

THE EMERGING DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH
IN THE CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA

The Emerging Doctrine of the Church in the Church of South India

A Thesis

by

W. R. Hussey

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in
partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology.

McGill University

1966

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	i
 <u>Chapter</u>	
1. <u>THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH</u>	1
Theological Claims	2
Plans for the Church's Initial Ministry and Membership	12
The Attitude of the Church toward the Laity and other Churches not in the Union	17
The Church's Organization and Discipline..	21
The Activity of the Church	34
2. <u>SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION</u>	42
Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches	47
Lutheran Orthodoxy of the 17th Century and Puritan Protestantism	53
Luther, the 16th Century Reformer	55
3. <u>SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY</u>	71
Baptism and the Supper of the Lord are means of Grace, ordained by Christ	73

CONTENTS (Continued)

Page

3. SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY (Continued).....

Christ is the True Celebrant at the
Supper, which is an act of the Whole
Church 76

The Restriction of the duty of Celebration
to Bishops and Presbyters is Absolutely a
Rule of Order 80

Roman Catholicism 83

Orthodoxy 85

Anglicanism 86

4. THE MINISTRY 100

The Ministry as a Divine Gift 100

The Vocation of the Ordained Ministry 105

Ordination 108

The Church's Initial Ministry and what the
Critics say about it 112

Basis for their Criticism 115

Does the Church of South India have an
invalid Ministry? 117

The Attitude of the Church of South India
toward the Apostolate 126

<u>CONTENTS</u> (continued)	<u>Page</u>
5. <u>THE CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA AND THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT</u>	131
Ecumenical Imbalance	132
Narrow Ecclesiastical Thinking	135
Secondary Motives.....	139
Spirit versus Organization	141
Theological and Doctrinal Differences ..	143
A Double Standard	147
The Church's Ministry.....	150
<u>CONCLUSION</u>	155
<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY</u>	157

THE EMERGING DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH IN THE CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA

Introduction

On September 27, 1947, another page was added to the long and complex history of the Christian Church. At that time in St. George's Cathedral, Madras, South India, a union was constituted giving birth to the Church of South India. This union involved "the Madras, Madura, Malabar, Jaffna, Kannada, Telugu and Travancore Church Councils of the South India United Church; the South India Province of the Methodist Church, comprising the Madras, Trichinopoly, Hyderabad and Mysore Districts, and the dioceses of Madras, Dornakal, Tinnevely, and Travancore and Cochin in the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, to which in 1950 was added the North Tamil Church Council of the South India United Church."¹

Here is the result of a sincere and conscientious effort to effect a union, capable of accommodating those of both the episcopal and non-episcopal persuasion. This has been a significant move for the whole of christendom, as well as for the people

1. The Constitution of the Church of South India, published by the Christian Literature Society for India, Madras, 1952, p. 1.

of South India. South India might well serve as a helpful guide to the churches in the West; for they are putting forth great efforts to unite the Christian Church, but have still to find a satisfactory solution to the precise problem raised by the differences between episcopacy and non-episcopacy.

Therefore, it is important that an assessment be made of the emerging doctrine of the church in the Church of South India, in order to become better acquainted with the Scheme, and to expose the unifying spirit which will enable christians everywhere, to transcend their differences and become one. It is to this task that the following chapters are devoted.

There are five chapters altogether; each one can be briefly introduced as follows: Chapter one is introductory, factual and of a summary nature, outlining several points in the doctrine of the church, as held by the Church of South India, and assessing them in the light of the Church in the New Testament. The next three chapters deal with specific aspects relating to this doctrine of the church in the Church of South India: Chapter two concerns itself with Scripture and Tradition. The South India Church accepts the Holy Scriptures as the supreme and decisive standard of faith, and believes that tradition should always permit itself to be judged by this standard. Since not all

