

APARTHEID

AND THE CHURCH

ISBN 0 86975 006 2

SPRO-CAS PUBLICATION NUMBER 8

APARTHEID AND THE CHURCH

General Editor
Peter Randall

REPORT OF THE CHURCH COMMISSION
OF THE STUDY PROJECT ON CHRISTIANITY
IN APARTHEID SOCIETY

JOHANNESBURG

1972

This is a public document and material from it may be freely quoted.

Hierdie verslag is ook in Afrikaans beskikbaar.

Cover design by Isobel Randall and Danie van Zyl

The South African Council of Churches and the Christian Institute of Southern Africa, joint sponsors of Spro-cas, are deeply grateful to the members of the Church Commission for their work.

Printed by the Christian Institute of Southern Africa,
Pharmacy House, 80 Jorissen Street,
Braamfontein, Johannesburg.

CONTENTS

	Facing page one	
Signatories		
Preamble	1	
Preface	3	
Chapter 1	The Effects of Apartheid on the Church	6
	External Legislative Controls	
	Internal Ideological Captivity	
	Fear	
	Prejudice	
	Despair	
	Conformism	
	Legalism	
	Authoritarianism	
	Wordiness	
Chapter 2	Disunity and Discrimination	26
	Denominationalism	
	Segregation	
	Discrimination	
	Paternalism	
	Diversity and Unity	
Chapter 3	The Mission of the Church	60
	Ecclesiastical self-concern	
	Pragmatic pietism	
	Clericalism	
Chapter 4	Recommendations	69
Appendix 1	New Summary of the Message	77
Appendix 2	The Doctrine of the Church	82
Appendix 3	Biblical Arguments on the Race Issue	87
Appendix 4	Working Papers prepared for the Church Commission	92

SIGNATORIES TO THE REPORT OF THE CHURCH COMMISSION

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, have participated in the discussions of the Spro-cas Church Commission. While we do not necessarily agree with all the details of the theological analysis in this Report, we do, however, support its general direction and regard it as a valuable contribution to the on-going debate about the role of the Church in South Africa.

We are aware that this is an incomplete report: in particular we had hoped to present views on the relationship between Church and State and Church and Society. We have not been able to do this in the time allowed and feel the urgent need for a publication on these issues, particularly in view of the growing conflict between Church and State in South Africa.*

We draw the attention of Churches in South Africa to the recommendations which end this Report and urge upon them the need for action.

(Dr)	D.W. Bandey	(Professor)	Brian Johanson
(The Rev)	Douglas S. Bax	(The Very Rev)	J.L. Knutson
(The Right Rev)	B.B. Burnett	(The Rev)	Theo Kotzé
(Professor)	Calvin W. Cook	(The Rev)	D.S. Modisapodi
(The Rev)	John D. Davies	(The Rev)	C.F. Beyers Naudé
(The Rev Dr)	John W. de Gruchy	(Dr)	Elfie Strassberger
(The Rev)	R.H. Ellis	(The Rev)	John Tau
(The Rev)	T.S.N. Gqubule	(The Rev)	Danie van Zyl
(The Rev)	Gerald Hawkes	(Mr)	A.C. Viljoen

***Spro-cas hopes to publish a book on *Church and State in South Africa* in the near future to complement the Church Report.**

PREAMBLE

THERE IS A long history of church pronouncements in South Africa condemning racial prejudice and racial discrimination and exhorting the white people of this country to live in love and fellowship with their black compatriots. The *Message to the People of South Africa*, issued in September 1968 by the Theological Commission of the South African Council of Churches, was one of these. A theological critique of apartheid, the *Message* denounced the country's racial policies as 'truly hostile to Christianity' (1).

The *Message* took a broad theological view. It did not set out to consider the implications of this view in specific aspects of our national life such as economics or education. Nor could it be expected that those reading and studying the *Message*, including those who accepted its basic premises, would immediately be able to interpret those implications.

Realising the need to work out in detail the implications of the *Message* for our national life, the South African Council of Churches and the Christian Institute of Southern Africa in 1961 jointly sponsored the Study Project on Christianity in Apartheid Society (SPRO-CAS), as a follow-up to the theological work undertaken by the authors of the *Message*. Six study commissions were established with the aim of presenting comprehensive reports within two years.

The *Message* provided the stimulus for Spro-cas. It also provided the basic theological foundation, viz. the Gospel as reconciliation, as God's sovereignty over all life, and His victory over evil. However, no attempt was made to suggest that the *Message* itself was beyond criticism, or that it was a final theological pronouncement.

1. For a detailed treatment of the events surrounding the publication of the *Message*, see *The Message in Perspective* edited by de Gruchy and de Villiers (S.A. Council of Churches, 1969).

The commissions were asked to examine the following areas in the light of the *Message to the People of South Africa*: economics, education, law, politics, society and the Church. Their reports are being published independently and will not necessarily bind the sponsoring bodies. In this way, it is hoped to achieve the greatest degree of objectivity and open-mindedness. The members of the commissions were selected on the basis of their known ethical concern and their expert knowledge and experience in the different fields of study.

The Church Commission reflected a wide range of denominational affiliations, which led on occasion to differences of theological interpretation. There was, however, a common underlying commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ which made the Commission's work an exciting and rewarding ecumenical experience.

Many members of the Commission contributed to its discussions by means of working papers and memoranda (a full list is given in Appendix 4). The task of preparing the draft report was undertaken primarily by the Rev. Douglas Bax and the Rev. J. de Gruchy, whose hard and dedicated labour is deeply appreciated. The final editing was carried out by Prof. Brian Johanson, to whom sincere thanks are expressed.

Apart from those whose names are listed at the beginning of the Report, the following also participated in the Commission's discussions: Dr Ben Engelbrecht, Prof A.S. Geysler, Pastor D. J. Gqweta, Rev. A.D. Scholten, Rev D. Tutu, the Very Rev P. Sandner and the Rev S.F. Windisch. The last two left the country before the Commission's draft report was completed. Several people outside the immediate membership of the Commission assisted in its work: particular gratitude in this regard is expressed to Mrs S. Turner and Mr Mark Collier.

Spro-cas itself cannot bring about the fundamental changes so urgently required in our society. It faces limitations in terms both of its mandate as a study project and in terms of the obvious difficulties in the way of its findings being accepted and implemented. We hope, however, that it will help to clarify our problems, specify those aspects of our life which are at variance with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and indicate the course that must be adopted if disaster is to be averted. The reports of the six commissions are obviously inter-related and should be read and considered in conjunction with each other.

The public debate on the morality of apartheid is never far below the surface, and there are indications that it is beginning to resume with vigour. A great many South Africans are perplexed and confused and will welcome new leads based firmly on morally justifiable principles. We hope that such people will find much value in the reports of the six commissions.

Peter Randall
Director of Spro-cas

July, 1972.

PREFACE

THE CHURCH COMMISSION, for various reasons beyond our control, was composed predominantly of white ministers and theologians and therefore our report is to this extent sectional. Nevertheless, our understanding of the Gospel and the Law of Jesus Christ is the same as that of those Churches which claim to accept the non-racialism, indeed the supra-racialism, of the New Testament. We are thus at variance with those Churches and Christians who seek to reconcile the Christian faith with Apartheid.

If the Church in our country is going to be true to its pastoral, prophetic and critical task, it must also be open to self-criticisms and committed to change in terms of the Gospel. We recognise that change is integrally connected with power. Some of this power is actual and present, as for instance that of church synods and hierarchies; some is potential or future power, as for instance that of the overwhelming black membership in our churches.

We wish to address particularly those who have power in the Church now - both synods, assemblies and hierarchies at the national and regional level, and church councils, property trustees and organisations at the local level. We do not think they are the only audience to address or necessarily the most important. But we believe they have power and influence to effect far-reaching change in the immediate future at this time.

Our approach to change is gradualist while seeking to be radical, that is to go to the roots. As a Commission we do not propose violence as a means of change in South Africa just as we do not approve violence which is being used to prevent change for the better.

Nevertheless we believe that only if the Churches implement recommendations such as are in this report can their proclamation of the

Gospel be credible. For we recognise that whereas in the past heresy has been understood in terms of false beliefs, we must also see it in terms of false action and non-action. 'Not every one who calls me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only those who do the will of my Heavenly Father' (Matt. 7:21).

The main thrust of our report is critical both of the Church and of the norms of the South African society which influence it. The Church by its very nature as the servant of the Word of God is called to examine critically all human ideologies and societies in the light of the Gospel. Yet it has long compromised its role as prophet and critic in South Africa. *We* are judged by the very Gospel which judges society. By the standard of the Gospel we find ourselves a Church whose performance has in no way matched what should be expected of it. Called to hope, we too often live as though without hope.

THE MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA

After its issue at the end of 1968 the *Message to the People of South Africa* was received with considerable misunderstanding in certain quarters. A new summary of it is therefore to be found in Appendix I, in which it is hoped that passages that were misinterpreted are clarified. To this end, parts of the original Message have been re-worded or even expanded a little, but mainly it has been freely re-arranged and shortened. A few Biblical texts have been appended to the first section as examples of Scriptural passages underlying its thought.

The misunderstanding also makes it necessary to stress the following points:

1. Apartheid may be criticised from various aspects. One aspect is the actual *practice* or implementation of apartheid as a policy which causes much oppression, injustice and suffering. Another aspect is the *ideology* of apartheid, that is, the framework of values and ideas with which its supporters seek to justify it morally and intellectually. This ideology is partly pseudo-theological. It is this rationalisation of apartheid which has given it a spiritual and intellectual respectability in the eyes of many. On the basis of it the National Party seeks to maintain that apartheid is the specifically Christian policy for South Africa (see, for example, the Party's official *Programme and Principles*, Art. I.13,21,23).

The *Message* is concerned to criticise primarily not the practice but the *ideology* of apartheid because those who are misled by it must first see the falsity of this ideological, pseudo-Christian justification before they will look at the whole problem of race relations more simply in terms of practical justice, freedom and order.

2. The *Message* interprets the Gospel to point in the direction of an open

and common society in the Church - and also as the ideal for society. This does not mean that there are absolutely no circumstances possible in which political partition may be necessary. But then the necessity must be very serious and it must be purely practical.

3. The *Message* argues for unity, not uniformity, and against division, not diversity. But it is also opposed to the making of diversity, or 'eiesoortigheid', into an ideological dogma to which justice and freedom may be sacrificed.

4. The *Message* is not an attempt to transform the Christian message into a social Gospel without remainder. It merely seeks to state what the Gospel says when applied to rebutting the ideology of apartheid. Apartheid is itself a 'social gospel', i.e. a social application of the Gospel. As such it can therefore be rebutted only by expounding the true applications of the Gospel to the social issue concerned.

Chapter One

THE EFFECTS OF APARTHEID ON THE CHURCH

A. EXTERNAL LEGISLATIVE CONTROLS

In order to be truly the body of Christ in the world, the Church seeks the right to give free, unrestricted expression to its basic functions such as worship, proclamation, fellowship, service and teaching. In an avowedly Christian country it legitimately proceeds on the assumption that this right is given. Apartheid legislation and custom however place serious restrictions on these basic functions as well as on the overall administration of the Church.

Apart from specific restrictions contained in legislation, there is also the inhibiting factor of uncertainty engendered by the wideness and vagueness of many regulations and laws. A climate of opinion has developed, encouraged by the plethora of regulations and laws, which makes even legally permissible actions seem doubtful and possibly dangerous. A great many people assume that the law allows them less freedom than it does, and there is a need for churches to make it known to their members that there are still considerable opportunities, for example, in inter-racial contact, which are often neglected because of ignorance and uncertainty regarding the law.

1. Restrictions on Freedom of Movement and Residence

The following restrictions concern the Church, particularly insofar as they hamper the ministry of the clergy and workers in religious organisations.

- (a) Movement is controlled and curtailed in the following ways:

- (i) An African may not remain for longer than 72 hours in a 'prescribed area' without permission. A 'prescribed area' includes most areas of the Republic excepting the African homelands, and the practical effect of this legislation is that an African cannot move to an area other than the one in which he has permission to be, unless he obtains a permit to do so, and this is only likely to be forthcoming, if at all, for a short visit (Section 10 of the Bantu Urban Areas Act No. 25 of 1945). See also (a) under Freedom of Association.
 - (ii) Indians in Natal, the Transvaal and the Cape require permits to move from one province to another, even for a visit (Indians may not own or occupy land within the Orange Free State).
 - (iii) Whites, Coloured people and Asiatics require permits to visit 'Bantu Areas', both township and rural. (However, white ministers who are South African citizens may visit African areas in the ordinary course of their duties without permits, although they may not lodge overnight in the home of any African member of their church).
- (b) In terms of the Urban Areas Act No. 25 of 1945 (as amended), Section 10 (i) (a) and (b), an African who is no longer in employment may not remain in an urban area unless:
- (i) he was born there *and* has thereafter continued to live in the area or
 - (ii) he has lived in the area with permission for 15 years or more or
 - (iii) he has worked continuously in the area for 10 years for one employer.

African ministers engaged in an itinerant ministry are unlikely to qualify in terms of Section 10 above, and on retirement are obliged to return to the homelands if they were born there, or to a resettlement camp if they were born elsewhere. There is also difficulty in obtaining permission for such ministers' families to join them in the urban areas.

- (c) Place of residence is controlled by the provisions of the Group Areas Act which provides that only members of a particular racial

group may occupy premises situated in a Group Area designed for occupation by members of that racial group. Any 'disqualified' person must obtain a permit. Thus a white minister or member of a religious community occupying premises in a Coloured Group Area requires a permit, and his occupation of these premises is at the discretion of the responsible Minister of State. The permission is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain.

- (d) Religious workers from countries outside the Republic coming to this country to be employed by the Church require a permit which is granted for a period of 12 months, and which may be renewed for a further period thereafter. In cases where the government does not deem it desirable to renew a permit, the application for extension is refused. After three to five years, application may be made for permanent residence and if this is granted the need for a permit then ceases. However, the granting of permanent residence can be rescinded, with no reasons given and no right of appeal. In this way a number of clergy have already been served with deportation orders.

The above sets out the position as far as can be ascertained at the present time but the application of the policy appears to be in a constant state of flux.

- (e) A number of ministers and religious workers from other countries have been refused entry or, once they have been outside its borders, re-entry into South Africa.

2. Restrictions on Freedom of Worship

There are the following restrictions on attendance at services of worship:

- (a) The right of Africans to worship at a place of their own choice is seriously curtailed by the provisions of Section 9 (7) (b) of Act 25 of 1945, which provides that:

'The Minister may by Notice in the Gazette direct that the attendance by Bantu at any church or other religious service or church function on premises situated within any Urban Area (Urban Area for purposes of this act being any area governed by a local authority) outside a Bantu residential area shall cease from a date specified in that notice, if, in his opinion:

- (i) The presence of Bantu on such premises or in any area traversed by Bantu for the purpose of attending at such premises is causing a nuisance to residents in the vicinity of those premises or in such area; or
- (ii) it is undesirable, having regard to the locality in which the premises are situated, that Bantu should be present on such premises in the numbers in which they ordinarily attend a service or function conducted thereat'.

(This regulation has been applied in a number of instances).

- (b) In terms of the 'Church Clause' of the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1957, Africans may be prevented from attending Church Services in the 'white' part of a town by order of the Minister with the concurrence of the local authority if in their opinion they are causing a nuisance or if it is undesirable for them to be present from the point of view of their numbers. It appears necessary for a complaint to be received for this clause to be applied.
- (c) The restriction against Whites, Coloured people and Asiatics visiting African areas, whether township or rural, without special permits ((1) (a) (iii) above) also makes it difficult for laymen from those racial groups to worship or meet together with African congregations.

3. Restrictions on Freedom of Speech and Publications

While there is no law directly curtailing the freedom of speech there are other factors which inhibit or curtail the proclamation of the prophetic Word of God.

- (a) Church workers from foreign countries are inhibited owing to the knowledge that their right to remain in, or return to, this country may not be renewed if the government takes exception to anything they say. (See I (d) and (e) above).
- (b) Some church workers from foreign countries on short visits are admitted to the country only on condition that they do not address any gatherings.
- (c) Ministers and officials of Churches and religious bodies who are

South African citizens have suffered removal of passports. Banning is another action the Government may take, and is increasingly taking against clergy and other church workers (for example, Father Cosmas Desmond, Rev Stanley Ntwasa, Rev Basil Moore, Mr David de Beer). The fear of losing one's passport or being banned inhibits criticism of the government's policy. Recent government actions (July, 1972) include the banning of the Rev S. Hayes and the withdrawal of the passport of Mr Peter Randall, the director of Spro-cas.

- (d) When applying for permission to occupy church sites in African areas, Church officials have to undertake not to criticize government policy. The same restriction applies to permits to enter African areas.
- (e) There is government criticism, even from the Prime Minister, of ministers who use their pulpits for 'political purposes' and this can be an inhibiting factor.
- (f) The state-controlled radio is often used to criticise aspects of the Church's life or message without opportunity being given for the Church to reply to the charges through the same medium.
- (g) The government's attitude also greatly reinforces attitudes of prejudice already within the congregation against prophetic criticism of apartheid policy and practice.
- (h) Books, magazines, records, and films propagating the Christian message are subject to censorship, and are liable to be banned if considered undesirable by Government-appointed officials (e.g. *God is for real, man*, a book of Scripture passages and prayers set in the jargon of inner-city youth, has been banned but since released; the recording of a sermon by the Rev Martin Luther King remains banned).

4. Restriction on Freedom of Association

The freedom of Christians of different races to associate or have fellowship with one another is inhibited, curtailed or prohibited in a number of ways:

- (a) In terms of Section 9 (5) of the Bantu Urban Areas Act No. 25 of 1945, Africans are prohibited from being accommodated in an 'urban area' (which in effect includes most areas falling under the jurisdiction of a Municipality or Divisional Council) without the

authority of a permit. In terms of a recent Supreme Court decision, the word 'accommodate' in this context includes the provision of lodging for one night (*O'Brien v. State*, Cape Supreme Court, 7 May 1970).

- (b) In terms of Section 26 (1) and (2) of the Group Areas Act No. 36 of 1966, a Coloured may reside in a white area only if he does so as a bona fide visitor of the actual owner or occupier of the premises at which he stays, and only if his period of residence does not exceed 90 days in all in any one year.
- (c) While legislation does not prohibit members of different racial groups from associating with one another, there is always the fear that an association between a man and woman of different racial groups will be seen by the police as a possible contravention of, or an attempt to contravene, the provisions of the Immorality Act No. 23 of 1957. Thus a white man giving a Coloured woman a lift home after an evening meeting runs the risk of being stopped and asked to explain himself.
- (d) In terms of Proclamation R26 dated 12th February 1965, a person 'disqualified' for purposes of the Group Areas Act is prohibited from being present in another group area for the purposes of attending any place of public entertainment or partaking of any refreshment ordinarily involving the use of seating accommodation as a customer in a licensed restaurant, place of refreshment, tea-room or eating house, or as a member of, or guest in, any club. There is much confusion in regard to the abovementioned Proclamation, but it is understood that a fête or bazaar with side shows and/or sit-down teas organised by a Church but open to the public would be illegal if multi-racial. The same would apply to a concert or film show in a Church Hall to which admission was not restricted to specifically invited individuals or groups.
- (e) If a conference is held in a white Group Area, it would seem that there is no restriction against Coloured people attending provided they do not sleep at the conference centre unless they could be regarded as 'bona fide' visitors of the owner or occupier of the premises. There is, however, a body of opinion which holds that this amounts to 'occupation' of premises in contravention of the Group Areas Act. The courts have not yet pronounced on this point. An African would be able to attend the conference but would re-

quire a permit from the local authority if he were a visitor to the area in question and intended staying longer than 72 hours. To sleep overnight he would require a permit from the Department of Bantu Administration.

- (f) In terms of the Group Areas Proclamation of 13th March 1970, it is illegal for persons other than white to be in a white area after 10 p.m. if they are not employed in the area. The full implications of this proclamation and the extent to which it will be enforced are not yet known.
- (g) The enforced movement of African, Coloured and Indian people under the Group Areas Act and also the endorsing out of Africans breaks up congregations and creates problems for the Church in maintaining effective pastoral contact.
- (h) Government legislation requires that prospective ministers of each racial group receive their training at residential institutions normally open to only one racial group, although common tuition would appear to be possible still in some institutions. This means that even ministers of the same Church are unable to share the mutual fellowship, and experience the inclusive character of Christian community in this way. The lack of this learning experience in turn negatively affects their witness concerning this issue to their congregations later.

5. Restrictions on Service and Welfare

Such problems as the breakdown of African family life due to the migrant labour system, the poverty of Africans in resettlement camps and the frustrations and antagonisms caused by lack of respect and the absence of adequate amenities and opportunities are inherent in the apartheid society. The Church is called upon to devote manpower and money to minister to the personal problems and needs of people arising from such factors.

The enforced separation of people of different races, together with economic imbalance, tends to separate those in need from those who have the resources to meet such needs. Unless a white actually comes into contact with the needs of others he is not easily motivated to use his resources in meeting such needs. With less and less opportunity for contact, white people are becoming increasingly unaware of and unconcerned about the needs of others.

