with individuals, speaking to them of their relationship to God through Christ. The full number of those who have been brought to Christ, both young and old, through the evangelistic ministry of the Toronto Bible College student body, eternity alone will reveal.

Dr. McNicol's Lectures Published

The Alumni Jubilee Lectures on "The Philosophy of History", delivered by Principal McNicol, have been published as a booklet. Included is the Principal's Portrait. Copies may be obtained at 25 cents each by writing to the College office.

(Reprint of 1st Edition, March, 1946)

Entered at Ottawa as Second Class Matter. Published quarterly.

Additional copies of this issue of "The Recorder" containing Dr. McNicol's article may be obtained on application to the College office.