churches adhere to this view, the South India Scheme is challenged whether or not it is putting too much emphasis on Scripture and too little on tradition. Chapter three examines the Church's Sacramental Theology. In her sacramental theology she states that bishops and presbyters are necessary for the administration of the sacraments from the standpoint of order only, not for the sake of validity. It is at this point that the ~~New~~^N ~~Church~~^S shows extreme differences with the views held by Roman Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Anglicanism, all of which assert that where there is no ordained priest, there is no valid sacrament. But in spite of these long established views, the South India Church holds fast to her contrary belief. Therefore, the question is asked, has the Church of South India ruthlessly and irreverently pushed these older views aside for the sake of convenience and compromise, or has she viewed the whole matter carefully and thoroughly? The Church's Ministry is the theme of the fourth chapter. In this chapter the Church's attitude toward the ministry is analysed under the following headings: The Ministry as a Divine Gift, the Vocation of the Ministry and Ordination. The Church's initial ministry and her view of episcopacy are also considered, thus giving rise to the question: Does such an acceptance of episcopacy

make for a strong and consistent ministry? The fifth and concluding chapter deals with the Church of South India and the Ecumenical Movement. This chapter attempts to enumerate some of the contributions which the South India Church makes to the cause of church union, by showing how she deals with some of the problems endangering present day ecumenical activity.

CHAPTER ONE

The Doctrine of the Church

To assess the doctrine of the church in the Church of South India, it is necessary to measure it against an authoritative standard. Some might seek such a standard in tradition or church history, but whichever is chosen it will ultimately lead to the Bible, because, as will be shown later,¹ this is the basis of all tradition and church history. The Bible is the Word of God; it contains the record of God's revelation to man. Therefore, the Holy Scriptures comprise a unique Book, and an authoritative standard.

In order for this assessment to progress with clarity and conciseness, ~~the doctrine of the church~~ ^{this chapter} will be divided into five general sections. As each of these sections is developed, sub-headings will be introduced and, when necessary, references will be made to Holy Scripture. These general sections will be as follows: 1. Theological claims. 2. Plans for the Church's initial ministry and membership. 3. The attitude of the Church toward the laity and other churches not in the union.

1. See Chapter two of this thesis.

4. The Church's organization and discipline. 5. The activity of the Church.

1. Theological Claims

In order to understand the doctrine of any church, precedence ought to be given to its theological claims. Therefore, this assessment of the doctrine of the church in the Church of South India will begin with an inquiry into such claims. These claims will be considered in the following order:

- (a) Unity is according to the Will and Purpose of God. (b) It is a unity in Christ and the Father. (c) It is a unity achieved by the Holy Spirit. (d) The unity of the Spirit should find expression in the whole church. (e) The church is the Body of Christ. (f) Faith is essential in becoming a member of this Body.

(a) Unity is according to the Will and Purpose of God

The constitution of the Church of South India expresses the belief that God, Creator of heaven and earth, and Father of our Lord, wills the unity of His people.¹

Substantiating evidence for this claim can be found in both the Old and New Testaments: Abraham was called, set apart and sent by God, in order to bring a blessing to all mankind.

1. The Constitution, op. cit., pp. 1-2.

The children of Israel were called to the solemn responsibility and sacrificial task of helping to bring deliverance and salvation to all the peoples of the world. And when Israel disobeyed and failed in their witness God sent His Son Jesus Christ. He came that all men might hear and learn of God, and be truly and freely united to Him. Jesus summed up His Father's Will and Purpose for all mankind when He prayed: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."¹ Inherent in Paul's teaching is the expression of God's Will for unity through Christ. In his *first* letter to the Corinthians he writes: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no division among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."² When writing to the Romans he says: "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."³ And in Galatians these words appear: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are

1. St. John 17:11.

2. I. Corinthians 1:10

3. Romans 12:5

all one in Christ Jesus."¹

(b) It is a unity in Christ and the Father

The Church of South India believes that since unity is a part of God's Will for man, it is a unity existing in Christ and the Father.² Here the Church is trying to emphasize that unity does not exist in, nor is dependent upon, church doctrine, a constitution, or a human agreement. Rather, the true unity for which the church seeks, rests fully and completely upon the Word of God in Christ.