Moreover, the state by its apartheid laws and policies interferes directly and indirectly to hamper the Church's work of service:

- (a) Marriage is an institution the Church has always sought to uphold for the sake of family stability. But an African woman who has permission (under the Urban Areas Act, No. 25 of 1945, as amended, Section 10 (i) (d)) to reside and work in a white area and then marries a man working where she is but whose home is in an African reserve, may lose this permission and be required to go and live at his home. In these circumstances there have been couples who have divorced in order to live together. (See M. Wilson: *Let No Man Put Asunder*).
- (b) It is illegal for a Marriage Officer knowingly to perform a marriage ceremony between a white and a person who is not white, and any such marriage is legally null and void (Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, No. 55 of 1949).
- (c) Prisoners are specifically to be visited, according to Christ's command. But the state's right to reject the appointment of ministers nominated by their Churches to the position of prison chaplain is often exercised, invariably with no reasons given. This applies particularly in the case of prisons with political prisoners.
- (d) The Church is denied access to detainees under the General Law Amendment Act, the Terrorism Act or the Bureau for State Security Law, even when they are kept in prison for long periods.
- (e) Resettlement Camps are places of great material and spiritual need. Yet the Church has sometimes experienced difficulty in obtaining access to these resettlement camps, and in rendering assistance to those compelled to live in such camps. This was so, for instance, in the cases of Morsgat and Limehill.
- (f) Registered Welfare Organisations were all notified by the government during 1966 that it was opposed to multi-racial organisations. Faced with the threat of losing government subsidies, many organisations have been forced to comply. The control of welfare organisations serving blacks has to be in the hands of blacks. Whites may be members of advisory or fund-raising committees for these organisations.

6. Restrictions concerning Institutions

- (a) Hospitals run by the Church in African areas are being taken

control of more and more by the government. While in normal circumstances this would be an acceptable practice (especially as the government subsidises these hospitals), in South Africa it results in the imposition of restrictions such as:

- (i) White doctors, staff and visitors requiring permits to work in or visit hospitals in African homelands.
 - (ii) Potential direct control by the state over appointments of doctors and staff.
 - (iii) Pressure to replace White and Indian doctors and staff with Africans.
 - (iv) African, Indian and Coloured doctors or staff are usually not permitted to hold positions senior to white doctors or staff.
- (b) Hostels and Orphanages run by the Church may not be open to both whites and those who are not white.

7. Restrictions concerning Education

- (a) African schools run by the Church were previously in receipt of government subsidies. In the face of the threatened withdrawal of these subsidies, most Churches were compelled to close the schools, or abandon control over them, selling the premises to the government. Only the Roman Catholic Church has managed to retain control of a large number of its schools on an unsubsidised basis. (See *Education Beyond Apartheid*, report of the Spro-cas Education Commission, p. 30 and p. 54).
- (b) Coloured schools previously run by the Church come under this state-aided school system, in terms of which the Church provides and maintains the school premises in return for rent. Whilst the Church is entitled to appoint a manager to each school, it does not have any final say in appointments, and has been given a decreasing opportunity to make an effective contribution. One result of this is that schools which previously admitted African children are now no longer permitted to do so, even in cases where no alternative facilities are available.
- (c) If a white Church school admitted a black or coloured child, it is

likely that the government would act against this. (See *Education Beyond Apartheid*, Chapter 6).

- (d) Night schools for Africans, many of which were run on Church premises, were compelled to close because they were situated in the 'white' part of towns, or because they were staffed by whites. No alternative form of education was provided by the government.

8. Restrictions concerning Property Ownership

A Church with white members but a black majority faces much difficulty in acquiring or holding property in 'white' areas. As most Churches in South Africa, unless racially divided, have a black majority this makes it extremely difficult for them to be accurately registered as a white body. However, if such a Church refuses to be inaccurately registered it encounters this pressing problem regarding property. This whole problem has also placed great difficulties in the way of Church unions across the colour line, and also Church unions between multi-racial churches.

Church sites are granted in some 'white' areas only on condition that the trustees guarantee that no one who is not white will be allowed to attend church activities on it.

9. Transport Difficulties

The lack of public transport facilities for the use of more than one racial group, and the complete absence of public transport in many cases for the use of one racial group to reach the residential areas of another group, serve to render more difficult the work of the Church in all its aspects. The result of Group Areas removals has often been that people have to travel further to work and to church, thus incurring extra expense and difficulty. Apartheid is also appallingly time-consuming in its effect. African and Coloured people spend much time waiting in bus queues and in travelling to work. This leaves them little time for Church programmes or even for developing a Christian family life.

10. Effects on Expenditure and Income

- (a) Owing to the enforced removal of communities from one place of residence to another, the Church finds it necessary to erect new buildings in instances when it would not otherwise be necessary to do so, thus incurring the expenditure of funds which could have been used more beneficially for other purposes.

- (b) In these circumstances it is not unusual for a substantial time to elapse before the new buildings are completed so that the congregation has to exist for a period without any place for meeting or worship, or with inadequate premises.
- (c) In cases where a Church which is regarded by the government as being controlled by the white racial group vacates premises normally used by persons of the coloured racial group, following the proclamation of the area as a white area, no government compensation is payable because these premises are deemed to be owned by the white racial group in an area which has been declared white. Unless the Church intends to use the premises for the white congregation the premises must be sold on the open market, and a satisfactory price cannot always be obtained.
- (d) A fête or bazaar with side shows and/or sit down teas organised by the Church for fund-raising and open to the public may not be attended by persons of a race disqualified from occupation in the particular group area. Members of different races may not sit down together for meals and teas at such functions. Both organisers and those disqualified from attending are liable to prosecution. (Proclamation R 26 of 12th February 1965).
- (e) Apartheid has tended to separate those who can afford to pay their ministers' stipends and pay for adequate church buildings from those who cannot. The result has often been inferior or inadequate buildings and equipment, or even a complete lack of them, in black areas. Similarly ministers in black areas have to serve far more members on average than ministers in white areas, and are also usually paid less. (This is admittedly partly due to lack of sufficient care and aid by white congregations, but their attitudes have been encouraged by apartheid legislation).

11. Effects on Leadership

The Church is unable to make the most effective use of the leadership potential of its members because:

- (a) the resettlement of Coloured and Indian people in terms of the Group Areas Act tends to accentuate socio-economic class divisions within the racial group which is moved. Those who can afford home ownership are settled in areas apart from those who are obliged to accept housing provided by government and local

authorities, with the result that those with greater resources are not in a position to guide and assist those with lesser resources.

- (b) Many with educational and leadership resources feel obliged to seek residence in other countries, owing to lack of economic or social opportunities in South Africa or because of intimidation or persecution.

12. Effects on General Attitudes

The outward values and customs of apartheid society, being phenomena which are the everyday experience of the members, tend often to have a stronger impact than the spoken Word of God, with the following results:

- (a) For both white and black members, but particularly for whites, apartheid tends to deaden any sense of the community of mankind and that basic fellowship of all Christians in Christ, which is irrespective of colour, race and sex. This, in turn, makes them unaware of their need to serve each other as brothers. Apartheid fosters a false sense of white supremacy, with its parallel dangers of the arrogance of whites seeing themselves as the agents of God's will and the interpreters of his providence for other races. It encourages the practice of paternalism, discrimination and injustice, breeds intolerance, prejudice and violence, and encourages fear and dislike of the unlike. It imposes serious pressure to conform to the 'traditional' way of life in South Africa, and if this tradition cannot in good conscience be accepted there is likely to be connivance in evading laws, thereby creating a contempt for the law *per se*.
- (b) Apartheid violates the dignity of man where he is not free to choose his way of life, his work and his place of residence, and deprives him of the right to move and speak freely, to establish and maintain a family and to develop fully his physical, intellectual, moral and religious life.
- (c) The imposing of an ideology or policy which dehumanises other men also diminishes the lives of those who impose it.

We turn now from the consideration of these external pressures which are in so many ways applied to the Church, to a consideration of the internal ideological and psychological pressures which are generated within the Church.

B. INTERNAL IDEOLOGICAL CAPTIVITY

The attitudes and motives of the members of the Church reflect an ideological captivity which seriously inhibits the possibility of its fulfilling its mission in South African society. In fact, the attitudes and motives of Church members in South Africa strongly reflect the situation in the country as a whole, which is characterised by a growing alienation and lack of mutual understanding between black and white people. There are obvious historical reasons for this. Within the Church the evangelisation of black heathen and the pastoral care of white settlers was generally kept separate. The Nationalist Government's policy of separate development has futhered and entrenched this separation. Thus while the Church is still one of the few places where black and white can meet in an environment of relative acceptance, for the most part the life of the Church reflects the prevailing social and political attitudes of the country. The following seem to be the most important and significant for us to discuss here.

Fear

Many of our attitudes are motivated by fear. In South Africa, the starkest form of fear is *racial fear*: fear of domination by other racial groups, fear of inter-racial mixture, fear of the loss of one's racial identity, and fear of the loss of privilege. This racial fear leads directly towards feelings of hostility towards those of other races, and the fact that this hostility is often repressed, in turn creates other pathological attitudes and makes it difficult to combat.

The supreme theological response to all fear is the triumphant affirmation that the risen Christ has the power to overcome all the lies and fears that enslave mankind. The Gospel exposes these as demons which have met their master in Christ, as powers that have been brought into subjection by Him who is the truth that sets men free. Against all racial fear and fear of others the central Gospel proclamation can be summarised in the words, 'Perfect love banishes fear' (1 John 4:17).

At a more conscious and sophisticated level perhaps the fear which most influences us is the *fear of failure*. Western culture teaches us to value visible success very highly and it seems intolerable that we should risk worldly failure. We are accustomed to a church life which seeks to assure us of success. A church building, for example, is not just a meeting place for the congregation but frequently its design and ornament are determined by worldly considerations such as prestige.

Fear of failure is one of the reasons why we put less emphasis on obedience in matters of social ethics than we do on matters of individual morality. We feel we might succeed in individual morality whereas social issues are more

complex. Similarly the way in which we usually give priority to the development of the congregation rather than the development of a social witness against oppression, injustice, ignorance and poverty, reflects our feeling that imposing structures and large congregations reveal 'progress' and 'success' more satisfactorily than the less visible results which might be achieved in social justice. By attending primarily to matters in which it can be confident of its own competence, the Church ministers more to its own desire for success than to humanity's deepest needs.

Our fear of failure and concern for success in the world are countered by the fact that the God of the Scriptures is identified in terms not primarily of power, glory or remoteness, but of His humiliation and service and His identification with the weak and oppressed. The status and prestige of this God does not depend on the status and prestige of men; he is free to identify himself with the most insignificant of people (cf. Deut. 7:7; 9:4-6). Christ's victory over evil was achieved through what seemed to His contemporaries to be the total failure of His crucifixion. If the Church is to be faithful to the Christian Gospel it must be willing to risk failure in the encounter with evil rather than insist on success in matters of little ultimate consequence. Christian commitment is not to success but to faithfulness. When Christ calls a man He bids him take up his cross and follow Him, even, if need be, to die. Christ meets and overcomes our fear of loss by His own example of offering Himself entirely. He says to His followers, 'Anyone who has left brothers or sisters, father, mother or children, land or houses for the sake of My Name will be repaid many times over, and gain eternal life' (Matt. 19:29; cf. 10:39 and 16:25).

There are many other manifestations of fear. There is the *fear of controversy*. A meeting between people of different attitudes and backgrounds frequently leads to disagreements and misunderstandings, which appear to conflict with the Christian principle of peace. Rather than risk exposure to such opportunities of experience and learning, we prefer to avoid controversy, thus strengthening our sectional groupings and identities.

From the beginning of His ministry, Jesus was involved in controversy with the religious and secular authorities. 'You must not think', He said, 'that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a son's wife against her mother-in-law; and a man will find his enemies under his own roof.' (Matt. 10:34f). As the experience of the first Christians in Acts shows, those who follow Christ fully cannot hope to avoid controversy or even persecution (Acts 4:1-31; cf. Matt. 5:10f; Mk. 3:6). 'I have told you all this', Jesus said, 'so that in me you may find peace. In the world you will have trouble. But courage! The victory is mine; I have conquered the world' (John 16:33).

There is the *fear of ostracism and isolation*; it is possible so to emphasise the value of fellowship that Christian people may forget that fellowship is a gift of grace and not a guaranteed possession of the Church on earth. To retain group fellowship when Christian discipleship calls us to isolation in going against the stream is to forsake Christ for the crowd. Ministers, particularly, may fail to speak prophetically because of the possibility that their congregations will reject them.

The Gospels depict Jesus as one who refused to bow down to popular and public opinion, whether it had the weight of political authority, religious tradition, social prejudices, or the revolutionary expectations of those who wished to overthrow the existing order by force. The temptation stories, among other Gospel incidents, point to Jesus' rejection of compromise for the sake of popularity and success (Matt. 4:1-11). The fact that in the end Jesus was betrayed, denied and forsaken by His inner circle of disciples because of the course He had chosen, indicates how firmly He was prepared to accept rejection and isolation for the sake of His task and integrity. The 'forsakenness of the Cross' highlights the whole matter (cf. Matt. 27:46). Christians, like the Lord, are called to follow Him irrespective of public opinion, that is, to be 'non-conformists' in the sense indicated by Paul: 'Adapt yourselves no longer to the pattern of the present world, but let your minds be remade and your whole nature thus transformed. Then you will be able to discern the Will of God, and to know what is good, acceptable, and perfect' (Romans 12.2).

Allied to the fear of ostracism is the *fear of the loss of identity*, the loss of the security of our cultural group. We may be so conditioned by the sectionalism of our society that we feel we have no personal identity apart from our group. We fear that if we break down our sectional confines we may be lost in a vague amorphous mass of humanity in which there is no individual distinctiveness.

However, we find our identity not basically in our parentage, race or nationality, but in the fact that God has created us in His image and that in Christ we are the sons of God (Genesis 1:27; John 1:12). Thus our true and abiding identity is best described in terms of being 'in Christ', for in Him we not only have a new perspective on the identity of others but also a new understanding of who we are and to whom we really belong (II Cor. 5:16f). This identity transcends all others, and therefore to fear the loss of any other identity is sub-Christian.

Finally, there is the *fear of those in authority* and their power to punish effective opposition to government policy, even when such opposition is strictly within the terms of enacted law. For example, people fear being detained, banned, deported or deprived of their passports without trial.

The supreme crisis of Christ's life was in conflict with the authorities of His day. Because He did not fear them but submitted Himself to their power

without compromise, He is able to say to His disciples, 'Do not fear those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. Fear Him rather who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell'. (Matt. 10:28). They are therefore set free to obey God rather than men (Acts 4:19f).

Prejudice

Prejudice is an attitude as powerful in its effect as fear. It is also itself based on fear in that it is an attempt to find security from anxiety and guilt by stressing the identity and superiority of one's own group over against other groups. It is a negative or antagonistic judgment based on a false and inflexible generalisation about people other than ourselves. *Race prejudice*, with which we are largely concerned here, is a judgment against those whose skin-colour is different from ours, based on false suppositions and generalisations which we have inherited through experience, hearsay and even education.

Race prejudice in our heterogeneous society is aggravated by severe barriers to communication (e.g. language, tradition, customs and culture, laws). Further, the fact that whites are a numerical minority in comparison with blacks, and yet have economic and political control tends to entrench white prejudice as a means whereby the position can be emotionally justified and then rationalised. This situation also creates black prejudice in re-action to it.

The factors which have led to race prejudice in South Africa are complex and beyond the scope of this report. (See *Towards Social Change*, report of the Spro-cas Social Commission, Chapter One, for a full discussion). Basic however is the fact that the first white settlers' immediate impression of the indigenous peoples was of their inferiority, particularly in terms of religion and culture. Colour as such was at this stage of relatively little consequence. However, within the first 150 years of white settlement at the Cape, attitudes changed considerably and prejudice became more decisively racial. Skin-colour and other racial features became the most decisive factors in differentiation between people, as well as the most important criteria in social relationships and economic, educational and political issues.

In South Africa the average person perceives those of the other races in terms of a stereotyped definition which is based upon certain assumptions arising from the real or imaginary past and based on a false anthropology and popular fallacies. The effect of this is to relegate people into out-groups, then to refer and deal with them in terms of stereotyped categories, and so ultimately to depersonalise them. Thus we have built into our way of life a complex of prejudices which are intensified by history, by psychological conditioning, by legislation and by economic factors.

Confronting prejudice is the Biblical teaching that God created all men in

His image; that Jesus Christ died for all men; that membership in the Church transcends all natural distinctions between men, as well as distinctions caused by history, culture, language and class; and that, as Paul puts it, 'with us worldly standards have ceased to count in our estimate of any man'. (II Cor. 5:16; cf. Genesis 1:27; Acts 17:26; Romans 5:6, 18, 19; II Cor. 5:14f; Acts 10:34f; Galatians 3:28).

Fundamental to the Christian understanding of community is the need for open and honest communication between people. This is an essential part of Christian love for both brother and neighbour. Furthermore, pride, rivalry and personal vanity are condemned, and we are exhorted to 'reckon others better than' ourselves (Phil. 2:3; cf. Gal. 6:3). Jesus Himself teaches us not to judge others, and always to treat them as we would like them to treat us (Matt. 7:1f; 12). Indeed, prejudice is basically contrary to the Christian understanding of personal and group relationships.

Despair

Among many of those who are disturbed by conditions in our country and feel the need for change there is a sense of impotence and despair which gravely inhibits their work as Christians. Christianity has for so long been the religion of the powerful and the successful that we have forgotten the ways in which the Gospel can give to the powerless, disenfranchised and socially rejected hope and stimulus for effective action. Instead of encouraging them merely to accept and tolerate their bondage and helplessness the Gospel can stimulate them to discover God's resources of freedom and power to overcome their handicaps. Accompanying this hopelessness are various kinds of fatalism, from a traditional African fatalism to an equally superstitious fatalism which believes in the blind forces of economics, or a general feeling that 'everything will work out in the end' - or even that 'all things work together for good' (a common and disastrous mis-translation of Romans 8:28. 'We know that in everything God works for good with those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose' (RSV). All these attitudes, however, involve moral abdication, and indicate a serious crisis of faith.

God meets our sense of despair in the Cross and in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christ crucified appears to man as weak and helpless, and yet He is the power of God (cf. I Corinthians 1:18ff). Likewise, God has not called many who are powerful and strong, but has chosen those whom the world counts as weak 'to overthrow the existing order' (I Corinthians 1:27f). We need to hear again the words of the Lord to Paul 'My grace is all you need; power comes to its full strength in weakness' (II Cor. 12:9). The promise in the gift of the Holy Spirit is that He will give courage and strength to those who obey Jesus Christ.

Conformism

The Church, in spite of all its words, sometimes appears to be a conspiracy against those changes in society required by the Gospel. Many of us, even while paying lip-service to the need for such change, are content that basically the status quo be maintained. Where the concern and drive to act boldly for Christ manifests itself in the Church, it is too often quickly dampened or skillfully directed into the safe area of the Church's internal pre-occupations. Churches where members are influential citizens are often remarkably ineffective agents of social change, mainly because they have a stake in the status quo.

However, the Church also tends to give priorities to its own preservation as an institution. In the age which measures influence and status largely in terms of money and what money can do, the Church also very often comes to measure its work in these terms. Consequently it gives evidence of considerable resistance to any policy or attitude which might offend people who supply the financial resources. Hence the tendency to encourage people to give money for internal Church purposes rather than for necessary social change and wider human needs. The Church, both in its relation to society and its own life, thus encourages that conservative element in each of us which is hostile to change.

A conservative attitude is necessary in some respects. We are, for instance, required to be loyal to the ancient, universal, traditional gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ, compared with which the present belief in the security of racial identity is a new-fangled novelty. Obedience to God does not imply change in every respect. Further, we must acknowledge that (especially to people who are continually being shifted around and who have few perceptible forms of security) the Church must represent the unchanging reality of God's love and purpose.

Nonetheless, the Church is also commanded to proclaim that God seeks to change and renew society according to His Will (Matt. 6:10). The Church's role is not to resist change at all costs but to watch for and co-operate with the signs of God's judgment and renewal. We Christians find it difficult to shake off the belief that God's status and glory depend on *our* survival and success, whereas the God of the Bible gives no guarantee that He will preserve our civilization, or any other, from being radically changed or even overthrown. The prophets of the Old Testament saw this clearly both in regard to Israel and the other nations. We have lost the idea of God as one who precipitates crises and have come to regard Him instead as a device to protect us from crisis. But the Bible witnesses to God as the deliverer of the poor and weak and the Judge of any system which causes them to be poor and weak (e.g. Amos 2:6f; 3:10; 4:1; 5:11; 8:4-6; and Isaiah 5:8f).

True conversion to Christ, both of individuals and Churches, profoundly

changes our self-concern, and satisfaction with ourselves, with the Church and with society, into a deep concern for God's Kingdom and righteousness (Matt. 6:33; John: 3:1-8; cf. Romans 12:2).

Legalism

There is evidence of extensive legalism in our Churches. In black congregations this is particularly obvious in the discipline often exercised against unmarried mothers or those who have failed to pay their dues. Very often persons convicted of such faults are suspended temporarily from the life of the Church. Legalism is present in white congregations too, but often in a more subtle form. Here churches tend to categorise people as acceptable or unacceptable in terms of their background, colour or class, even though denominational teaching and declarations may assert and encourage the very opposite. Acceptance is based on sectional or group compatibility.

There is always need for true discipline in the life of the Church. True discipline is part of the learning process which enables persons to become mature and responsible Christians. But such discipline, while it does not play down guilt or failure, is the discipline of grace. God has demonstrated that He accepts man even though man has not proved himself acceptable (Romans 5:6-8). It is important to recall that Jesus made His most alarming demands on people who were *already* living by observable rules, and that He told the religious leaders of His day as well as His disciples not to judge others who were not (cf. Mark 10:17-22; John 7:52-58; Matt. 7:1-5). Indeed, Jesus made it clear that He came to save sinners! (Luke 5:29-32; Mark 2:17). The Gospel of grace in contrast to the legalism of the Pharisees and the later Christian Judaizers draws people together into the fellowship of forgiveness instead of separating them into categories on moral, racial or other grounds. Legalism has no proper place in the Church seeing we are called to accept each other as God in Christ has accepted and forgiven us (cf. Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13; Matt. 18:21ff).

Authoritarianism

Our society is in many ways authoritarian. We see this in the relationship between government and people, between masters and servants and, particularly in traditional African society, between men and women, old and young. While elements of these are found in the traditions of the Church itself, they easily develop into an authoritarian style within the Church which has little relation to Christ's style of authority. Indeed, the Christian often feels himself reduced in stature or oppressed by those in authority over him in the Church. This creates frustration, disillusionment, tensions and a false picture of the Gospel.

Jesus Christ has set the true pattern of authority. It is the authority of spiritual power, humility and service, and is exercised in such a way that it

evokes response even when it is not linked with a formally constituted authority. True authority in the Church is seen when it is both obedient to the Gospel and open and sensitive to the needs, hopes, problems and concerns of men. (Matt. 20:25-28; Mark 1:21-27; Mark 2:10; Mark 2:28; I Timothy 3:1-7; I Cor. 12-14).

Wordiness

The sheer wordiness of the Church is often a hindrance to effective Christian action. The teaching of theology has come to be understood by many as so much thinking and talking which is divorced from acting and worshipping. The Church in its educational role sometimes appears to assume that its main task is to supply the necessary intellectual resources in merely verbal form. This overlooks the fact that people learn best through experience. The endless convolutions of words can be an effective escape from commitment and action. As a Church Commission producing a written report we wryly admit the questionability of our own words in this respect.

The Church has often taken more care to guard against heretical words than heretical actions. This has been particularly true of some of the Councils of the Church although it was decidedly not true of the Jerusalem Council of A.D. 49 when the doctrinal issues of law and grace were directly related to social relationships across cultural barriers within the Church (cf. Acts 15 and Gal. 1 and 2). In contexts of grave social injustice the Church often appears content to deal only in formulae and its theological work is considered to be complete when it has enunciated general principles like 'love'. The Church has seldom given sufficient attention to the practical means by which its goals such as 'love' are to be achieved. Even a Church which seeks to be committed and educating often feels that it has done its duty when it has had a lengthy discussion about an issue!

Christ has set us an example of obedience to the Will of God even to the point of death (I Peter 2:21; Matt. 26:39; Heb. 5:8f). We are therefore called to offer ourselves in obedience to God (cf. Romans 12:1f; John 7:17). Such obedient action is not to be understood in terms of merit for we are justified by grace alone through faith, but faith without obedience is not faith, and words without deeds are empty. (Ephesians 2:8; James 2:14-25; Matt. 7:21-27). Indeed the worship of the Christian cannot be separated from a life which seeks to do the Will of God (cf. Amos 5:21f; Matt. 5:23f). Genuine faith is always 'active in love' (Luther). Moreover, Christ places a new value on the apparently small efforts of apparently insignificant people (Luke 21:1-4; I Cor. 1:25-31). All efforts in true faith and obedience are eternally significant.

Chapter Two

DISUNITY AND DISCRIMINATION

A. DENOMINATIONALISM AND ECUMENISM

The Church from the beginnings of its history has been rent by schisms and divisions. Even in the New Testament we find Paul fighting against the tendency for Christians in Corinth to hive off into separate groups claiming different human leaders (I Cor. 1-4). Thereafter, the Church was rent not only by heresy but also schismatically by such factors as rivalry, nationalism, social and economic factors, and disputes about liturgy and discipline. Since A.D. 1054 there has also been the great schism between the Eastern and Western Churches.

However, it was with the Reformation that the great fragmentation of the Church in the West began, a fragmentation that was in the end to shatter the Church into thousands of denominations and sects and which lost none of its momentum until this century. Why was this? The actual break-up of the Church in the Reformation began the process. Unfortunately after the Reformation and the break-up of the unity of the Western Church many later Protestants came to regard the visible unity of the Church as of very little importance. As a result the break-up of the Church into denominations and sects continued and increased. Many denominations were originally formed because their first adherents thought this necessary in order to witness more clearly or completely to the truth of the gospel or to express more clearly the true nature of the Church. But in time loyalty to the partisan structures as such developed, together with a deep-seated love of separate existence with overtones of pride and a sense of superiority to others.

From Europe this shattered state of the Church and these resulting partisan attitudes were exported to South Africa. From the beginning of the 19th century the English and the Scots and then other settlers arrived in increasing numbers with their different denominations which took their places alongside the church of the Dutch burghers. Then as a result of the Great Trek the unity of the Dutch Church was also broken. Moreover the division between the English-speaking Churches and especially the missionary societies on the one side and the Dutch Churches on the other was exacerbated by their different approaches to the racial issue.

With the arrival of the newer settlers the evangelism of the blacks began in earnest. From the beginning the blacks too were taught by the example of multiple white denominations to place little value on the visible unity of the Church. In time as they began to experience very real frustrations of their own with the traditional white-controlled Churches the blacks therefore began to ask themselves: Why should we now not break away and form our own Churches? The result was that to an increasing degree Africans, and also Coloured people began either to demand separate communities and structures within the traditional churches or else to split off into separatist churches and sects, which in turn also split up into further groups. This separatist movement gathered rapid momentum among the blacks until today it is calculated that there are well over 2 000 Churches and sects among them.

The result of all this is that the Church's fundamental message that God has wrought reconciliation between Himself and man and thus also between man and man in Jesus Christ is compromised and contradicted. Moreover, in a pluralistic society like South Africa's which has such potentially explosive seeds of division in its racial, economic, language and cultural differences and which therefore so urgently needs the Church to be a witness to, and an agent of, this reconciliation, any call by the Church for reconciliation and unity between the different groups in society appears as so much hypocrisy. If it cannot be reconciled and united within itself how can it in any way expect those outside of it to be reconciled and united? On the contrary the Church appears as the sanctifier of human division. Thus the whole message and witness of the Church is brought into serious disrepute, and indeed is regarded by many with incredulity.

A further result of this disunity of the Church is that the wide variety of Churches encourages the individual Christian to regard himself as having the right to select 'the church of his choice'. It is significant that during the period 1951-1960 when it was the most outspoken in its criticism of government racial policy the Anglican Church was the only large Church which seriously decreased in the number of its white adherents (from 416 472 to 384 448 according to the 1960 Census figures). In the same period the other Churches (except the smaller Gereformeerde Kerk which suffered a slight decrease) in-

creased the number of their adherents, in most cases considerably. In this way whites, for instance, came to demand that instead of questioning their beliefs and attitudes, the Church should support the status quo. Inevitably the implication comes to be accepted, consciously or unconsciously, that the God whom the Church proclaims also sanctions the status quo and does not call his people to labour and suffer in the struggle to change it.

In this situation of denominationalism where people leave any Church that is too demanding for one which is more palatable it also becomes extremely difficult for the Church to exercise any real discipline. Hence the astonishing fact that whereas the Reformers considered discipline to be one of the important marks of the Church, ranking close behind the Word and Sacraments, English-speaking Protestant Churches today practise very little real discipline.

The ultimate result of this state of division in the Church is that the churches become identified with racial, cultural and language groups. A church comes to be understood as the religious aspect of the group. Consequently it comes to be seen as natural and proper for a church, either formally or tacitly, to exclude people who are different, who belong to another group, an 'out-group'. In turn church members come to regard their church membership as an automatic right on the basis of their belonging to the racial, cultural or language 'in-group' - and not as demanding something from them, especially in the way of any change in their attitudes to the out-group. On the contrary it is thought proper for the Church to adapt itself to the group, not vice versa.

The consequence of this is that the Church can be used to give religious sanction to the ideological aims and ambitions of the group.

Examples of this are:

the original official *Programme and Principles* of the National Party demanded that 'the religion of the *volk*' be used as a means to the end of engendering 'the sense of national self-esteem and permanent character as a *volk* (die besef van 'n nasionale eiewaarde en 'n vaste volkskarakter)';

the idea of the English, especially popular in Victorian times, that they were somehow God's chosen people, abetted by Him in their imperialistic adventures;

and recently amongst blacks, one *extreme* form of 'black theology' which tends to exalt the blackness of blacks above the common humanity they share with others.

In effect all this implies the reduction of Christianity to a tribal religion and

the worship of a tribal God. It is not without reason that blacks have long accused whites of preaching a 'white man's God'. We have also heard much about 'the God of the Afrikaner *volk*', 'the God of the English', the 'quest for a Black Messiah' etc. In the end all of this reduces God to the spirit of the nation or 'the attribute of nationality' (Dostoievsky).

The tragedy is that in this situation in South Africa today very many, perhaps even most, Christians do not take seriously the scandal of division and the need for unity in the Church. Many Protestants argue that the true unity of the Church is invisible and that its visible disunity is inevitable and not a matter for undue concern. In fact ecumenism is viewed with suspicion for it inevitably constitutes an undermining threat to partisan and sectional attitudes in its assertion of the unity and catholicity of the Church.

Nevertheless the picture is by no means completely bleak today. In the early twentieth century the 'ecumenical movement' sprang up to reverse the centrifugal movement in the division of the Churches. One result of this in South Africa has been that since 1936 the Christian Council of South Africa, now the South African Council of Churches, has existed as an attempt to establish greater contact and co-operation between the various Churches. It is a tragedy, however, that excepting the Transvaal N.G.K. from 1936 to 1939, the Afrikaans Reformed Churches have never belonged to the Council, while the Baptist Church withdrew in 1969.

Among black separatist movements the significant steps have been the establishment of the Interdenominational African Ministers' Association of South Africa (IDAMASA) and the African Independent Churches' Association (AICA) in a new attempt to bring about greater contact and unity amongst themselves. AICA itself is now a member of the SACC.

Most significant, however, have been the various steps toward structural or 'organic' unity between denominations. For instance three Methodist bodies united in 1932 to form the Methodist Church of South Africa. The Lutheran Churches and missionary bodies have formed the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in South Africa. Three Congregational bodies united in 1967 to form the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa. The three largest Presbyterian Churches plan to unite soon - and it is anticipated that the United Congregational and Presbyterian Churches will hereafter unite with each other. Most comprehensively, the Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational Churches have set up a Church Unity Commission to negotiate union between all of them.

There are further important Biblical and theological arguments relating to the nature of the Church that are relevant to this discussion. These are touched on briefly in some notes that can be found as Appendix 2.

B. SEGREGATION AND FELLOWSHIP

Our discussion of denominationalism leads directly to the racial issue, which we shall now consider more specifically.

As we have seen, the Church's division into denominations in principle opens the way for, and indeed encourages, the structural division and separation of the Church into racial and cultural groups. But not only is this so: even when denominations remain structurally united the Church tends to divide into separate racial and class groups *within* each denomination. Thus the Church not only brings its own prior divisions into society but also tends to mirror in its own being and life the divisions of society itself.

The Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk originally recognised that the administration of Holy Communion 'simultaneously to all members without distinction of colour or origin' was 'an unshakeable principle based on the infallible Word of God' and that 'therefore all Christian communities and each individual Christian are obliged to think and act accordingly' (Synod of 1829). But there were in fact already some separate congregations for Coloured people, as well as missionaries who could not be called to minister to white congregations on account inter alia of differences in levels of training. In 1857 the N.G.K. Synod resolved: 'The Synod regards it as desirable and Scriptural that wherever possible our members from among the heathen be received and incorporated in our existing congregations'. But as a result of pressure from white members the same Synod also passed an important resolution that for the first time *officially* permitted separate services and buildings for White and Coloured people in the same parish. It thus clearly recognised that fellowship was the ideal Christian norm and separation was granted only on the ground of expedience (as a concession to 'the weakness of some'). In time, however, this practice increasingly became the norm in the NGK. As a result inter-racial worship came to be seen as something not so much to be encouraged as to be permitted. In 1956, for instance, the Federal Council of the NGK resolved, 'As a matter of principle no person will be excluded from corporate worship solely on the grounds of race or colour'. By 1966 'joint worship' between the races was discouraged except 'under special circumstances' (Report of the General Synod of 1966). From subsequent events it would appear that these 'special circumstances' are extremely rare.

When the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk united with the NGK in the old Transvaal Republic they agreed as a principle of union that 'the Church allows no assimilation between whites and non-whites'. ('Assimilation' here translates 'gelykstelling', which can mean either 'positing as equal' or 'positing as identical'. Presumably it meant the latter here - though it perhaps carried overtones of the former for many). A law was also passed that 'the members

of the mission congregation shall not make use of church buildings of the white members of the Church'. The present NHK (the part which stayed out of the union) retains the famous and controversial Artical III in its Church Law which forbids 'mixing of white and non-white' and all 'assimilation' (originally 'gelykstelling', but since 1964 changed to 'vermenging'), and lays down, 'Therefore only white persons belong to the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk'. When Prof. Geysers, the former New Testament Professor on its theological faculty in Pretoria, protested against this article in the 1960's, the NHK prohibited its members from discussing it in public. The Gereformeerde Kerk likewise rejected the idea of racial mixing in its congregations 'as a *principle and rule*' and specifically prohibits using the sacrament of Communion 'as a demonstration of ecumenical unity' between Christians of different races (1961).

Partly as a result of this attitude but also because it seemed good missionary policy to give the different language and cultural groups their own Churches (an argument that applied more to Africans than to Coloured people, however) all the Afrikaans Reformed Churches eventually set up separate 'daughter' Churches or denominations for the different races.

In the NGK, the White, African and Coloured Churches have been linked by a special 'Ecumenical Synod' since 1964. The most recent and most extended justification of racial separation in the churches is in the report on race relations adopted by the General Synod of the NGK and published in English under the title *Human Relations in South Africa*. This uses what are the favourite texts today for supporting apartheid, namely, Gen. 1, 2, 11, Deut. 32:8 and Acts 17:26f, to argue that the stories of the creation and the Tower of Babel show that God's will for mankind is diversity and pluriformity, not only on linguistic lines, but also 'somatic' (physical), cultural and racial.

On this basis it argues: 'Mixing and integration ... on a large scale ... or ... the obliteration of dividing lines' would result in this 'God-willed diversity ... being levelled down to a colourless uniformity, the distinctiveness of *volke* (being) destroyed, and their particular culture bastardised'. 'Then the pure religion of Christianised *volke* would be threatened and *volke* would, in short, not be able to fulfil their independent vocations and live according to their distinctive character'. Therefore 'such a development must be opposed in principle'. It is assumed here that God must will the preservation of all the *present* differences between races, nations and language groups as they are. For the above reason the Church should in no way contribute to such mixing and integration.

When we turn to the other Churches we find that the Baptist Church and the two largest Pentecostalist Churches, the Apostolic Faith Mission (which split from the NGK) and the Full Gospel Church have completely segregated national Councils or Conferences for each racial group. (Conferences of the

third largest Pentecostal Church, the Assemblies of God, are integrated at alternate meetings).

In most of the so-called 'English-speaking' Churches, the official theology and policy is in the direction of encouraging contact between the races or at least of opening doors to all races. They are integrated on the level of their national and regional Church courts. The recent Congregational union and the proposed Presbyterian union have both involved uniting Churches of different race groups. A number of national or regional leaders in the more English-speaking Churches have been black. But on the level of the local congregations actual practice very often does not accord with the official policy. Only the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches seem to have several congregations that are at all racially integrated, even to a small extent. Often blacks have been made to feel unwelcome or merely tolerated. Certainly black servants in white suburbs tend not to frequent the churches there in large numbers because they either do not feel at home or fear rejection (even if this is not actually expressed) in 'the white man's church'. Thus whereas the Afrikaans Churches are at least consistent in their rejection of fellowship with other races, the English-speaking Churches often fail to live by the unity which they profess in this regard.

The following are some obvious ways in which race (and class) divisions manifest themselves also in 'English-speaking' Churches:-

- (a) the 'mission church' concept which results in separate places of worship for different races living near each other, even when no practical reason such as language difference justifies separate congregations;
- (b) segregated services, perhaps even in the same church buildings, when there is no practical reason to justify this, apart from the unwillingness of many white congregations really to welcome as their brothers and sisters fellow Christians who differ from them in race or in class;
- (c) the reserving of special pews, usually at the back, in some churches in 'white' areas for the use of black worshippers; and the widespread tendency for black congregations to show white visitors to the front benches;
- (d) the tendency to ignore blacks attending integrated churches so that they sit isolated by themselves when there is any meeting in the church hall afterwards.

The attitudes among whites which we have described have inevitably led to a reaction among black Christians. Though the NG Sendingkerk (Coloured Mission Church) stresses much more positively than the NGK itself that its churches are open to all 'irrespective of race and colour' (1962 Synod) its members have been glad to be given separate independence from the white Church, and in fact sometimes petitioned for separate congregations before the Sendingkerk was established. This is not so much because they needed separate services of worship for cultural reasons as because they did not feel welcome and were not granted full equality and active participation in the 'white' congregations. Similarly Africans accepted separate independence in all the Afrikaans Churches: for them cultural and linguistic difference played a more important part and made it best for them to meet separately from the beginning.

The system in the Afrikaans Churches at least provided the structures for blacks to have increasing separate independence and some degree of self-expression in their own cultural forms. The result is that there have been fewer separatist churches and sects splitting off. In the English-speaking Churches, the failure to implement their official policy of integration by giving blacks equal participation, power and pay has led to members moving into separatist Churches and sects in which self-respect and Africanisation are given priority. Both the Afrikaans and the English-speaking Churches are failing significantly to attract black members at a rate comparable with the rapidly growing proportion of blacks who are now joining the 'independent' Churches and sects. What must we say concerning the failure of the Churches to achieve fellowship across the barriers of race, language, and colour?

The first thing to be emphasised is that it is necessary for all Christians in South Africa (especially white, and both Afrikaans and English-speaking, but also black) to recover the essential insight of the NGK, namely, that the Scriptures insist on it as 'an unshakeable principle' that 'without distinction of colour or origin', all Christians form a united communion of saints. In 1829 the NGK was very close to the principles of Scripture and the original theology of Calvin.

In later years the Afrikaans Churches created the ideology of *volk* and race represented by Afrikaner nationalism. The original insight into Scripture of 1829 came to be completely obscured by ideological considerations. Because no man can serve two masters the result of this loyalty to an ideology was that (in this particular issue) men grew deaf to the Word of God which their forefathers had heard and understood so much better.

From the Christian perspective, the problem with all nationalistic ideologies is their method of thinking basically in terms of nation versus nation. In contrast to this the New Testament and the early Church as well as the Reformers thought of the Church vis-a-vis the nations (cf. e.g., 1 Pet. 2:9).

It is only by making the nation rather than the Church one's basic category that one can, for instance, argue so illogically that white and black *Christians* must not integrate because if 'Christian nations come into contact with heathen nations ... the mingling of the two can threaten Christianity' - instead of seeing that from the New Testament point of view what is important is the solidarity of all Christians in their witness together vis-a-vis all the nations. (A 'Christian nation' is an impossible concept from the New Testament point of view because true Christians are always a minority in every nation, Matt. 7:13f). So also it is this ideology that is in control when the preservation of a 'historically valuable culture' or, the 'distinctive character' of any *volk* from being contaminated ('bastardised') by other cultures, is made fundamental. Sociologically this is nonsense because it is ordinarily the inter-penetration rather than the isolation of cultures that is a good thing in so far as they serve to fertilise each other. More important than this however is the question: where does the Bible speak about the value of cultures - let alone about their being fundamental? This is not a primary Christian value at all but an ideological one, an ideological dogma which has been imported into theology and to which the Christian emphasis on the reconciliation of all men and the unity of the Church has been sacrificed.

When we examine the actual texts used to support apartheid we find that they are totally unable to bear the arguments based on them. It is argued, for instance in the *Human Relations Report*, that Gen. 1 and 2, with their account of light and darkness, sea and land, different kinds of plants and animals and the male and female sexes, prove that 'diversity and pluriformity' (and thus separation) are just as basic and just as much a divine imperative for man as the fundamental unity of mankind is. But this strange exegesis quite overlooks the fact that Gen. 1-2 nowhere speaks of man as racially or culturally pluriform but rather of mankind in the singular (Gen. 1:26f, 2:15 cf. Acts 17:26) *in contrast to* the plants and animals created according to their various kinds (Gen. 1:11f, 21,24f). In Adam, as it were, all men are one and are thus basically of one kind (Gen. 3:20 cf. Acts. 17:26). This is far more important than any differences between them. Singularity, not pluriformity, is God's order of creation for man. Moreover the sexual difference between man and woman is a ground not for their separation but precisely for their union!

On the basis of Gen. 11:1-9 it is further argued that at the Tower of Babel God 'intensified' the 'diversity and pluriformity' of man so that '*volke* and races came into existence', and so also differences in culture. But Gen. 11:1-9 concerns the diversity of languages, not races or cultures. If applied in the way the apartheid theologians wish to apply it, against inter-group mixing and marriage, it would prohibit integration, for instance, between French-, German- and Dutch-speaking people of the same race, and thus the coming into existence of the Afrikaner *volk*. It would not prohibit marriage between

people of different races if their home language was the same! In fact, however, this passage contains no commandment against mixing between any groups, but only an account of a providential act of God. Moreover, the placing of the story of the Tower of Babel in Gen. 11, long after the creation, shows that the diversity of languages between men (and any cultural differences that might result from their being separated by language) are by no means to be regarded as so fundamental as the singularity and unity of man which is the order of creation. In contrast to this unchanging order of creation, language difference is something that develops in history and is thus extremely fluid. Moreover, part of the meaning of the story of Pentecost in Acts 2 is precisely that the effect of the Babel of languages in dividing men has now been overcome by the Holy Spirit. Men from every part of the known world and speaking every kind of language are visibly united into one congregation, one communion of saints in one place! The curse of Babel is overcome by the redemption through Christ.

It is then further argued on the basis of Deut. 32:8 and Acts 17:26f that it is God's will for the different races of mankind to separate themselves into different areas in order to retain their 'pluriformity'. But all Deut. 32:8 means is:

1. according to the Massoretic text, that when the nations settled in their separate localities God saw to it that there was room for Israel; or
2. according to the more probably correct Qumran and Septuagint reading (cf. NEB), that God has parcelled out the nations to the heavenly beings for them to look after as guardian angels (cf. Dan. 10.10:13, 20f, 12:1, Ps. 82) - like a great King or Emperor placing the provinces of His empire under the administration of his satraps. Neither of these readings means that the peoples of the different nations may not mix with each other. If the text did mean this it would once again mean that the Germans, French and Dutch should never have left Germany, France and Holland and above all should never have mixed! It would *not* mean that different races living within the same national boundaries (as in South Africa today) should not mix! But in fact the text contains no commandment to that effect at all. In its context (v. 6f, 9ff) it is merely concerned to explain the special relationship between God and the nation of Israel - a special relationship that in the new dispensation has become that between God and his 'new Israel', the *multi-racial* Church!

Similarly in Acts 17:26 all that Paul is doing is to rebut the Athenians' idea that they were essentially different in origin, nature and culture from the rest of mankind with the argument that all men come from the same stock and are therefore basically the same. It is God in His providence who has determined the different times or epochs and the different parts of the earth in which the various nations live and this is therefore not subject to their own control. The

application of the text in defence of the ideology of apartheid is thus an exact reversal of its meaning! The error at the root of this application is the attempt to turn a statement of *God's providence* into a *commandment for men* - theologically inadmissible and always presumptuous.

From the above it is quite clear that the attempt to find a Scriptural defence for the doctrine of apartheid is a somewhat desperate attempt at *ex post facto* justification which amounts to reading the ideology into the texts rather than expounding what they actually say. Having rebutted this ideologically controlled exposition of Scripture, however, it is desirable to look at what Scripture actually *does* say concerning race relations, especially the relation between different races in the Church.

Many English-speaking Christians, especially, because they have not been taught tortuous expositions of the Tower of Babel story etc. assume that the Scriptures have nothing to say about the 'racial problem', or at least nothing more specific than 'Love your neighbour' (which is already, of course, a very far-reaching commandment). Therefore they are inclined to leave the matter to the Government and see nothing incongruous with the Church's adapting itself to the Government's policy. In fact, however, the Scriptures are more specific than this. The problem of *volk* or race is a central one in the Scriptures and they do have a great deal to say concerning it.

It is true that there is hardly any reference to the issue of black/white relationships in the Bible. The reason for this is not that black men were unknown to its writers. On the contrary they appear several times in the pages of Scripture (e.g., Jer. 13:23). The reason is rather that black/white relationships never constituted a problem for the people of the Bible. For them the colour of a man's skin was irrelevant. Rather, the real problem in race or *volk* relationships is for them not across the line white/black but rather across the line Jew/Gentile. It is in terms of this line then that the Bible deals with this whole problem. This is *the* race problem. It sees this problem in much more fundamental terms than the black/white problem is seen in South Africa - but for that very reason in its implications it also has much to say that directly confronts black/white apartheid.

The Biblical arguments related to the question of race relations are summarised briefly in the notes contained in Appendix 3. These comments show convincingly that in the light of Christ's act of reconciliation any kind of racialistic thinking and practice in the Church is impossible.

C. DISCRIMINATION AND EQUALITY

Discrimination against people on the basis of arbitrary and unfair *criteria* is, by common consent, evil. A person who discriminates on the basis of irrele-

vant and arbitrary criteria is prejudiced. His criteria have an ideological basis. For example, discrimination against any group of people on the grounds of clothing or class, language or nationality, skin colour or race, is discrimination on arbitrary criteria and is thus an act of prejudice. It is with this improper kind of discrimination that we are concerned here.

Incipient discrimination can be seen in the earliest beginnings of segregation: from the time the earliest slaves and Khoikhoi (Hottentots) in the Cape were converted to Christianity they were made to sit either at the back of the church in which their masters worshipped or in a balcony upstairs. That is, they were made to be as invisible and therefore as unimportant as possible in the churches. There was no thought of allowing them any real say in the life and running of the local church.

It can reasonably be argued that the later segregation of these Coloured people into their own congregations was at least a step forward from this position of invisibility and inferiority in the mixed congregations. Nevertheless, all segregation on merely racial grounds (as distinct from segregation on such purely practical grounds as language difference) also is a form of discrimination, whether the segregation is imposed within or between congregations. In the Boer insurrection of 1801, the leaders complained that Hottentots were being allowed to worship in the church at Graaff-Reinet and that they were being instructed by missionaries of the London Missionary Society and in this way were being placed on an equal footing with Christians. The Dutch Reformed Synod was still able to take a strong official stand against this kind of attitude in 1892, when it decided unanimously that even to question or discuss whether the Lord's Supper should be jointly celebrated by all members of a congregation without regard to colour or descent would be 'derogatory' to the Christian religion. Racial segregation becomes discrimination not only when motivated by the psychologically irrational aspects of prejudice against groups of another colour, class or culture, but also when it is maintained for the sake of retaining exclusive power within one's own sphere. In fact colour prejudice is often to a large extent a psychological 'cover' for the fear of losing power.

Moreover, not only did the white members of the NGK seek to retain exclusive power within their own sphere; through their missionaries they also sought to exercise some power in the 'daughter' Churches. From the first the NGK took the position that its white missionaries in the 'daughter' Churches should have the right to wield governing authority in them. At the same time it sought to exclude these missionaries from discipline at the hands of the black Church courts. All disciplinary issues against them were to be finally settled by the 'mother' Church. In 1962 it was confirmed that these missionaries remained members of the 'mother' Church. (*Human Relations Report*, p. 28).

The 'English-speaking' Churches too have practised their own forms of discrimination. Even where congregations are integrated, as is usual in the Anglican Church, the whites sometimes sit in front so that they take Communion before the other races. Sometimes also they elect all-white parish councils.

The 'ecclesiastical colonialism' in the English-speaking Churches represents another way in which the Church retains power in its decision-making bodies since they, as the ones more familiar with these forms can manipulate them more effectively.

Some of these Churches also weight their supreme Church courts in disproportionate favour of the whites. The Methodist Church, in spite of an overwhelming majority of black members, so structures its annual National Conferences that they can never have a black majority and de facto always have a slight white majority. (This Church like some others is a 'white body' in respect of holding property and is legally required to maintain a white voting majority at its Annual Conference).

Other important ways in which white churchmen have maintained power is by packing the important committees and commissions of their Churches with, and by keeping the highest posts in the hierarchy for, members of their own race. For example, in the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa no black has been chosen as Moderator of the General Assembly though undoubtedly some blacks have had the necessary ability. (Once or twice blacks have just missed being chosen). Very few Moderators even of its Presbyteries have been blacks. Similarly in the Anglican Church only two bishops are not white, and both of these are in black 'homeland' areas. The same applies, mutatis mutandis, to other Churches. Alternatively 'tokenism' is engaged in: the practice of placing a few blacks in the most important posts. This is partly excused on the ground that (in terms of the white culture) whites are better trained for these positions. This however merely promotes the problem unless at the same time the whites are encouraging black leadership to develop by sharing or taking over the responsible positions. Moreover, the problem with not appointing blacks to positions of leadership is not only that they are denied a share of the power: it also means that the leaders of such Churches tend to see matters more fundamentally in terms of white concerns and interests and to neglect the specifically black point of view in their leadership. Only black leaders can take black interests consistently seriously in a segregated society. This failure to share power is another great cause of the exodus of members into the Independent Churches and sects where blacks run their own affairs.

Fortunately, however, there are signs that more whites in the mixed Churches are recognising their 'colonialist' tendencies for what they are and are becoming more and more ready to share power with blacks or to turn it

over to the black majorities in their Churches. But the need for a much greater degree of really good black leadership will not be filled until the Churches put much more effort and imagination into recruiting more blacks to the ministry -and into removing all the aspects in which they discriminate against blacks. Until the Churches pay black ministers higher stipends, for instance, they will not attract many from the more highly educated and talented class of blacks and so will not be able to raise the level of their own training of black ministers and potential leaders.

Although this does not have to do directly with *racial* discrimination we may note briefly here that the Church has been guilty of discriminating also against youth in its distribution of leadership and power. It is much easier for comparatively young people to attain positions of great power and leadership in the business, commercial, professional and academic worlds than in the Church. This is one important reason for the Church's hidebound conservatism, for thereby it loses the freshness, flexibility and idealism which young people so often can contribute. Indirectly this inhibits the Church from radically abandoning old prejudices and the discriminatory status quo also in the area of race.

Another important area of discrimination (and to an important extent this is bound up with the desire to retain power) is that of finance. White congregations frequently pay black employees on their church premises very inadequate salaries. Even more, the discrimination between the stipends paid to black and to white ministers in some mixed Churches makes these Churches sound very hypocritical when they criticise injustice in the civil sphere and greatly compromises the effectiveness of their witness. How can a Church which discriminates along racial lines in the stipends it pays its ministers sound convincing when it criticises the state for racial discrimination or presses for equal opportunity for all races in the public sphere?

The question of ministerial stipends is under consideration in most churches, and generally the trends are encouraging. The NGK sets the same *minimum* scale of stipends for all its ministers, whatever colour they may be, and in fact pays its black ministers considerably more than the 'English-speaking' Churches do. In practice, however, there is still a great disparity between white and other ministers' stipends in the NGK because most white dominees receive far more than this minimum scale. There is now a significant movement to work toward parity of stipends in some of the 'English-speaking' Churches and there is now parity in at least three dioceses in the Church of the Province of South Africa. The Roman Catholic Church in principle does not make any distinction between the monies its black and white priests receive, although in practice priests working in white parishes regularly receive much more in the way of financial gifts from members of their congregations (and sometimes also from overseas sources). In the United Congregational Church

some coloured ministers with large congregations are actually paid considerably more than white colleagues in much smaller congregations.

This whole matter is complicated in the non-episcopal Churches by the fact that the ministers are usually paid directly by their congregations so that ministers in well-off white parishes automatically receive much more than black ministers in their much poorer parishes. (The Spro-cas Economics Commission has shown that average white incomes are now about thirteen times greater than those of Africans and about five to six times greater than those of Indian and Coloured people). This disparity has been aggravated by apartheid in that it has strictly separated blacks and whites into separate areas and thus into separate (poor and rich) congregations. Usually the disparity in stipends is alleviated to some extent by assisting the poorest black ministers from central funds of the Churches but this system needs to be greatly developed so that there is a consistent parity of stipends irrespective of racial distinction. Parity of stipends, especially in an apartheid society, seems possible only when all ministers are paid from a central fund to which local congregations pay assessments based on their ability to contribute to it.

The disparity in the available wealth in black and white congregations leads to many other different kinds of discrimination. One result is the great difference in the ratio of ministers to lay people. The number of ministers (whether black or white) working in black congregations tends to be much smaller proportionately than that of ministers working in white congregations. According to its statistics for 1969, in the Methodist Church of South Africa the ratio of ministers to members in white congregations is 1:136 and in other congregations 1:920. How much the deployment of manpower depends on financial resources and not on the size of the congregation or its needs is shown by the fact that whereas in Worcester 109 white members had their own ordained minister, in Namaqualand one minister served 1 500 members (black, coloured and white). The general disparity of the ratios between minister and members may be even greater in other Churches than in the Methodist Church.

A further point of discrimination is that whereas white ministers are frequently appointed to black congregations, blacks are almost never appointed to white congregations even when their educational qualifications and cultural sophistication fit them for this.

The building programmes of white congregations are ordinarily far more ambitious and luxurious than those for black. Very often white congregations spend tremendous and extravagant sums of money on splendid new churches and halls while black congregations struggle with the upkeep of poorly erected and deteriorating church buildings. Not long ago one white congregation in Cape Town spent R35 000 merely to move the organ and choir stalls to the back of its church while coloured congregations nearby were

worshipping on old school benches! (Moreover Group Areas removals under apartheid have forced many of the poorer black and coloured congregations to rebuild and have inadequately compensated them for their old buildings). This shows the need for more centralised national schemes to finance building projects.

Such things as church educational programmes also tend to be much more adequately developed for whites. Educational aids used in white congregations are often completely lacking in black. Sunday School programmes are developed at great expense with the white child in mind, but not comparably for black.

Some of the most scandalous acts of discrimination which have gravely affected the credibility of the 'English-speaking' Churches, especially in the eyes of Afrikaners, have been the refusals of white Church schools to accept pupils from other races. Afrikaans newspapers and politicians still refer to the refusal of a well-known Cape Town boys' Church school to accept as a pupil the son of a coloured priest of the same Church.

There is also often discrimination between the languages in which Church publications are printed. In this regard criticism is sometimes very valid, but a completely fair policy is also extremely difficult. The costs of printing, limited demand and the multiplicity of languages in South Africa sometimes compel Churches to limit printing to their own lingua franca. Nevertheless, there is happily an increasing amount of Church publishing in languages other than English or Afrikaans and this should be encouraged to every practicable extent.

The Church may have to reap the whirlwind it has sown, for the groups which have been discriminated against are becoming increasingly conscious and resentful of this discrimination. There is a serious threat that this will eventually lead to racial splits in the Church which will shatter what is left of its witness to reconciliation and unity across the colour line. Moreover, this threat is growing at a stage in the history of South Africa when the different races move more and more into political confrontation with each other, and its witness to reconciliation becomes all the more urgently necessary.

Prophets and apostles roundly condemn all improper discrimination. James writes 'For instance, two visitors may enter your place of worship, one a well-dressed man with gold rings, and the other a poor man in shabby clothes. Suppose you pay special attention to the well-dressed man and say to him, 'Please take this seat', while to the poor man you say, 'You can stand; or you may sit here on the floor by my footstool'. do you not see that you are inconsistent and judge by false standards? Listen, my friends. Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and inherit the kingdom ...?' (Js. 2:2-5). Similarly God condemns the prejudice in Peter which made him want to discriminate against those who were not of the

Jewish race: he warns Peter not to consider the Gentiles 'profane' (Acts 10). More generally, the Christians in Colassae who are tempted to be prejudiced or to discriminate against Greek or Jew, barbarian or Scythian, slave or free-man are rebuked on the ground that 'Christ is all that matters and Christ is in them all' (as we may translate Col. 3:11. Cf. Gal. 3:28).

The way to solve the problem of discrimination and friction is not to segregate the races. For it is not integration that breeds friction and trouble between the races, as the apartheid ideologists and theologians argue, but discrimination and injustice. It has frequently been argued in South Africa that the black riots in the USA proved that integration caused friction between the races and could not work. This argument ignores the fact that those who rioted in Watts, Newark, Chicago and the other US cities were not the integrated blacks but those who had been segregated into black slum ghettos where as a result of discriminatory labour practices and other disadvantages they were suffering a very high rate of unemployment and poverty with their attendant social evils. Similarly in Northern Ireland it is not the fact that the Protestants and Roman Catholics are different or that they live together that has led to the explosion of violence between them but the fact that the Roman Catholics were discriminated against: they were not permitted their fair share of political power and economic opportunity. So also in the Church it is true that though differences in outlook, culture and education may make it more difficult for the races to work together it is not these as such but group prejudice and discrimination and injustice that are the real causes of friction between them.

The answer is *not to segregate* because the race that is segregated then experiences this as rejection. Even a segregation that was not imposed by one race upon another but *really* desired by both races from the beginning would betray the New Testament principle that the Church is the one Body of Christ in which the races are to live in reconciliation and unity with one another. A resort to segregation would be a relapse from this biblical principle to the pagan principle that 'birds of a feather flock together' and 'one crow does not peck another crow's eyes out'. Even though the desire to be separate may also be a reaction to discrimination by the discriminated-against themselves, it must be rejected as unscriptural.

The answer is rather for the Church to engage in radical self-examination, to identify all the points at which discrimination is being practised in her, to welcome all frank criticism of such discrimination and to move quickly to eliminate it. Wherever necessary the appropriate structures must be set up to enable her to do this. One of the most hopeful plans toward this end is that of the Anglican Church to set up 'Challenge Groups' within every level of its polity which will seek to identify and challenge all discriminatory tendencies and to prod the Church into eliminating these.

Welcoming criticism also involves taking seriously protests by those who feel they have suffered discrimination. Recently a group of twelve black Roman Catholics, including three priests, walked into a national conference of bishops in Pretoria with placards reading, 'Must we tolerate white bosses in the Church as well?', 'Christ is black - bishops act for white interests' etc. They distributed copies of a memorandum which denounced certain Roman Catholic leaders for discriminatory attitudes and demanded the appointment of a black cardinal. During a pause in the conference proceedings the leader of the demonstrators, Mr Drake Koka, pointed out that although there were 1 000 000 blacks and only 170 000 whites in the Roman Catholic Church in South Africa there were 25 white bishops and only one black bishop. To some extent this is explained by the fact that there are 1 380 white and only 144 black priests in the Roman Catholic Church in Southern Africa. This inevitably means that a greater number of bishops will be appointed from among the white priests. But this raises the question whether the Churches in general have done all they could to recruit black priests and ministers.

This event is probably only the hint of wide-spread feelings among black members of the Roman Catholic Church. There have been protests against discrimination and movements for a black split in the Methodist Church - which abated somewhat only when the late Rev Seth Mokitimi was elected its first black national President.

It must be emphasised that it is not the presence of group tension or protests against discrimination as such that are to be deplored but the Church's failure to react positively and creatively to such protests. A Church which is true to the evangelical principle of multi-racialism is very likely to have some tensions. The question is how it meets tension; whether it allows such tension to build up into unresolved feuds; or retreats into a false peace of segregated cosy cliques of the like-minded; - or becomes a place where the varied people called together by God's love, and not their own choice, creatively learn to resolve their tensions and love each other as brothers in a reconciled and reconciling community. True reconciliation must involve encouraging the frank, honest, open and often painful articulation of resentments and criticisms in mutual dialogue between the groups concerned.

This may mean even encouraging a group to structure itself, for example into a black caucus in a Church court, so that it can specify and formulate its complaints and criticisms. A black has written in a context not directly related to the Church, but which applies equally well to it. What he says is in criticism of those white liberals who oppose separate black solidarity for the purpose of fighting against discrimination: What can be more logical than for us to respond as a group? When workers come together under the auspices of a trade union to strive for the betterment of their conditions, nobody expresses surprise in the Western world. It is the done thing. Nobody accuses

them of separatist tendencies. Teachers fight their battles, garbage men do the same, nobody acts as a trustee for another. Somehow, however, when blacks want to do their thing the liberal establishment seems to detect an anomaly? (SASO Newsletter, August, 1970).

The New Testament Church did not lack protests by one group against discrimination by another. The Hellenistic (Greek-speaking) Jews protested against the maldistribution of alms which seem to have been in the form of free meals (Acts 6:1f). They complained that the Hellenistic widows were being discriminated against by the Aramaic-speaking Jews. The Church did not brush aside the protest. It did not decide to segregate into two separate sections having little to do with each other! Instead it took the protest very seriously and responded to its challenge constructively. At the instigation of the Twelve the Church chose seven men, all with Greek names, to deal with the distribution of the alms. Thus the Hellenists were given proper recognition. Roughly, in terms of the kinds of discrimination we have discussed previously we may say that they were given a share in the power and in the control of the finances of the Church. The significance of this step was not thereby exhausted. Several important results followed.

According to Acts 6:7, the numbers of the community now greatly increased. Perhaps this means that now they were given proper recognition as a group more Hellenists flocked into the Church. Moreover, the leadership of the Hellenists who had been given an official role in the community was not restricted to matters of food distribution, but quickly developed in other more important areas, as we see in the example of Stephen (6:8f). The third result was that the Hellenists, with their clearer insights into the revolutionary nature of the Christian faith, began to call the Church to make a much more radical break with the old traditions and securities of the Jewish establishment and a less compromising confrontation with traditional Judaism (from which the earliest Christian community did not clearly mark itself off). From this in turn there resulted the first persecution of the early Christians (8:1f) - and finally their dispersion and the evangelisation of the heathen among whom they were scattered (8:4f). In all this there is a lesson for the Church about the fear of admitting to its leadership those who belong to a discriminated-against group who through being radically critical of the establishment in society are likely to challenge the Church to greater faithfulness and suffering.

Although the traditional leadership in the Church, with its own ties with the establishment, and its lack of trust, may hesitate to let power go out of its own 'safe' hands, it is this greater faithfulness and readiness to suffer persecution which God needs if He is to use the Church to His ends in the world.

D. PATERNALISM AND BROTHERHOOD

Paternalism means the treatment of another in a way that is benevolent in intention but in fact inhibits from recognising the maturity of the other. It also inhibits the other from coming to his own full maturity. We are here specifically concerned with the paternalism shown by whites towards blacks in South Africa.

The idea frequently reiterated by white politicians and church-men that whites have a responsibility from God to be the 'guardians' of blacks is paternalism. While it is often propagated in order to awaken or encourage a sense of responsibility among whites toward their black fellows its effect is also to make whites think of themselves as superior to blacks. From this can follow the conclusion that whites have a right to retain the real power and leadership, and even if necessary, to interfere in, and run matters for blacks because they can always do it better. Thus paternalism inhibits the development of black leadership, at any rate from taking over the real centres of power.

In 1904, the famous Scottish missionary and principal of Lovedale, Dr James Stewart, saw the difficulties in the way of a racially mixed Church 'proving either a harmonious or a vigorous one':

'If the Native element asserts itself, there will be a collision of views due to difference of education, or race interests, and various other causes. If it does not assert itself, it will be merely a hanger-on to the wealthier white section - abject, inert and lifeless, and without any of the spirit necessary for its right vocation, the extension of missionary work as soon as it has reached the position of self-support'. (Quoted in South African Outlook, July 1971, p. 103).

It was historically as a result of this point of view that the Bantu Presbyterian Church was eventually constituted as a body quite separate from the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. Dr Stewart posed three alternatives:

- (i) *conflict* between the races in integrated Church;
- (ii) *paternalism* from the whites in an integrated Church, with a resultant passive dependence from the blacks;
- (iii) *segregation*.

It is the third of these alternatives that the Afrikaans Reformed Churches, above all, have chosen. Certainly the idealistic motive of wishing to avoid the suppression of the black races in a paternalistic/dependent relationship within multi-racial Churches, giving them instead their own autonomy has played a prominent part in the more 'verligte' thinking of the Afrikaans Churches.

Paternalism shows itself in the Afrikaans Churches in the constant use of the terms, 'Mother Church' for the white Dutch Reformed Church and 'Daughter Churches' for the black. These terms reflect the historical fact that the black Churches had their origin from the now white Dutch Reformed Church but its continued constant use also inevitably conveys the idea that the role of mother and children are retained in the relationship of these Churches to each other. (Perhaps we should call this 'maternalism'!) It also obscures the fact that the parent Church from which the present white and coloured Churches stemmed was racially mixed. The paternalistic character of the relationship is perpetuated even after the recognition of the independence of the 'daughter churches'. It is reflected in such things as the one-way traffic in the exchange pulpit, the use of personnel, and the relative lack of dialogue.

Moreover, in spite of practising segregation, the Afrikaans Reformed Churches have not been able to avoid the concomitant of paternalism against which Dr Stewart warned, namely, subdued dependence and lack of proper self-assertion among their black members. Blacks have been segregated into poorer churches of their own which therefore remain financially very dependent on the 'mother' Churches. The fact that the ministers of the 'daughter' Churches receive considerably higher stipends than their counterparts in other Churches has made them all the more aware of this financial dependence. In turn this has greatly inhibited these ministers and also the laity from frankly expressing their feelings in outspoken criticism of the policies of the 'mother' Churches. It is only recently that there have been signs that the ministers are prepared to express themselves frankly.

Paternalism is also characteristic of the 'English-speaking' Churches, where it takes the form of an endemic general attitude rather than something that can be shown to a great extent by concrete examples.

The paternalistic white will never approve really radical plans directed towards the liberation of the black majority. Liberals - and 'verligtes' - with a basically paternalistic approach inevitably react negatively toward radical movements like Black Power.

Some of *the results of paternalism* may be summarised as follows:

1. Because paternalistic whites related downward to the other races as superiors to inferiors there is no room for real respect and mutual acceptance.

Paternalism thus makes true community and involvement in the lives of others as full persons impossible.

2. Because paternalism refuses to accept the members of another race as mature persons it makes real dialogue with them, and therefore a real understanding of them impossible. Most of those people, for instance, who continually announce, 'You have to understand the Natives properly', in fact themselves fail to understand them because they are presupposing that understanding 'Natives' is something quite different from understanding *persons* like themselves. Such paternalism creates a gulf in understanding.

3. Because paternalism is a partly benevolent attitude it enables racialistic people to remain psychologically blind to their own racialism and convinced that they are really only benevolent in their attitude. This for example can actually go so far as for some whites to refuse to accept blacks into their churches and yet still to persuade themselves that this is best for the blacks.

4. Paternalism blocks the development of black leadership with its continual argument, 'They are not ready (i.e. mature enough) for it'.

5. As Dr Stewart warned, paternalism develops a dependent attitude among blacks which is 'abject, inert and lifeless', lacking the confidence, initiative and spirit necessary for them to use their own talents to the full in pursuing the work of the Church, in co-operating in the mission task etc.

6. This dependence on white leadership and initiative frequently involves an uncritical acceptance superficially or least of what that leadership does. Blacks feel, consciously or subconsciously, that they cannot afford to disagree and assert their own point of view in a Church controlled by paternalistic whites. As a result their real feelings and needs are not adequately expressed and taken account of.

7. This dependent attitude spreads to the financial area. Because black congregations are separated from, and forced to be financially dependent on white congregations they sometimes make little effort to give sacrificially themselves and to contribute more adequately toward their ministers' stipends, the erection and upkeep of their church buildings and the cause of charity.

8. Inevitably blacks in the end come to recognise the patronising and condescending nature of paternalism for the insult to themselves that it is. The result is a deep resentment and further estrangement leading to hostility between them and the whites.

What shall we say in response to the problem of paternalism? The basic point is that paternalism attempts to impose on others the relationship of a benevolent father (*pater*) to his children. It thus involves a failure or refusal to

recognise and accept them as *brothers*. In the Family of God which the Church calls itself, however, we are basically related to each other not as fathers to children or superiors to inferiors but as brothers under the one Father, who is God. The need of the Church therefore is for it to recapture a deep sense of itself as God's family. Christians *must* believe - must be clearly taught - that they are called by God to be brothers of one another, whatever their race, and must make this the basic principle of their relationship to one another. For 'have we not all one Father?' (Mal. 2:10). All the races in the Church must therefore be enabled and encouraged to join together with a sense of full common participation in the Kingdom of God and the life and mission of the Church in the world.

To accept one another as brothers involves the idea that we are on a level with one another and therefore also that we can 'level with' one another. We have, in other words, every right to be frankly and radically critical of each other. True brotherhood inevitably involves mutual criticism, but criticism that is constructive rather than destructive.

This brings us to the remaining alternative of the three posed by Dr Stewart, namely, *conflict* between the races in an integrated church. Dr Stewart feared such conflict. We have seen, however, that it is not in the end avoided by either paternalism or segregation: these can provide further fuel for such conflict. But we would suggest that instead of seeking at all costs to escape conflict, or as he put it 'collisions of views', we should in fact welcome the frank and open expression of such colliding views as an opportunity for each side honestly to re-examine itself. This could lead to hostile criticism or conflict, but the more seriously each side takes its brotherhood with the other the less hostility there will be and the more quickly there will be real repentance and change. Not by avoiding this sort of 'collision' but only by working through it creatively is it possible to establish real reconciliation and true community in the end. The complaints which have bred conflict must be listened to attentively and dealt with creatively and together so that out of the pain of conflict and of struggling to be reconciled true community may be born.

E. DIVERSITY AND UNITY

It is clear that the norm for the Church in Scripture is unity and fellowship rather than division. But we still need to look at the right attitude of the Church to uniformity or diversity and at the whole question of the relationship between unity and division on the one hand and unity and diversity on the other. This is a complex relationship.

It has been fairly typical of English-speaking whites to assume that unity

necessarily involves uniformity. The typical English missionaries assumed that the conversion and Christianising of the blacks among whom they laboured necessarily involved transforming also black culture into uniformity with their own. They assumed that their own European (or, more exactly, Victorian English) culture was *the* Christian culture. There resulted the caricature of missionary work which saw the handing out of a pair of trousers as the first step to conversion.

Similar unconscious presuppositions are reflected still, for example in the frequent assumption that black and multi-racial congregations should be expected to take over the liturgies of the white congregations without anything further than a straight translation into their own languages. The consequence has been a failure to encourage blacks to develop liturgies and styles of worship truer to their native idiom. This failure to leave sufficient room for real diversity is another of the important reasons why the African Independent Churches and sects have broken away mainly from the English-speaking Churches or have been formed beside them.

These are examples of what may be called a 'cultural imperialism' or 'cultural colonialism', which also takes the form of 'ecclesiastical colonialism', by which is meant the attempt by whites to retain power in the church as it becomes multi-racial. A black minister has said: 'The English churchman regards the Church as his own property and as such he is guarding it with jealousy against the African churchman'. One way in which Whites retain this power is by maintaining their own cultural ethos as exclusively normative.

The so-called 'liberals' in the 'English-speaking' Churches are frequently criticised for minimising too much the differences between groups and races and the complex problems resulting from these differences. There is some truth in this charge arising mainly because they are reacting too blindly against racialist arguments.

On the other hand, it has been typical of Afrikaners to assume from the opposite end, as it were, that diversity necessarily results in division. The Afrikaans Reformed Churches have recognised the need to take seriously the fact that the races have differences in culture and custom. Therefore they have recognised to a greater extent that the Church needs to be 'indigenised' in each racial or cultural group and so become 'all things to all men'. To this extent their policy has been in accord with some of the important insights of the World Missionary Conferences held earlier this century, when the Church and its missionaries began to realise the need to distinguish more clearly between the export of western culture and the propagation of the Christian gospel, and to encourage the Christian faith and life to take more indigenous forms among non-western peoples.

The influence of Kuyper in the Afrikaans churches can be seen in the pamphlet by Dr F.J.M. Potgieter, head of the Department of Dogmatic

Theology at the Stellenbosch NGK Kweekskool, *Veelvormige Ontwikkeling Die Wil Van God* (1956). On the basis of Kuypers' arguments Potgieter concludes against 'the Liberalists' that Scripture 'quite clearly' opposes integration between whites and blacks and that God is therefore also against a united or integrated Church. At the Reformed Ecumenical Synod at Lunteren in 1968, where he was one of the official representatives of the NGK, Dr Potgieter again used the same sort of argument based on Gen. 11.

On this sort of basis Afrikaner theologians have defended the exclusivist idea central to the ideology of apartheid and is expressed in the Afrikaans word, 'eiesoortigheid'. As a Dutch Reformed minister, the Rev. Nico van Loggerenberg, put it typically in a letter to *Pro Veritate* some time ago: 'Die pseudo evangelie van eenheid en saamwees van die humanistiese ekumene' must be opposed with 'die Bybelse gedagte van differensiasie en eiesoortigheid'.

What, however, is the attitude of blacks in this matter. This is probably best characterised over against the white slogan, 'Unity is Strength', by the idea that diversity and proliferation is a sign of richness. This may partly explain the attitude which lies behind the tremendous proliferation of the Independent Churches and sects. In this whole phenomenon unity has not been considered important. However, many blacks have placed a high premium on unity and partly for this reason have remained members of the multi-racial Churches. Even within the Independent Churches and sects today there is a new quest for closer relationships, though unfortunately this is largely in reaction to white nationalism and therefore expresses the quest for a united, exclusively black Church.

In response to these various attitudes we can suggest that from a Scriptural point of view the English-speaking and Afrikaner ideas of the relationship between unity/disunity and uniformity/diversity are basically the same mistake from opposite ends. Both assume that unity involves uniformity to some extent, and that diversity excludes, or at least imperils, unity. In the end both the Victorian missionary's successors and the Afrikaans Churches have sought to have cultural uniformity within their own Churches. Scripture, however, takes a quite different point of view: it both welcomes diversity (and proliferation) and insists on the need for unity!

This positive attitude towards diversity, is most dramatically seen in the Biblical passage where Paul declares that in his evangelism of Jews and Gentiles he radically adapted himself to their different religious cultures. 'Indeed', he adds, 'I have become everything in turn to men of every sort, so that in one way or another I may save some' (I Cor. 9:19-23). Another dramatic example is the way in which the form of the Gospel was transformed as it moved from the Jewish Palestinian culture and ethos into the Hellenistic culture and ethos of the pagan Roman empire. For instance, key ideas of the 'pri-

mitive' form of the Gospel, such as 'the Kingdom of God' and 'Messiah' were translated into concepts such as 'eternal life' and 'Son of God' which were more easily understood by non-Jews. A similar important example is John's attempt to use elements of the Greek concept of the universal *Logos* to explain the meaning of the Messiah to his readers who included non-Jews.

The Gospel welcomes and makes itself at home in different cultures. The Spirit of the Gospel actually adds to these *cultural* differences embraced by the Gospel by giving to each Christian a different *spiritual* gift with which to serve God in and through the Church (1 Cor. 12:4-11). The Gospel does not reject differences (in so far as these do not hinder or oppose the Lordship of Christ) but actually adds to them. The Church is called to recognise and even encourage diversity within its own body. It is called to display not a cultural or spiritual rigorism or legalism but an openness and liberty toward differences.

All this involves what is called the 'indigenisation' of the Gospel. As Paul recognised in seeking to 'become everything in turn to men of every sort', the message and life of the Church must be adapted to every different culture for the sake of effective communication and in order that it might take root in it and live. H. Kraemer argues, there must be a 'genuine translation of Christianity into indigenous terms' in every culture so that Christian truth actually experiences an 'incarnation' in the ideas and through forms of the people to whom it is proclaimed (*The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, p. 323, 312). In D.T. Niles's simile, it must be transferred from one culture to another not like a transplanted pot-plant but like a seed sown in a specific soil. The Church must permit the Gospel to take native form in its different groups. It must allow and encourage the culturally varied expressions of the Gospel, of worship and of Christian life which result. For example it must encourage forms of life and worship adapted to radically different cultures such as those of modern and of tribal life, but also to the typical life styles of different subgroups within the same broad culture, such as modern urban youth.

For this reason the basic purpose and tendency of 'Black Theology' is to be welcomed. For this is basically an attempt to indigenise the Gospel in terms of the cultural forms, the general situation and the specific needs of blacks. It is an attempt to translate the Gospel much more radically into black ways of thinking and in relation to black problems so that Christ will no longer be seen through the eyes of the white. One of the causes that has helped prompt the rise of black theology is evangelistic concern about the general drift of blacks from the Church today. It is felt that one of the reasons for this is that the traditional Churches have been more adapted to the spiritual needs of the white man than to the black.

Underlying Black Theology, and necessary for it, is the emergence of a

sense of black identity. It realises that the understanding of God must come through life experience and for the black person this means his black experience.

Therefore one basic issue with which Black Theology concerns itself is worship. It is asking in a fresh and more radical way: What forms would truly *black* worship (worship of God in terms of black culture, experience and needs) take? This is an important question since blacks in multi-racial Churches find the kind of worship which whites have taught them 'stilted and restrained'.

Black theology's attempt to make the Gospel relevant to the general situation of blacks and their specific needs goes further than worship, however. It also, involves asking and answering the question: What does Jesus Christ mean to us in terms of our political situation as an oppressed people in South Africa?

The openness and liberty toward different cultures which has been stressed must be a *Christian* liberty, a liberty which, as Paul put it, remains 'under the law of Christ' (I Cor. 9:2). That is, it must be subject to the laws of the essential Gospel, so that the essential Gospel itself is not compromised. In John I the evangelist uses the Greek idea of the *Logos* critically and partially, subjecting it to the basic norm of the Gospel of the incarnation itself and thus in fact transforming it. Unfortunately, in reaction to the lack of indigenisation in the traditional Churches some of the separatist movements have gone to extremes which do not observe this principle with resulting *syncretism*. This is not a genuine *translation* of Christianity as such into black culture but what Kraemer calls an '*assimilation*' of it to the 'fundamental religious ideas and tastes of the pre-Christian past' of the culture concerned. That is, the content of the Gospel has not merely been expressed in culturally different forms but has been itself radically and essentially compromised. The Gospel protests against being compromised in this way and insists on remaining true to its own essential nature. Though the Christian faith must receive, for instance, a truly black or African form of expression it must remain authentic. It may never legitimately be transformed into a Christianised form of African religion. Just as little, on the other hand, may it be syncretised with, or made a veneer for, white nationalism, and thus be made into a white tribal religion. For it stands in judgment over every false god and therefore against every false religious idea or ethic in every culture. True indigenisation inevitably involves translating the Gospel into the terms of any culture in such a way that it all the more relevantly and directly confronts and opposes some of the most basic ideas and values of that culture.

Indigenisation of the Gospel may not be thought of as a rigid or static adaptation, for this would assume that culture is a static and unchanging phenomenon. All cultures, even to a very limited extent the most primitive

and isolated ones, are in a state of constant flux. This is true of modern cultures with their developing technologies, urbanisation, and mass media communication, and it is true of less technological cultures existing cheek by jowl with a technologically advanced culture, as occurs in South Africa. Black culture is being transformed by the technology, education, urbanisation, industry, communication media, medical methods etc. of white society - so much so that it is rapidly becoming radically different from the old tribal culture. Therefore the cultures of two groups which are originally disparate may in time become broadly homogeneous. The Coloured people and the Whites, especially the more educated and sophisticated sections in both, have to a large extent become culturally one. The culture of the educated, urbanised Africans, too, approximates to that of the educated, urbanised whites (and is increasingly different from that of typical tribal and rural Africans). Only colour prejudice or laws, not cultural difference, keep such groups separate.

It is with a fluid diversity and development of culture and not to the rigid, static grouping of apartheid ideology or official government policy that the Church must be concerned in its attempt to indigenise. The Church should adapt itself by conforming not to the separate (racial) groupings prescribed for it by the Government or society but to the actual differences between cultural trends which overlap racial groups. True indigenisation being God's word in Christ to people in the actual *cultural* situation in which they are for the moment. It must therefore be a flexible and open-ended thing, particularly in the fast-changing modern world, in which rapid progress and development are increasingly becoming conditions of survival. To classify and then separate people within rigid cultural boundaries is to attempt the impossible and certainly may not serve as basis for the Church's programme of indigenisation.

From the above we see that the Church should welcome diversity and oppose uniformity. It should be, in the words of the creed, not only 'one' (united) but 'catholic', in the sense that it embraces all kinds of men and all their different cultures.

Christian theology thus also fits in well with the sociological fact that group 'identities' are not absolute but empirically and historically fluid and variable. For instance, identity of oneself primarily in terms of belonging to a race or a nation or *volksgroep* (a unique linguistic group) is only a comparatively modern one in the history of western man. Before the 18th century man thought of himself primarily as a Roman Catholic, a Lutheran, a Calvinist or before that as a Christian or one who owed allegiance to the nobleman on whose land he lived or a citizen of a certain city - not as a member of a race, nation or language group. The emphasis on racial, national and *volk* identity which the apartheid ideologists and theologians make so primary and im-

portant, and indeed absolute, has been made possible only in fairly recent times with the development of modern racialism and nationalism and may with the progress of history once more fade into the background (e.g. in the European Common Market).

Scripture regards the differences between men not as opposite nor as antagonistic but on the contrary as complementary - and therefore as contributory -to their unity. We may show this first in relation to the diverse spiritual gifts and functions with which the Spirit compounds the cultural diversity of men in the Church (1 Cor. 12:4-11). In v. 7 of this passage it is made clear that the diverse gifts are all 'for the common good' of the Church. Then in an extended passage Paul spells this out, explaining how each member of the Church needs the complementary gifts or function of every fellow member and that this binds them together in one corporal unity just as the different parts or organs of a man's body all need each other in the unity of the whole (12:12-13). Note that this common need of, and concern for, each other binds them into a concrete *bodily* union- not merely a *spiritual* unity. Paul, who is no docetist, here takes absolutely seriously the incarnational aspect of the Church's unity.

Paul goes further than applying this principle only to the differences of spiritual function between men. He also applies it to different cultural groups: Jews and Greeks (12:13). They too have been united 'by baptism, in the one Spirit' 'into one *body*'! They too, need and should be concerned about each other in concrete, bodily unity - suffering, flourishing and rejoicing together 'so that there might be no sense of division between them' (12:24-26). We saw in the previous section of this chapter how strictly Paul applied this basic principle at Antioch.

Even where separate worship can be approved on linguistic and cultural grounds however, one needs to be careful. For such groups need to ask themselves very seriously whether their different styles of worship do not in fact need the enrichment of mutual influence and even fusion. Should there not, for instance, be room for both set liturgy and extemporaneity in every form of worship?

Again, the more 'stilted and restrained' worship of many whites perhaps really needs to be enriched by the emphasis on the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Pentecost!), on 'atmosphere' and a place for warm emotion instead of merely cold rationalism, on spontaneity, on movement, on a real sense of belonging, on healing and on celebration which it could learn from black worship - as well as by the modernity and relevance which it could learn from youth worship. Some modern liturgies, for instance the one produced by the Consultation on Church Union in the USA, provide for the *Pax* to be passed from worshipper to worshipper with a handclasp or (as in the early Church) with an embrace and for anyone to make their own biddings for prayer or even lead in

prayer themselves. Even the Negro custom of clapping during some hymns has been taken over in some predominantly white congregations in the USA. The practice of liturgical dancing during worship is also being increasingly recognised as a creative aid to worship.

It is wrong for the Church to set the example of one group rigidly excluding the culture of another. Rather, 'the reconciled man is grateful for his own culture insofar as he discerns in it the gift of God, and is open to the same gift in the different culture of his neighbour'. Therefore in principle Christians should 'open the way to the enrichment of cultures by exposure to one another' (Reports of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, Nairobi, 1970, p. 5, 7). Even in theology the white can very often learn much from the culturally different way of thinking of even the more 'primitive' black African. (See John Taylor: *The Primal Vision*). In all these ways, therefore, men need each other's cultural gifts to enrich their life together in the one Body of Christ.

The separation between groups which is legitimate in the Church therefore is a purely practical, fluid one, in contrast to the separation between groups in apartheid which is an ideological one, that is, one which is made in principle and therefore rigidly. A practical, fluid separation is one in which every group is open to every other one, and joyfully welcomes members from it. An ideological separation, however, is one which erects walls between the groups, so that they reject and exclude each other. *'The Church of Jesus Christ does not make room for walls be they tribal, racial, cultural, economic, national or confessional.* The Church that by doctrine and/or practice affirms segregation of peoples (e.g. racial segregation) as a law for its life cannot be regarded as an authentic member of the body of Christ' (WARC Reports, 1970, p. 16. italics original). For 'the exclusion of any person, on grounds of race, colour or nationality, from any congregation or part of the life of the Church contradicts the very nature of the Church' (WARC Proceedings 1964, p. 230. cf. also 'dividing wall' of Eph. 2:14). This quotation is equally applicable to English-speaking white congregations and Afrikaans congregations.

Scriptural principle of unity of the Church demands *joint worship* as the rule and permits separate worship only in special circumstances how can the same principles demand anything else but *joint or united government* of the Church -except, again, in special circumstances of a purely practical nature? In the New Testament, for instance, it is clear that when the Gentile churches emerged in Antioch and elsewhere these were not autonomous but regarded as extensions of the one Church which was centred in Jerusalem, from where emissaries were sent out to inspect these new communities. In fact, according to Acts, the Council of Jerusalem felt itself able to take decisions concerning doctrine and practice for the Church as a whole and which it took for granted

would be accepted and applied even in the Gentile churches outside Palestine (Acts 15). The relation between the Church at Jerusalem and the Gentile churches came to resemble to some extent the relation between the Temple at Jerusalem and the synagogues of the Jewish Dispersion in that just as the Jewry of the Diaspora paid Temple tax so the scattered Gentile churches contributed money to the Church in Jerusalem. With the passage of time and the further development of the Gentile mission it is true that the Jerusalem church's hegemony became less and less effective. But this was for geographical reasons, and *not* because of a principle based on the differences of race, culture or language between it and the churches of the Gentiles. A strong sense of the general unity of the Church remained. With the final destruction of Jerusalem the government of the Church came to be centred more and more in the great diocesan centres and to develop along geographic and to some extent national lines (until Rome was able to assert a central hegemony once more). It remained united in any one area, however, even when the area comprised both Jewish and Gentile Christians.

There is thus generally no excuse for separating the different cultural or racial groups into separate bodies (nationally or regionally) under separate Church courts. Sometimes, however, practical reasons may in fact modify this: when language and cultural differences make it difficult for one group to follow a court's proceedings and to feel free to participate in them fully, with the result that it becomes a merely passive group of spectators whose own concerns are not adequately dealt with. Even then language interpreters should be used rather than separate courts be instituted. If, however, this means that not only the speeches of the one group but all the proceedings of the court have to be translated this may become very awkward. In such a situation it may become preferable to separate the courts. (Note that even the Anglican Church has its Ethiopian Order). But even then this should explicitly be regarded as a temporary 'emergency' arrangement for the period it will take the different groups to get to know each other's languages and cultural ways or one group to become familiar with the other's language and culture. (Such a cultural crossflow will inevitably take place if they are living together in the same country). Moreover, separate courts should not be completely separate but linked together as far as possible within some kind of federal scheme. In fact wherever the language problem makes separate courts necessary only on the regional level they should be linked under a united Church court on the national level. Thus the separation must be for merely *practical* and *not ideological* grounds and it must therefore be understood as a temporary expedient which is limited at all points to what is really necessary.

In South Africa, however, cultural crossflow has already taken place to the extent that most of the blacks who would ordinarily be delegated to Church courts know at least one of the official languages which can therefore become

a lingua franca for proceedings, even though they may occasionally still wish to have their own speeches translated into it. For this reason, though such separate courts may have been justified in the past, it is doubtful whether they are necessary now except in the African areas - and in the case of the latter this can be restricted to separate regional courts under a common national court (Synod/Conference/Assembly). In fact the realisation of this is contributing toward the union of previously segregated churches within the same denomination, such as the Congregational churches and the Presbyterian churches.

The Church which is true to Scripture goes beyond merely passive openness between groups. Even where practical reasons cause groups to worship separately the Church should seek to bring them together at least occasionally. This is especially important in a land like South Africa where separation so often really proceeds from, or else leads to, rejection. For the Church exists as God's reconciling and uniting agent bringing men together, and needs both to act and to be seen as such. 'Efforts within the Church of Christ to manifest the unity of all believers in worship or other elements of church life help the world to believe that Jesus is the one sent by the Father (John 17:21)' (WARC Proceedings 1964, p. 230).

The Church should bring young and old together. It should be a place where they learn to know, understand and love each other so that the 'generation gap' is transcended. It is therefore probably preferable for young and old to worship as one congregation, with alternating adult and youth services, rather than for them to worship as two quite separate groups as is done in a few places. But even when different groups, such as different language groups and the different races do worship separately (in South Africa they are often forced by the geographical separation imposed on them by apartheid to meet in separate churches) the Church should bring them together at least occasionally, in combined worship services, rallies, outings, retreats and conferences. Wherever possible two different language groups should rather be parts of the same congregation using the same church buildings at different times than be separate congregations with separate buildings. There should be regular pulpit exchanges between the different groups. As we have seen, wherever practical, circumstances allow, the hierarchical courts to the Church (regional and national courts, synods etc.) should be integrated so that all groups should be united at least in the structures of a common government. Moreover, wherever practical, all broader regional delimitations (districts, presbyteries, dioceses etc.) should be so arranged as to embrace as many different cultures, classes, language groups and races as possible - not only so that this will help them to have more a sense of solidarity as one broad Church unit but also so that within the structural framework of this unity they may more easily be able to show 'concern for' (I Cor. 12:25) and help one

another, the rich contributing to the needs of the poor in the same district or diocese etc.

As a further sign of such mutual dependence and unity each group should accept the ministry of those of other groups. In South Africa there are many white ministers serving black parishes: it is important that there should be a great increase in the number of black ministers serving in white parishes. (It is necessary of course for such ministers to be at home in the language and culture of those to whom they minister). In every way possible the whole Church should seek to manifest visibly and corporately the unity between all groups within it which Christ has given to it as His one Body.

If a united Church truly wishes to permit and encourage diversity then it must be *decentralised*. It is unfortunately a tendency of many protagonists and antagonists of church unity to assume that such unity involves a high degree of centralisation. The antagonists see in this a strong argument for their point of view. The modern Church tends to be immensely bureaucratic and most schemes of church union unfortunately involve a tendency toward even greater bureaucracy. For this reason one national Church, in the sense of one huge organisation, is an ambiguous prospect even to many thinking churchmen who favour church union. Prof. Ian Henderson's scathing polemic against church union in Britain, *Power without Glory, A Study in Ecumenical Politics*, though virulent and sensationalist, did contain a valid warning which the Church needs to take seriously against the temptations of ecclesiastical power and the tendency of concentrated power in the Church to be oppressive rather than freedom-giving.

A highly centralised united national Church often tends to lack real tolerance. Massive, centralised unity tends to impose tyranny by bureaucracy, the reactionary use of power, the imposition of uniformity and the inability to adapt to the different and changing needs of peoples and cultures.

There is, however, no essential reason why a united Church should be highly centralised rather than decentralised. The New Testament Church, for instance, as we have seen, had a strong sense of general unity, to the extent that the Council of Jerusalem felt it could make a decision affecting Gentiles outside Palestine; yet this unity was never a rigid or highly centralised one.

Thus though Paul was scrupulous to maintain unity with the Apostles in Jerusalem and to have recognition as a fellow-worker from James, Cephas and John in Jerusalem (Gal. 2:9f), he was clearly recognised as leading one mission while Peter led another (Gal. 2:8f). Moreover, he never thought it necessary to refer constantly to some central authority in the Church for instructions or condonation of what he was doing. On the contrary we have seen how he actually repudiated Peter's (and possibly James's) attitude in Antioch (Gal. 2:11ff). He continued to see to it that the Gentile churches contributed to the needs of the Church in Jerusalem but further than that he went

very much his own way, and in turn he did not impose any rigid central authority of his own on the congregations among which he worked. One can drive the analogy of the primitive Church too far here as its structure is not necessarily the model that the Church today, in different conditions, must follow in detail. Nevertheless, the basic point is valid: it is possible for the Church to be greatly decentralised without being untrue to itself.

If a united Church is to take seriously the need genuinely to indigenise and adapt itself to the different cultures, subcultures and groups in its society, it must have a radical degree of decentralisation and freedom to diversify itself. Only in this way can it meet the different needs of the pluralistic societies of our modern world.

Chapter Three

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

THE MISSION of the Church refers primarily to the mission of God's redemption and reconciliation of the world. It refers to God's calling of Israel to be the sign of His Glory and light amongst the nations (cf. Is. 60:1-5). It refers to the sending of His Son, Jesus Christ, as the Messiah to be the Saviour and Lord of the world (John 3:16f; cf. Luke 2:29-32; Acts 2:22-36). It refers to the sending of the Holy Spirit to bear witness to the work of redemption in Christ in the world (John 16:7-15). Within this context, and only within this context, can we understand mission as the calling and sending of the Church, first to Israel (Matt. 10:5f) and then to all the nations (Matt. 28:1ff) to declare in word and action what God has done, is doing, and will do in Christ for the world, and thereby to call all people to believe in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and obey His Will (cf. II Corinthians 4:1-7; 5:11; 6:1; Eph. 3:9f).

The Church is thus part of God's purpose in His work of salvation. It is an instrument which He uses to bear witness to His work. It is a sign of the new humanity which He has brought into being. It is the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the city set on a hill for the sake of those around and outside it. Because of this, God's mission is the *raison d'être* of the Church, and must be the central focus of the Church's life. For just as Christ did not exist for Himself but for the world, so the church does not exist for itself but for God and therefore for the world and all men. Certainly the community of the Church is called out and separated from other peoples. Nevertheless it is called out in order to exist for and amongst others, and not isolated from them. The Church is the Church only when it is seeking to be faithful to its mission.

The Church is often seen as an institution or community of those in whom

salvation is realised. But in the New Testament, it is decisively the world that is the focus and goal of God's saving activity. It was the world which God created through and for Christ (Col. 1:16; cf. John 1:3), it was because He loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16); and it was the world which He reconciled to Himself in Jesus Christ (II Cor. 5:19), who is the Saviour not only of the Church but the world (John 4:42). The task and role of the Church is to be used by God in His saving activity which has the salvation of the world as its goal.

In our examination of this central issue, however, we have become aware of at least three basic hindrances to mission in the life of the Church in South Africa, ecclesiastical self-concern, a pragmatic 'pietism' and clericalism. These, we believe, prevent the Church from being fully the Church because they contradict the calling of the Church to bear witness as the People of God to the Rule of Christ in our country today. We therefore begin by describing these hindrances and the theological response that needs to be made to them.

Ecclesiastical Self-Concern and the Election of God

The Church is always faced with the temptation to regard its institutional forms as ends in themselves. Hence we find the Church in our land in danger of becoming a religious ghetto in which the Church is predominantly engaged in keeping itself alive. Symptomatic of this danger is the disproportionate amount of money, time and effort spent in servicing the ecclesiastical institutions as compared with serving the needs of the world. Some Church people unconsciously assume that if all is well with the administrative functioning of the Church then all is well within the Church. Or, if the Church statistics give evidence that membership is rising, new buildings are being erected and financial support is increasing, then they draw the conclusion that the Church is fulfilling its divine mandate and calling. As a result concern is expressed when anything happens to threaten this sense of growth, security and consolidation. For example, it is often said that the Church should not be so critical of the racial situation because this could mean a loss of membership and finance. Furthermore, the Church sometimes looks askance at forms of ministry and mission which attempt to engage the world at points of specific need but which have no prospect of financial return or which cannot easily be fitted into established institutional patterns. The Church is thus often fearful of risking all for the sake of the Gospel.

The divine election of God's People stands in direct contradiction to this ecclesiastical self-concern. Israel was often guilty of misunderstanding its election by seeing only one side of its meaning, the side which spoke of blessing, and promise, and the protection and deliverance of God. But election was no guarantee of the preservation of religious institutions, or, in the case of Israel, the nation. On the contrary it could and did bring about

severe punishment when Israel forgot that concomitant with the divine promise was the divine mandate by which Israel was called to serve the nations. Election meant an awesome responsibility (cf. Amos 3:2; Jeremiah 7:16-34; 37:17-20; Ezekiel 6-7). The prophets, particularly, constantly warned Israel against the fatal opinions: 'Is not the Lord among us?' they say; 'then no disaster can befall us'. (Micah 3:11; cf. Jeremiah 5:12). Further, we recall the fact that Jerusalem and the Temple, symbols of Israel's calling and focus of her mission, were not exempt from destruction (cf. Matthew 23:37-24:2).

In the light of the New Testament, the Church is the People of God reconstituted on the basis of the new covenant established in Jesus Christ. As such, the election of God gives it its foundation, destiny and purpose. The Church is called to be sent to the ends of the earth in order to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all nations (Acts 1:8). This is summed up in I Peter: 'You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a dedicated nation, and a people claimed by God for His own, to proclaim the triumphs of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light. You are now the People of God, who once were not His people ...!' (2:9f).

This calling says nothing about the preservation of the institutional forms of the Church. The Church as a society of people is an institution and therefore cannot exist without such forms, and it always needs them to express its life and continuity. But the need for institutional forms must not blind us to the fact that they exist primarily as means to an end, namely, mission. Preoccupation with the institution, or ecclesiastical self concern, is the negation of the Church's calling, and it is therefore fatal for the Church to regard its institutional forms as inviolable and sacrosanct. *God* preserves His people.

But we can and must go deeper into this matter. Paul in his letter to the Romans seeks to unravel the mystery of Israel's election and disobedience in relation to the Church (Chapter 9-11). In his exposition he indicates that the Gentiles who have become part of the Church have been grafted into Christ as a 'wild olive branch' in distinction to the Jews who were part of the true stock. However, says Paul, 'Put away your pride and be on your guard; for if God did not spare the native branches, no more will He spare you' (Romans 11:21). The Church always needs to remember that it lives by the privilege of grace and that this entails both the glorious opportunity of service and the awesome possibility of judgment (cf. Matt. 5:13; Rev. 2:4f, 16:3:1-3, 15f).

Moreover, our reluctance to work for social justice together with individual salvation is challenged by the fact that the people of God are chosen to be the means by which the whole world will find its blessing and fulfilment. This means that our freedom does not lie in our ability to choose what is convenient and congenial for us, but rather in God's purpose for us. Our election does not mean that we are separated from the world and can escape into a religious ghetto, but rather that we are sent into a deeper relationship with the

world through our relationship to Him 'Whose Will it is that all men should find salvation' I Tim. 2:4). At its profoundest level our election is a mandate to enter more deeply into the suffering and disorder of the world to risk all for Christ and to accept if necessary the world's rejection and wrath (cf. Matt. 5:10f). It is within this context that the Church discovers the true peace and strength of her Lord (cf. John 16:33).

Pietism and the Kingdom of God

We are deeply conscious of the dangers of an unbalanced Christian faith and life. Piety or spiritual devotion is a necessary element in the life of the Church, but when this element results in an unbalanced stress on the individualistic and inward aspects of devotion *at the expense of Christian involvement and action in society* it becomes a false pietism that hinders the mission of the Church in the world. On the other hand while involvement and social concern are equally necessary parts of Christianity, they too, can degenerate into an activism that loses any specifically Christian motivation, insight or direction. Each of these one-sided approaches is a form of escapism and is equally disastrous for mission.

It is possible to make a distinction between traditional pietism and pragmatic pietism. Traditional pietism believes that Christianity has primarily to do with the conversion and sanctification of the individual, and thus provided an important stimulus to the great missionary movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. While primarily evangelistic in character the educational and medical consensus of these movements produced some of the greatest institutions in the countries to which the missionaries went. There is a long tradition behind this approach and it has adherents in most churches. It finds its roots in the unworldly mysticism of the Middle Ages and received fresh impetus at the time of the Enlightenment as a movement away from the current dead and spiritual inwardness. Theologically it is subjective, ethically it is individualistic, and there is the danger of a dichotomy between the personal and the social.

Pragmatic pietism has no theological reasoning behind it, and to use the word pietism in relation to the Christians who practise it represents a debasing of the concept which does an injustice to those truly godly people who *because* of their godliness are deeply committed to social reform. However, the term 'pietist' is commonly used in connection with people who use it as an escape from social responsibility, and we must therefore examine the phenomenon. It is then the 'pietism' of those who because they do not desire to become personally involved in social and political issues as Christians, resort to a wholly inward and individualistic interpretation of Christianity. It is thus a matter of convenience rather than primary conviction for very often its

adherents are persons deeply involved in the life of the world and society in not specifically Christian ways. It is an escape mechanism to enable them to avoid making a stand on issues when this threatens to be costly, a stand, indeed, which may mean an estrangement between them and their social peers. Thus it becomes a subtle form of hypocrisy! It is this pragmatic pietism which so often seeks to render ineffective the prophetic task of the Church and role of the ministry. It is this pietism which tells preachers to stop 'preaching politics' and preach 'the Word of God' - forgetting that the Word of God has very direct things to say also to political, social and national matters!

The Biblical teaching on the Kingdom of God is a direct contradiction of this false pietism. The God of the Scriptures is the Creator and Ruler of the whole world - the earth belongs to Him (cf. Exodus 9:29; Psalm 24:1; I Cor. 10:26). With the coming of Christ this rule becomes manifested in the life of those who repent and believe the Gospel (cf. Mark 1:15). It commits them to pray 'Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as in heaven' (Matt. 6:10). Thus while it is true that the Kingdom is always to be understood as an eschatological event, that is, something which will be fully realised only at the 'end of the ages', the Gospel calls the Church to live and witness to the reality of the Kingdom here and now already amidst the social realities of daily life.

Social concern and action are also rooted in the commandment of Jesus Christ: 'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Matt. 22:39). This commandment calls us beyond the merely individualistic and inward to a concern and compassion for those in need. Jesus makes this plain in the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). Love for the neighbour and for those in need is not just a pious feeling: it is a concrete active expression of concern (cf. John 15:13; Amos 2:14-17). Jesus says that such love, together with love for God, sums up the Law and the Prophets (Matt. 22:40) and so makes clear that social justice and righteousness are involved. Indeed, it is very difficult to separate love from working for justice if the 'neighbour' we are called to love is the victim of injustice. We recall the prophecies of Amos and in particular his indictment against religious devotion which was oblivious to *social* righteousness:

*I hate, I spurn your pilgrim-feasts;
I will not delight in your sacred ceremonies
When you present your sacrifices and offerings
I will not accept them,
Nor look on the buffaloes of your shared offerings.
Spare me the sound of your songs;
I cannot endure the music of your lutes.
Let justice roll on like a river
and righteousness like an overflowing stream'*

(Amos 5:21 cf. Matt. 23:15, 23f).

Pragmatic pietism is an un-Biblical form of escapism that reduces the impact of the Gospel on the life of the world. A Christianity which does not express love for God in concrete love for man in his social situation becomes a pseudo-Christianity which gives religious sanction to our basic selfishness. It provides a culturally acceptable diversion for energies which should be spent on working for social righteousness and reduces to a very narrow limit the range of truth for which Christians should be concerned. It posits a theologically intolerable division between the 'Creator of the World' and the 'Saviour of Souls'.

Mission certainly includes personal evangelism, but personal evangelism is not the sum total of mission. Rather we must see mission in terms of the total mission of Christ Himself, who came 'to announce good news to the poor, to proclaim release for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind; to let broken victims go free'. (Luke 4:18). Any concept of the mission which excludes these dimensions is biblically defective.

Clericalism and the People of God

By clericalism we mean the tendency whether it be conscious or unconscious, to equate the Church with its professional or ordained ministers. A tendency which is discernible to some extent in all Churches with a professional ministry. Laymen often see the role of the minister merely in terms of Sunday worship, and a particular form of verbal 'witnessing'; as a concern for individual and family morality; and the maintenance of the Church as an institution. Because they understand the ministers' role as the Christian role par excellence they seek to emulate him in these terms themselves. Such a narrow conception of their Christian role often causes laymen to make a dichotomy between their Church life and the other areas of their life, such as their work situation, their social relations or their political attitudes. The minister is often unable to speak about the layman's world since the Christianity he represents seems wholly irrelevant to it.

The minister's professional status and education usually removes him from the day-to-day conditions in which most laymen work, and unless he tries to take the layman's situation seriously his advice is apt to be generalised and only vaguely helpful. Thus in a clericalised Church the layman is likely to feel that the kind of questions faced, for instance, by Spro-cas, are at best secondary and at worst wholly unrelated to the Christian life.

The life of a clericalised Church will therefore be shaped largely by the strengths, weaknesses and limitations of its ordained ministers. If they are not concerned with social justice the church or congregation they serve will concentrate on matters of individual behaviour and may easily ignore the problems of social righteousness. Because the Church's image itself suggests that its work is to do what the minister does, anything beyond this is seen at best as

an optional extra and at worst, as a threat to use the Church as an organisation for social change. Indeed, church life has become so clericalised in certain instances that many people think of the life of the Church as worship, sacraments and pastoral care and assume it to be totally unrelated to secular life and concerns of the world.

Some churches have realised the need for fuller lay participation in their life. Unfortunately, in many instances, this perception that the Church *is* more than its ordained ministers has not led to a correct understanding of the role of the layman but rather has incorporated willing laymen into the life of the organisation as assistants to the professional clergy. This very often requires a great deal of time, energy and imagination on the part of laymen and produces some very desirable and valuable results. But it can have the effect of diverting Christian people's concern into the 'safe' area of the Church and away from the areas where the battles for truth and righteousness are being more demandingly fought in the world outside, away from the layman's own territory, the world he knows best. Laymen do have an important contribution to make to the functioning of the life of the Church within its structure. They have specific gifts and talents in which they are trained and these need to be used in the mission of the Church. However, the layman's role must not be allowed to degenerate into that of a mere assistant to the ordained minister. Indeed, because laymen as a result of general clericalisation have such a narrow idea of their church's role, a church controlled by laymen may even be worse than a church that is 'priest-controlled', unless they have been trained to think otherwise.

The word 'layman' comes from the Greek word *laos* (people) which in the New Testament stands specifically for the people of God. This means that the layman is not an uninitiated passenger in the life of the Church but belongs in his own right to the People of God, with all the implications of privilege and responsibility. Ministry in the New Testament is of many different kinds; it is certainly not confined to professional clergy or to the kind of work which we may regard as appropriate for the clergy. On the contrary, ministry in the New Testament refers to the whole ministry of the people of God in the world, in which all members act as 'leaven' or 'salt'. St. Paul makes this clear in his first letter to the Corinthians: 'but now you are Christ's Body, and each of you a limb or organ of it. Within our community God has appointed, in the first place apostles, in the second place prophets, thirdly teachers; then miracle-workers, then those who have gifts of healing, or ability to help others or power to guide them or the gift of ecstatic utterances of various kinds'. (12:27f).

One of the Church's ministries is the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments. Paul indicates the role of those called to this kind of ministry: 'these were His gifts: some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some

pastors and teachers, to equip God's people for work in His Service, to the building up of the body of Christ'. (Ephesians 4:11f). In other words the task of the ordained minister is to enable all the members of the Church to fulfil their calling to serve Christ in the world. Only in this way does the Church grow both in depth and membership, that is, 'through the due activity of each part'. A confusion of roles at this point is disastrous for the Church, for, as we have seen, it creates the clericalised Church in which the whole of the People of God is not involved in the mission of the Church but instead the mission of the Church becomes the prerogative and the sole responsibility of professional clergymen. Many of the frustrations facing ordained ministers in the Church today would be overcome if they saw clearly the nature of their role in the life of the Church and if the lay-members of the Church allowed them to fulfil that role without at the same time having to fulfil the many other secondary roles expected of them.

The proper mission of the laymen is not to help the professional minister to do his job but to witness to the transforming power of Christ in human and social life and thereby to be a sign of God's reconciling work. In this way the layman participates in God's transformation of society through his profession or business, or at his craftsman's bench; indeed, it may involve him in local government, politics and other areas of life in which he is specifically trained and where he can wield a special influence. This work is the layman's mission although he may *also* give time to the administration of a church.

Conclusion

The life of the Church as the worshipping community of Jesus Christ cannot be separated from the mission to which the Church is called, and which is discharged through worship, fellowship, proclamation, mutual care and concern.

The *structure* of the Church is the form in which its life and mission in the world is arranged. The basic principles of this structure should be determined by the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ in the world as revealed in Scripture so that the structure of the Church may not hinder mission, but enable mission. Structures are also a result of planning, constitutional procedures and tradition, for the Church is a historical community of people living in particular situations and at particular times. But these factors which inevitably determine structure must always be examined and judged in terms of Scripture. Thus the problem of structure lies deeper than organisation. It is a matter of faith and obedience - for structures can be heretical if they prevent the Church from being the Church in the world. Structures can in fact reinforce the political, social and cultural values of society even when these are alien to Christian faith - whereas they should challenge such values and give concrete expression to an alternative way of life.

In common with the Church in many parts of the world today, the Church in South Africa is in a period of structural crisis, even though the crisis may be unacknowledged. Indeed this lack of acknowledgement is a very serious aspect of the crisis. An essential mark of the true Church is its willingness and ability to examine itself to see whether or not it is being faithful to the Gospel, for the Church cannot be the Church unless it is always in process of reformation (Matt. 5:13; I Peter 4:17; II Corinthians 13:5). This whole study has been directed towards this process of reformation.

Chapter Four

RECOMMENDATIONS

ALL TOO OFTEN in the past the Church has regarded recommendations and resolutions as a sufficient response to the needs of men in Church and Society. Such recommendations then have merely a soporific effect on the Church's conscience. A faith which does not issue in action is like a corpse (James 11:26). So the following recommendations, or any mere approval given to them, will be of no use without setting up programmes to put them into effect.

The recommendations fall into two categories: General and Particular. The General recommendations deal with more basic issues. In making these recommendations, the Commission acknowledges that some churches have already begun implementing similar proposals which they themselves have formulated with regard to their own life, structures, and government.

GENERAL

1. Awareness

The Church in South Africa is faced not simply with political and social issues but with a crisis of faith. It is of the utmost importance for it to realise this. Both church leaders and church people as a whole are compelled to ask:

- (i) 'Do I indeed believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?
- (ii) Do I give my first loyalty to Him?

- (iii) Am I really committed to the faith that any man who confesses Jesus Christ as Lord experiences His gracious acceptance and that all men are loved by Him without qualification of racial origin or culture and thereby are called to mutual acceptance, love and unity?
- (iv) Am I really committed to the Church's becoming the kind of community which will bear witness to this Lord in the world?

Answering yes to these questions means accepting searching demands on the Church. We may have to learn afresh what is meant by the words to St. Paul 'My grace is sufficient for thee. My strength is made perfect in weakness'. We will have to be prepared to accept rejection and apparent failure, powerlessness, as the world perceives it, and perhaps poverty. These are, of course, marks of the Lord Jesus Christ. We may have to perceive afresh that faith means depending on God's grace alone rather than on our investments in ecclesiastical status, numbers of adherents and financial resources. Unless we have the liberty that such a faith provides, we will not be able to demonstrate that we do indeed believe that Christ reigns.

Our first recommendation, therefore, is quite simply that the Church recognise with the utmost clarity that what is at stake in South Africa today is nothing less than its own authenticity as the Church of God.

2. Confession and Discipline

We should take seriously the point that heresy in action needs to be as clearly denounced as heresy in doctrine. The churches, especially those with a confessional tradition, should be persuaded to draw up confessions of faith or theological declarations which state clearly their position on the racial issue. If possible the Churches should together draw up and commit themselves to an ecumenical statement. (The Message to the People of South Africa and the subsequent discussion about it could be used as resource material for this). The need for a confessional symbol concerning this critical area of Church life in South Africa is urgent. It should then be made quite clear to all prospective members of the Church that they are necessarily committing themselves to what such a confession or statement stands for.

3. Education

The sporadic and piecemeal efforts which have been made to liberate

Christians from racial prejudice must be intensified, co-ordinated and expanded. A substantial and, if possible, ecumenically co-ordinated or sponsored programme of education in attitudes which reflect faith in the Gospel of reconciliation is an urgent necessity.

In present circumstances, multi-racial contact may seem to produce meagre results. This is partly due to the inability of many African and Coloured and Asiatic Christians, who have been conditioned by past paternalism in the Church, as well as in society, to say with frankness what they think. Further many articulate black Christians are no longer prepared to meet with white Christians. A process of education in the meaning of reconciliation in Christ and in mutual acceptance is urgently needed therefore for persons of all racial groups within the Church. The Church is still in a unique position to promote inter-racial contact, communication and dialogue on a large scale and should make effective use of its opportunities.

It must be frankly acknowledged, however, that because whites most often exercise the power within both the Church and society and because for this reason their attitudes have more far-reaching consequences, the main thrust of education for attitudinal change should be focussed on them. Education for healthy inter-group attitudes should be systematically planned. Sunday schools and confirmation classes as well as adult education should be designed to teach through experience as well as by admonition and theological concepts.

If, however, the Church is to be a faithful witness and an effective means to assist in the achievement of a more just social order it must organise its own life and government consistently with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. An immediate and urgent aim must therefore be the removal of all forms of racialism from the institutional structure of the Church.

The training of candidates for the ministry largely determines the nature of the Church of the future. It is of particular importance therefore that these candidates be thoroughly grounded in the relationship between Christ and the world and, in particular, in the relevance of the Gospel to racial issues. This will enable ministers of the Gospel to realise their obligations to relate their teaching and preaching directly and relevantly to social and political issues. The Church should make determined efforts to train men of all race groups for the ministry together. If training together at Seminary and or university level is made impossible by the State, consideration should be given to other methods of training.

4. Leadership

A deliberate and immediate policy of education for leadership in church

positions among African, Coloured and Asiatic Christians must be embarked on and a substantial part of the Church's resources should be devoted to such theological students being given opportunities for furthering their education to enable them to accept positions of leadership in every area of the life of the Church.

In order to achieve a racially balanced leadership in the Church it is necessary, not only that white Christians be prepared to share leadership, but also that some should responsibly relinquish positions of leadership and all should accept that in churches where black Christians predominate the leadership should reflect this. Church structures, government and leadership should be consciously adapted to this expectation. Moreover there must be a new willingness to accept and incorporate in the life of the church specifically African and Coloured and Asiatic contributions to the common life.

5. Synodical Decisions

The Church must find means to implement resolutions which do not conform to dominant social norms and attitudes. This will involve a careful scrutiny of power structures in the Church and a willingness to make them more representative and more effective. Any serious programme of implementation must have time limits built into it.

Important resolutions which have been consigned to the past may be resurrected, strategies of implementation worked out, realistic time limits decided upon and machinery for review of progress set up by Synods and Assemblies.

6. Ecumenical Action

As long as the Church is gravely divided denominationally its stand for acceptance and unity between the races is gravely weakened both in principle and in practice. For this reason the attempt to give expression to the unity which is Christ's gift to the Church is of fundamental importance to the Church's witness with regard to race issues in South Africa. A wide area of ecumenical action is open to Christians. The Church's educational departments could design and carry out many programmes in common. Experiments with ecumenical congregations can be embarked on. There are many ecumenical opportunities in the area of youth fellowships, Bible study groups and publications and so on. But even more important are opportunities to seek together to meet the needs of the society which we share and for which we are responsible. This can be done by Christians taking

seriously and corporately their responsibility for social change where unjust laws deprive their fellowmen of opportunities enjoyed by others.

Because the Church's concern for people cannot be limited to the life of the Church alone, all who teach within the Church should clearly stress the Christian's social responsibility. Teaching is not sufficient, however. Christians should together contribute money and work for welfare organisations which relieve poverty and malnutrition and actively support programmes and political organisations which seek a more just society. There should, for example, be support for Spro-cas 2 (the Special Project for Christian Action in Society).

The Church can become a catalyst for wholesome social change when it is responsive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. It needs moreover to perceive the catholicity of Christ's mission in the world and to move forward to participate in it on an ecumenical basis. The Church still needs to commit itself to doing together all those things which conscience does not oblige Christians to do apart. At present it lacks both the will and the machinery to act in this way.

PARTICULAR

We need to find appropriate symbolic actions which contain within themselves the germ of our complex situation and demonstrate the Christian response. We suggest a few actions of this kind which could be taken.

1. Stipends

We recommend that each denomination embarks on a programme of equalisation aiming at equal salary scales for ministers of all races by 1975.

2. Family Day

All Churches are opposed to migrant labour with its catastrophic breakdown of morals in general and of family life in particular. We recommend that Family Day be used to inform congregations about the effects of migrant labour and that Africans be invited to speak to their white fellow Christians on this theme on Family Day.

3. Group Areas

Some Churches are registered as white for freehold and leasehold purposes

although the majority of their members are African, Coloured and Asian. We recommend that such Churches no longer pursue the legal fiction of being racial churches. They should together refuse to describe themselves in legal documents as White or African or Coloured. To accept such designations is a denial of their nature as the Catholic Church of God.

4. Membership

Every congregation should have a clearly visible notice board announcing that persons of all races who are Christians are welcome to become members and the congregations should be led to accept this as a real possibility.

5. Church buildings

The churches spend a disproportionate amount of money on buildings. We recommend that building projects be ecumenical and multi-functional in design. They should be of service to the community for example, as crèches, nursery schools and community centres. This would make more money available for community development.

6. General Education

What is spent by the state on African education is far less per capita than that devoted to the education of white children. If more adequate provision is made for the former our income tax must be increased. We propose that Church members now tax themselves to provide bursaries and funds for additional teachers and classrooms in Community schools. Such monies may be channelled through the churches or various reliable bursary funds (e.g. S.A. Institute of Race Relations or the South African Council of Churches).

7. Private Schools

Churches should review their relationship with schools with a Church foundation which are unwilling to accept pupils from any but the white group. (See Chapter 6 of *Education Beyond Apartheid*, the report of the Sprocas Education Commission).

8. Investments

We recommend that churches re-examine the use they make of money (when they offer tenders and award contracts, where they invest or with whom they have mortgages, and through whom their schools buy books and so on) with a view to securing the maximum benefit for all members of the community, rather than merely making the best deal for themselves.

9. Ecumenical Communities

Ecumenical communities in which Christians worship together and attempt to live out the values the Church preaches should be encouraged by Church authorities.

10. Simplicity of Life

In view of the poverty of a large part of the population of our country, simplicity of life should be a hallmark of a Christian. Church leaders should ensure that symbols of their office and their style of leadership do not emphasise status and power, but are consistent with the life and authority of the Son of Man.

11. Symbolic Acts

Christians should use their imagination and skill in planning symbolic acts of resistance to what is false or unjust in the life of the community or in the life of the Church. Perception is needed to see where such thrusts can produce an effect and wit, patience and courage must be exercised in their execution.

12. Conscientious Objection

The churches must consider conscientious objection both in terms of the Christian's attitude to engaging in armed conflict and also to defending a social order which does violence to the lives of their fellow men. Where Christians refuse to take up arms on grounds of conscience the Church should continue to support them with its prayers and fellowship.

The Commission also draws the attention of churches to the recommendations made in the other Spro-cas reports, and in particular to those addressed to the churches in *Power, Privilege and Poverty*, the report of the Spro-cas Economics Commission.

Appendix One

NEW SUMMARY OF THE MESSAGE

1. The Gospel of Jesus Christ

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the good news that in Christ God has broken down the walls of division between God and man, and thus also between man and man (1). By the death and resurrection of Christ, God has triumphed over the forces that threaten to isolate and destroy man. Through faith men are being reconciled to God as their Father and thus to each other as brothers in one family (2). Though of different races and groups they are being called into corporate, visible unity (3). Therefore differences of ancestry, race, nationality, language, culture and class can claim no right to be barriers which must keep men apart from each other.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ declares that God is love (4). If God is love, the will to be separate (that is to keep apart) is opposite to God. Separation from God and each other is the supreme threat and danger that Christ died to overcome. Therefore the Gospel calls us to love the brethren - not only the members of our own race group or the people with whom we may choose to associate on grounds of culture or class, but every person God gives to us as our brother (5). And to reject the fellowship of any brother on the grounds of natural distinction is to despise God's gift and to reject Christ (6).

The Gospel of Jesus Christ declares that God is the Master of this world and the Lord over all history, so that it is to Him alone that we owe our primary commitment and obedience (7). Therefore we do not owe this to anyone else or to any group or section of humanity.

The Gospel concerns the individual and his salvation but not only the individual. For by the Blood of the Cross God reconciled Himself with not only the individual but the whole universe, (8) and at the Coming of Christ He will complete its redemption or renewal (9) and the unity of all things in Him (10).

Similarly the Gospel does not concern only the Church. For just as Christ is the Head of the Church so He is also sovereign over all the universe (11) and His Gospel summons the whole world to salvation and obedience (12). Therefore no aspect of human existence, whether individual or social, spiritual or corporate, private or political, ecclesiastical or cultural, is free from the claims and demands of the Gospel of Christ.

This Gospel proclaims the reign of God already inaugurated in Jesus Christ and demands our faith and obedience now. God's work of reconciliation does not wait for a distant heaven but has already been done in Christ (13). Therefore our task as Christians is to witness to it and work for its realisation here and now, in this world (14).

2. Our Situation

In our country at this time a policy of racial separation is being enforced with increasing rigidity in more and more aspects of life - political, economic, social, educational and even religious.

According to the Christian Gospel we find our primary identity in association with Christ and with each other, but according to the ideology of apartheid, we find our essential 'identity' (15) in racial distinction and dissociation from one another and therefore our separate racial identity must be preserved at all costs. The Gospel proclaims that the most significant features of a man are those which enable him to be a disciple of Christ - his freedom to respond to love, to choose, to serve his fellowmen - but in South Africa every one is expected to believe that a man's racial identity is the most important thing about him. It is this that has to decide where he can live, whom he can marry, what work he can do, what education he can get, whose hospitality he can accept, where he can get medical treatment, where he can be buried - and the answer to multitudes of other questions. Thus the racial appearance men happen to inherit is being exalted above their common humanity as all-important, as what determines their lives finally. This means a rejection of their humanity and a denial of the central statements of the Gospel.

In practice apartheid results in tragic insecurity afflicting those whose racial classification is in doubt and drastic discrimination against those who do not have the 'right' classification. It severely restricts the ability of Christian brothers to know and to serve each other, or even give each other simple hospitality. It thus limits obedience to the Gospel's command to love one's

neighbour as oneself. It rejects as undesirable the reconciliation and fellowship which God gives us. It thus calls good evil. It reinforces the divisions which the Holy Spirit calls us to overcome. It is thus a form of resistance to the Holy Spirit.

Moreover, whatever the theory, the practice of 'separate development' depends on the maintenance of white supremacy. It is thus rooted in and dependent on suppression, the suppression of all other groups.

The policy of separate development is seen by many white South Africans not merely as a temporary political policy but as the permanent will of God, the necessary form of Christian obedience for this country. It is being put forward in the name of Christianity. Attempts have been made to support racial separation from Scripture. For instance, it is said to be an 'order of creation' which was divinely confirmed at the Tower of Babel and again at Pentecost and thus somehow becomes a commandment. But the Bible's story of creation says nothing about the different races, and the story of Babel concerns languages not races. Moreover the event of Pentecost asserted and showed the power of the Holy Spirit to draw men into one community of disciples in spite of differences of language and culture and is thus the way by which the disunity of Babel is healed. The first Christians, as Jews and Gentiles, found that God was creating a new community in which differences of race, nation, culture, language and tradition no longer had power to keep men separate.

Thus the ideology of apartheid calls to its support a heretical interpretation of Scripture and implies in the end that we must believe in a different novel gospel (16). It offers also a 'salvation', (17) namely, the political salvation or security of our society through the way of separation. But the Christian Gospel denies that either the individual or society can be saved through any programme which is hostile to God's purpose of reconciliation and unity. Together with the hardships which derive from its implementation apartheid is thus hostile to true Christianity and defended in the name of Christianity can serve only to keep people away from the true knowledge of Christ. Therefore the Church must enable all our people to distinguish between this false novel gospel and the true eternal Gospel of Jesus Christ.

3. The Church and the State

People should be able to see the Gospel of Christ expressed above all in the Church. They should be able to see the power of God changing hostility into love and creating an inclusive fellowship of brothers. We are grateful for where these signs of God's grace do appear in the life of the Church. But even in the Church there is conformity to the practices of racial separation; and the measure of this conformity is the measure to which the Church abandons its

obedience to Christ, breaks the links between itself and the Kingdom of God and ceases to be the Church of Jesus Christ. (Therefore we in the Church most of all need to repent).

To be realistic (especially as few of us are faithful and obedient Christians) the State must take pragmatic account of the divisions between men and between groups of men in proposing any scheme for the ordering of our relationships. But even the state must see men's wish to divide into permanently separate groups as the essentially sinful element it is. It may not regard the differences or divisions between men as of ultimate significance or make separation between them the ultimate ideal (18). If it does it stands in opposition to Christ and the reconciliation made for us in Him. This is why the advocates of the policy of apartheid inevitably are found opposed to the Church when it seeks to live according to the Gospel and show that God has reconciled and united us. A thorough policy of racial separation is threatened by any demonstration of the reality of reconciliation and therefore in the end must require an attack on the Church.

4. Our Loyalty and Obedience

The Gospel of Jesus Christ declares that all authority is given by Christ. Christians betray their calling if they give their highest loyalty which is due to Him, to any group or tradition, especially where that group is demanding self-assertion or the preservation of its separate 'identity' at the expense of other groups. Christ is Lord, and South Africa is part of His world and under His judgment. If we seek to reconcile Christianity with 'the South African way of life' (or any of life) we allow an idol to take the place of Christ. Rather, we confess that our duty is to live in accordance with the Christian understanding of man and community, even when this is contrary to the customs or laws of our country.

So we wish to put to every Christian in this country the question we have to face every day: To whom or what do you give your primary commitment, your first loyalty? To a sub-section of mankind, an ethnic group, a human tradition, a political idea? Or to Christ?

May God enable us to be faithful to Jesus Christ.

FOOTNOTES

1. Eph. 2:14ff.
2. Matt. 23:9; Gal. 4:4ff; Eph. 2:16; 1 Jn. 4:20.

3. I Cor. 12:12-26; Col. 3:11; Gal. 3:28; 2:11ff; Jn. 17:20-23.
4. I Jn. 4:8-16.
5. I Jn. 4:7-21; Jn. 13:34f.
6. Mt. 25:40, 45.
7. Ex. 20:1-3; Mk. 12:29f; Mt. 6:24.
8. Col. 1:20; II Cor. 5:19.
9. Rom. 8:18-24, Acts 3:21, Rev. 21:1-5, cf. Isa. 11:1-9, 65:17, 66:22.
10. Eph. 1:10.
11. Col. 1:15-18, Eph. 1:20-22, I Pet. 3:22.
12. Rom. 16-26.
13. Jn. 19-30.
14. II Cor. 6:2, Heb. 3:15.
15. This is a technical term in the ideology of apartheid.
16. Cf. Gal. 1:6.
17. Apologists for apartheid themselves use this term.
18. In the words of Dr Verwoerd, for instance, 'complete separation' is as such 'the ideal'.

Appendix Two

THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

WHAT SHALL we say in response to the division in the Church in South Africa? The first thing that is necessary is to clarify our understanding of the nature and purpose of the Church.

The Church is in the first place a divine institution. Therefore its purpose must be understood not in terms of man, or of human hopes, plans, cultures, prejudices or pride, but in terms of *God's purpose*. And God's purpose concerns the world. Not the Church but the world is the end point of God's saving activity. For He is not satisfied with the few already gathered into the Church but wills 'that all men should find salvation' (1 Tim. 2:4). Therefore His purpose with the Church is that it should bear *witness* of His salvation to the world (Acts 1:8). That is, God's intention in bringing the Church into existence is that it might be the sign and the herald of the reconciliation which He has accomplished in Jesus Christ. This reconciliation is between God and man but therefore and immediately also between man and man.

The Church is in the second place a human institution. It exists in history and in society. It is made up of men. It is for this reason that it fulfils the divine intention only partially and brokenly. It constantly subverts and contradicts the divine intention by subordinating it to human intentions and aims. But it thereby sins against its own *raison d'être*. 'There is no greater sinner than the Christian Church' (Luther).

If God's will for the Church is that it should be a sign and herald of the reconciliation He has accomplished in Jesus Christ this means that it must exhibit that reconciliation in its own life as well as proclaim it in word. It is to be itself a 'light for all the world'. Its own life is to be 'salt to the world' (Matt.

5:13f). If it merely speaks about this reconciliation and does not realise it in its own being and life it becomes a hypocritical witness and therefore ineffective and useless in terms of God's purpose for it, a light which has been put out, salt which has lost its savour.

The Church is purposed and called by God to be a witness wherever it is in the world. That is, it is always in a missionary situation. But the Church has been most aware of being in this situation in the so-called 'mission fields' of Africa and Asia. For this reason it is most aware in these areas of its failure to be an effective witness to the Gospel of reconciliation so long as it is a divided, that is, unreconciled, Church itself. That is why 'the ecumenical movement has been a by-product of the missionary movement.

It should also be pointed out from a purely practical point of view that the division of the Church into denominations results in an *immense waste* of its resources of manpower and money because the work of the denominations overlaps so much. Tied down in areas to which they have committed money and resources, the divided Churches lack the freedom and resources to plan strategically for the development of work in new areas and in terms of special ministries (such as the ministry to industry, mining compounds etc.). In this situation it is particularly the poorer section of the population which suffer.

The idea that *the Church*, and therefore its attributes, including its unity, is essentially invisible and not to be visibly realised is ultimately unbiblical. It became so powerful in the Protestant Church largely through the inroads that Pietism made into it, as well as through the individualism of the Enlightenment. Ultimately this idea implies that the Church is essentially an invisible fellowship of spirits. It drives a wedge between the essential, invisible Church and what the manifest, visible Church is and ought to be, so that the relationship between the two becomes extremely tenuous and they threaten to become, as it were, two Churches instead of the one.

It is true that in Luther passages can be found in which he played down the external aspect of the Church, including its visible unity. For instance, he wrote, 'The essence, life and nature of the Church is not a bodily assembly but an assembly of hearts in one faith'. But Luther wrote such things in the polemics of his reaction to the onesided emphasis on the institutional aspect of the visible Church which his Roman Catholic opponents made. In this reaction, as we have seen, Luther stressed the more vertical aspect of the Church in terms of the Word of God (and the Sacraments). But Luther's definition of the Church does also imply the horizontal aspect of the Church as a continuing society in which the Word is preached and the Sacraments are administered, an aspect which is needed to complement the exclusive stress on the vertical which caused many later Protestants to devalue the unity of that society. Luther himself was extremely reluctant to break the unity of the Church and it needs to be pointed out that in fact he did not leave the Roman

Church but was excommunicated from it. He also went to great lengths to bring about union with the Hussites and went to the Marsburg Colloquy in the hope of reconciliation with the Reformed Church of Zwingli.

Moreover, it is quite erroneous to appeal to Augustine and Calvin and their idea of the invisible Church as so many anti-ecumenists in South Africa do. It is true that both Augustine and Calvin spoke of the visible and the invisible Church but for them these were merely two aspects of one and the same things (the Church as we see it and the Church as God sees it) rather than, as it were, two Churches, an ideal (in the platonic sense) and a visible (cf. Inst. IV (i) 7). Certainly for neither of them did this doctrine imply that the visible union of the Church was unimportant. Augustine held that there is no just necessity for dividing the Church and that schism is 'a most horrible sacrilege' which surpasses all crimes (c. Ep. Parmen. II, 25; c. Litt. Petil. II, 221). Similarly Calvin wrote to Archbishop Cranmer, 'It must be counted among the worst evils of our epoch that the Churches are thus rent apart from one another' (CR 14,3114,313ff). For this reason Calvin was filled with the vision of a united world-wide Church and regarded it as his mission to promote this. (He sought a less centralised and rigid structural unity than that of the medieval Church). He never ceased striving to bring about unity between the Reformed and Lutheran Churches and wished to go to Lambeth to accomplish the same with the Church of England. But he aimed beyond a reunion of Protestantism. He attended several colloquys with the Roman Catholics and wished to meet with the prelates in France in 1561 to discuss church reunion. He even proposed a 'universal council' of Protestants and Roman Catholics from the countries of Europe to iron out their differences and 'unite all Christendom'. Moreover Calvin did not insist on a rigid conformity in doctrine, liturgy or polity. He was willing to allow considerable diversity in the proposed union. Only concerning the fundamental doctrines of the faith should there be agreement for union to be possible (Inst. IV (i) 12).

Behind this attitude lies the fact that for Calvin the Church was essentially not an invisible fellowship of spirits but a body, the Body of Christ. And 'Since He (Christ) has but one body of which he makes us participants, by this participation we too must necessarily be made all together one body ...: we cannot have discord or division with our brothers without disagreeing with, and being divided from, Jesus Christ' (Inst. IV. (xvii) 38).

This statement points to the christological dimension and specifically to *the incarnation* as the key to this problem. For just as the concept of the Church and its attributes as being invisible and needing no visible realisation is to be attributed partly to neoplatonic ideas so it was these same ideas which were responsible also for docetism, the heresy that Christ did not come in a body of flesh but in spirit only. If we take seriously the true humanity of Jesus Christ we must take seriously the visible existence of his community in the world. As

surely as Jesus Christ was incarnate and visible, the Church is also, for the Word made flesh creates his community in his own image and likeness, as his own Body. A docetism of the Church is just as wrong as a christological docetism. The Church can follow Jesus Christ, it can be a witness to the Gospel, only in so far as it is like Him, the Supreme Witness, visible in the world. It can witness to His salvation and reconciliation only in so far as it makes them as visible as He was in the world.

It is true that the Church is never a perfect witness, and the fact that it is 'one holy, catholic and apostolic' is always invisible to some extent except to the faith which believes that it is one and holy in Christ, i.e. that He bestows these attributes upon it in spite of its own failure to exhibit them. This makes the unity of the Church analogous to, indeed part of, its *justification and sanctification*. For the invisible unity of the Church in Jesus Christ and its visible unity stand in the same relation to each other as the righteousness imputed to the Church, or the individual Christian, by grace through faith (justification) and the righteousness which they live out in the world in obedience to God's will and command (sanctification). These are not two different righteousnesses: the second is the living out, the obedient realisation of the first. In the same way the Church is commanded to live out visibly its unity in Christ. The extent to which this unity remains invisible is due to sin and is a contravention of God's command and Christ's prayer. Division is possible only because sin is possible. And therefore to insist that visible unity in this world is not necessary is antinomian, i.e. implies that we do not need to obey God's commands.

The disunity of the Church denies *the unity of God*. If there is only one God how can He have instituted many Churches each of which claims that it alone knows the real truth about Him? A plurality of Churches, each in rivalry against, or opposition to, one another implies in the end a plurality of gods. Instead of witnessing to the unity and uniqueness of the one Triune God it implies that there are many spirits, many lords, many gods. Hence Christ in His last prayer with His disciples prays that they and all who come to believe in Him will be perfectly united as the Father and the Son are and so be a witness of this divine unity to the world (John 17:11, 20-23).

In conclusion we do affirm that many of the divisions in the Church originated out of a concern for its renewal on grounds that were doctrinally and historically justified. However, this does not alter the facts that the inability of the parent Churches to accept the need for reformation and sometimes the intransigence of the reformers created the divisions and that these are a scandal against and a denial of the nature of the Church and the Gospel it seeks to proclaim. All true Christians should labour with their whole heart to overcome every separation between them. This does not mean that they must avoid the real problems of unity by cheap and therefore ultimately hypo-

critical alliances or unions based on the kind of modern 'tolerance' which owes more to the Enlightenment than to the Gospel itself. We must not be disloyal to the true insights that we have been given in our several confessions in the past. We must take our past seriously but on its basis we must join together in a common struggle with the questions as we seek to subject ourselves anew to Jesus Christ and overcome our divisions on the basis of being 'firmly joined in unity of mind and thought' (1 Cor. 1:10), as the Scriptures command us. For the unity of the Church is to be sought first of all in agreement about the Gospel. If we can find this unity of 'mind and thought' in regard to the fundamental doctrines of our faith - and we must - that is sufficient, as far as doctrinal agreement is concerned, for us to commit ourselves to structural or organic union with one another.

Appendix Three

BIBLICAL ARGUMENTS ON THE RACE ISSUE

LOOKING FIRST of all at the Old Testament we see that the people of Israel were taught:

- (a) that they were the elect people of God; and
- (b) that they must not intermarry with the Gentile races or nations.

As the prophets made clear God meant these two principles to be understood in the sense that:

(a) God had chosen the people of Israel not because they were intrinsically different from, superior to or greater than the other peoples of the earth but purely on the grounds of his grace (e.g., Deut. 7:7f). For they were not different from others: their ancestor had been a mere wandering Aramean (Deut. 26:5). God regarded all the peoples of the earth equally (Amos 9:7), and the election of the Israelites meant not that they were to be dealt with more favourably but rather that they were more liable to be punished for their iniquities (Amos 3:1f). They were elected not because they merited it or even because they were to be favoured to the exclusion of the Gentiles but precisely in order that they might be the instrument through which God blessed the Gentiles. For Abraham was elected in order that through him all the families of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:3) and Israel in order that through him the darkness of the Gentiles might be dissipated in light (Isaiah 42:6).

(b) They were to count the purity of their *religion* as of supreme importance and to take any measures necessary to prevent its being compromised and dis-

torted by syncretism with the false religions of the heathen around them. It is clear that it is for *this* reason that intermarriage was in principle forbidden with the Gentile peoples (e.g., Ex. 34:15f, Deut. 7:3f, Neh. 13:26f, Mal. 2:11). Later, when this was lost sight of in the fiercely exclusivist nationalism which followed in the wake of certain steps taken by Ezra and Nehemiah, the Books of Ruth and Jonah stood as witnesses against nationalist exclusivism with the insight of true prophecy that the issue was fundamentally not that of race or people (or blood) but that of religion. Any person of any other race or people who embraced the worship of the true God like Ruth was to be welcomed into the people of Israel. Indeed Ruth and the Moabitess, as well as Tamar and Rahab the Canaanites before her, became in the providence of God the ancestors of David the great king of Israel. Rahab, by her betrayal of her own people in Jericho for which she was blessed, is the most dramatic symbol of the fact that faith in the true God destroys nationalism and makes even patriotism quite secondary and irrelevant. The greatest figure in the Old Testament, Moses, who was the great Lawgiver of Israel, himself married not someone from among his own people but a Midianite (Ex. 2:16f, Nu. 10:29), a Kenite (Jud. 1:16, 4:11) and a Cushite (Nu. 12:1). In fact it is possible that Cushite here means a black woman descended from the negroid people who inhabited the land South of Egypt: this would add ironic point to the fact that Miriam was stricken 'whiter than snow' with leprosy for her prejudice against the woman (12:9ff). At any rate she is punished for her prejudice against the mixed marriage, which God approves. Elsewhere in the Old Testament such blacks are mentioned as living in the midst of Israel without any thought that such integration is wrong (II Sam. 18:21, Jer. 38:7ff, 39:15ff).

Nevertheless, in spite of these examples and the warnings of their prophets, the Jews fundamentally misinterpreted these two principles. Their election they interpreted in nationalistic terms as meaning that God had favoured them not only above but to the exclusion of the Gentiles. The Jews were to be saved, the Gentiles were all to be damned in the end. The law against intermarriage they interpreted as a reinforcement of this nationalistic and racialistic principle. As they saw it there were fundamentally two races in the world: the Jews and the Gentiles (who were all lumped together), and between these a strict segregation was to be observed. Even from those who were of mixed race, i.e. of both Jewish and Gentile ancestry, like the Samaritans, the Jews segregated themselves.

Thus between the Jews and the Gentiles and Samaritans there was set up a system of rigid apartheid, which the Jews believed to be sanctioned by God. Because of this belief Jewish apartheid was even stricter and more rigid than is the South African variety. For instance, Gentiles and Samaritans were strictly segregated in the outer 'Court of the Gentiles' at the Temple in Jerusalem, the focus of Jewish worship. Any Gentile trespassing into the inner 'Court of

Israel' did so on pain of death. Gentiles and Samaritans were designated unclean and liable to cause impurity through contact. Contact with them was therefore to be avoided wherever possible. Mixed marriages with them were forbidden. The Jews refused even to eat food prepared by them.

When we turn to the New Testament we find a complete break with this nationalistic, racialistic apartheid of the Jews which was in one of its most *verkrampte* phases at the time, and a radical return to the prophetic tradition. The first thing we notice is that the Gospel goes out of its way to emphasise that the ancestry of Jesus included three Gentile women and Bathsheba, the Hittite's wife (Matt. 1:3, 5f). Jesus Himself repudiates the laws and taboos of Jewish apartheid. He asks a Samaritan woman for water (John 4:7, note v. 9). He actually goes to spend two days, eating and sleeping, with the Samaritans (4.40). He specifically chooses a Samaritan as a model of neighbourly love for the Jews, a neighbourly love which triumphs over all nationalism and apartheid (Luke 10:30-37 cf. also 17:11-19). He praises the faith of a Gentile above that of all Jews, and enters into his home (Matt. 8:5-10). He prophesies in response to the deputation of Greek Gentiles who come to Him that by his death and ascension He will draw all men across all boundaries to Himself and thus draw them together (John 12:20-33). For Jesus is Himself the new Adam who represents all mankind and in whose humanity, through His death and resurrection, reconciliation and redemption is accomplished for all men (Rom. 5:6-19, I Cor. 15:21f). Thus, even more than in the story of the first Adam the unity of all mankind, their unity in Christ, is accomplished and revealed as their fundamental condition rather than any natural diversity.

After Christ's death Peter, who still shares the idea 'that a Jew is forbidden by his religion to visit or associate with a man of another race' (Acts 10:28), is dramatically taught not to think of the Gentiles as unclean or any different from the Jews in God's eyes. He therefore goes into Cornelius' house to welcome him into the Church and shares a meal with him (Acts 10 especially v. 15, 11:3). Later this same issue caused a crisis in the racially mixed church at Antioch. The Jewish Christians were persuaded that they should revert to their traditional apartheid and segregate themselves from their Gentile fellow Christians (who of course would have been allowed to establish their own separate 'daughter' or 'mission' Church).

Even Peter wavers in the crisis - no doubt because he believes that 'the weakness of some' must be accommodated! But Paul stands up and denounces him with prophetic indignation. On the basis of the principle that 'there is neither Jew nor Greek ... for you are all one in Christ Jesus' (Gal. 3:38 RSV) he accuses Peter and the other Jewish Christians of abandoning the straight path of the true Gospel (2:14) and of wishing to build up again the Jewish law which segregated Jew from Gentile as though this were not a wall which had been torn down for everyone who accepted the Gospel (2:18). He

insists that the Gospel of justification by grace alone, through faith, posits all men as equal and identical in their standing before God, so that none may segregate themselves from others on the basis that any differences between them are more fundamental than their solidarity in sin and forgiveness. Whereas apartheid has been observed between Jews and Gentiles before it is now an essential of the Gospel that they sit and eat around the same table in visible unity (2:12)! An invisible unity is not enough. Paul is therefore asserting precisely the opposite to the idea that the sacrament of Communion must not be used 'as a demonstration of ecumenical unity' between the different national and racial groups in the Church: he is insisting that it must be! For him it is not integration but segregation that has 'inherent dangers' (dangers for the Gospel!) and that 'threatens the pure religion of Christianised *volke*'! For he is not concerned about the 'independent vocations' and 'distinctive character' of *volke* or races but about the vocation and distinctive character of the Church in which they are reconciled and brought together in Christ. As I Peter puts it, in the Church they have become together a new 'chosen race ..., a dedicated nation, and a people (*volk*) claimed by God for His own' (2:9), and all previous natural distinctions have become quite secondary to this.

Another crucial text on the same theme is Eph. 2:11-22. Some supporters of apartheid have rejected the almost unanimous exegesis of this passage by New Testament scholars, but it quite clearly refers to the breaking down of the wall of separation between races of men. It is true that the text does not speak in terms of 'Blacks', 'Whites' and 'Coloureds': it acknowledges only two races, namely Jews and Gentiles. But it clearly means to include *all* who are not Jews within the term 'Gentiles', however otherwise they may classify themselves racially. Christ has brought together into a new unity of visible fellowship *all* believers of these two fundamental racial groups. Just as the Gospel tells us that at the death of Christ the curtain in the Temple which symbolically separated men from the immediate presence of God was ripped apart (Mk. 15:38), so Ephesians tells us that the division between men symbolised by the wall at the Temple which separated the Court of the Jews from the Court of the Gentiles has been smashed down by Christ. Thereby *all* 'Gentile' Christians (including blacks, whites and all others) and all Jewish Christians have been united together into 'one new humanity' in Christ. This means that if any group of believers rejects the fellowship of any other group on racial grounds it is rejecting what Christ has accomplished and is cutting itself off from the 'one new humanity' which is the true Church. Calvin commented on this passage: 'Unless the Jews admit the Gentiles to fellowship with them they have no friendship with God'. If this is correct, then the text implies exactly the same concerning whites admitting blacks to fellowship with them. The Scripture here, therefore, is concerned precisely with 'the obliteration of

dividing lines', asserting that this has been accomplished by Christ and is therefore a sign of the true Church!

It is thus natural that when we look at the congregations for which there is evidence in the New Testament they are, outside of Judah, nearly all interracial. Most of the Epistles for instance were written to congregations made up of both Jews and Gentiles. The Church at Antioch in fact includes besides Jews and Gentiles two men who may well have been blacks: Simeon called Niger (meaning black) and Lucius of Cyrene (in Libya). There is no racial or national apartheid in the New Testament Church for it recognises only one apartheid, that between believers and unbelievers - and this is not a rigid separation (for Christians are sent to live in, and be witnesses to, the world) but merely a certain detachment Christians must observe in circumstances where they might be detrimentally influenced by bad company (I Cor. 15:33, II Cor. 6:14ff, I Cor. 10:20f, 5:9ff). Within the Church, however, no Christian of one race may say to one of another, 'I have no need of you' (I Cor. 12:13, 21ff).

In all these ways the Scriptures proclaim that our fundamental 'identity' is in Christ and thus in the community of His Church rather than in our separate groups. This primary identity overrules all other classifications (and thus all prejudices), whether they be racial, social, cultural or political. In Christ all the differences between men, racial and other, can no longer have decisive significance, and they can therefore have no power to keep men apart from each other. The differences between men are not denied, but are shown to be relative, and are overcome in the 'new man'. Love spontaneously creates ecumenism. To be faithful to Christ and His Gospel is to live by this truth and so to let the unity which Christ has given us become concrete and visible in our lives. We are called, as members of the one Body of Christ, to share and manifest together a corporate unity in Christ. This involves common worship, prayer and discussion, and united witness and compassionate service in the world.

Appendix Four

WORKING PAPERS

The following working papers were prepared for the consideration of the Church Commission:

<i>The Lordship of Christ</i>	Prof. C.W. Cook
<i>Church and World</i>	Prof Brian Johanson
<i>Statistics of South African Churches</i>	Dr Elfie Strassberger
<i>Denominationalism</i>	Dr J.W. de Gruchy
<i>Hidden Presuppositions</i>	Rev J.D. Davies
<i>Mainly Attempts in Theological Diagnosis</i>	Rev J.D. Davies
<i>Church Structures</i>	Dr J.W. de Gruchy
<i>Attitudes and Motives</i>	Rev J.D. Davies
<i>Discrimination</i>	Cape Town working group
<i>Clericalisation</i>	Rev R. Ellis
<i>Mission of the Church</i>	Border working group
<i>Church and State</i>	Rev D. Bax and Dr Elfie Strassberger
<i>Mission of the Church (revised)</i>	Dr D. W. Bandey
<i>Effects of Apartheid on the Church</i>	Mrs S. Turner