~~This kind of evidence is~~ ***This contention can be***

biblically sustained. The fact of unity being in Christ and the Father, is perpetually proclaimed by both Old and New Testaments. When Abraham and Israel were called, they were not assembled by men, but were called by God to God. It was in God that they found unity. The disciples were also called by God through Christ. This is why Paul was able to say to the Romans, "we, being many, are one body in Christ", or to the Galatians, "for ye are all one in Christ Jesus". Therefore, the unity which the church seeks, whether in South India or elsewhere in christendom, is not in anything man has done or can do,

1. Galatians 3:28

2. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 2.

because that which unity requires is far beyond the best anyone can offer; there is never a time when man is worthy of it. Only the Will and Purpose of God, revealed through Christ, can achieve the fact of unity. It is only in and through Christ that christians are granted the guidance and freedom which draws them out of their narrowness, poverty and private spiritual experience, and sets them into a greater fellowship which can give them new birth. In Christ people are able to exchange hate, fear and doubt----causes of disunity----for love, courage and faith----the essence of unity.

(c) It is a unity achieved by the Holy Spirit

The Church of South India claims that this unity, for which Christ prayed and which is grounded in Him and the Father, is wrought through the power of the Holy Spirit.¹

This claim ought to have meaning and depth for anyone who is at all familiar with the early beginnings of the church in the New Testament. Even after the nucleus of the Christian Church had been chosen, its message and structure completed, this small group had to wait until it received the power of the Holy Spirit.² It was this profound and unique Gift

1. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 2.

2. Acts 1:4.

that united the church to God and gave her life. Through this power God witnessed to His own presence and bestowed upon the disciples the wisdom and courage to know and follow His Will.

It was also this Spirit who united the members of the early church with one another. According to New Testament teaching church membership was a participation in the Holy Spirit,

κοινωνία τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος; ¹ the Spirit of unity worked so mightily that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul"; ² under the unifying power of the Spirit the earliest christians "had all things common". ³ There is one body of the believers because there is one Spirit; ⁴ all the individual christians have been made to drink of the one Spirit. ⁵

(d) The unity of the Spirit should find Expression in The Whole Church

In order to guard against any possibility of totally excluding the Holy Spirit, which is the essence of the church and her unity, from the natural realm and reach of the understanding; and in order to reinforce the thinking that the Holy Spirit is intimately participating in Christ's earthly work, the Church of

1. II Corinthians 13:14;

Philipplians 2:1

2. Acts 4:32

3. Acts 2:44-47

4. Ephesians 4:3f

5. I Corinthians 12:13;
Ephesians 2:18

South India insists that "this unity of the Spirit must find expression in the faith and order of the Church, in its worship, in its organization and in its whole life, so that, as the Body of Christ, it may be a fit instrument for carrying out His gracious purposes in the world".¹

The New Testament also reveals the necessity of the Holy Spirit finding expression in all God's work. According to New Testament theology the Holy Spirit is a living, determinative and decisive principle underlying all of life. In the Gospel of Mark the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus at His Baptism and it was in the power of the Holy Spirit that His whole ministry was affected. The Holy Spirit was also present at Christ's Death, Resurrection and Ascension.² Later the Spirit was given to the Christian Church as the permanent principle of her life; and He is to find perpetual expression in the church's preaching, prayers and sacraments.

(e) The Church is the Body of Christ

The Church of South India believes that all who have been baptized and made members of the Christian Church are united in the Body of Christ.³

1. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 2.

2. John 16:7, 20:22; Acts 2:33; Ephesians 4:8

3. The Constitution op. cit., p. 3

This concept of the church occurs in several places throughout the New Testament. In the Gospel of Matthew with parallels in Luke and John, Jesus describes His mission as that of gathering 'Israel' to Himself.¹ In the Gospel of John Christ speaks of raising the church, the temple of His resurrection-body, into the place within the purpose of God which Judaism and its temple now no longer can hold.² St. Paul says christians enjoy ἡ κοινωμία τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος,³ because they are one body in Christ,⁴ although the functions of the body are as diversified as are the Spirit's gifts.⁵ "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."⁶ In Ephesians and Colossians the metaphor is slightly varied, and Christ is said to be the head of the body: "And he is the head of the body, the church";⁷ "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body..."⁸ Christ, in this metaphor, is the Head of that body of which christians are made members through their baptism; while the Head is perfect, the body is incomplete and is being built up by the apostolic, pastoral and

1. Matthew 23:37; Luke 13:34; John 11:52

2. John 2:21

3. II Corinthians 13:14

4. I Corinthians 12:13

5. Ibid 12:4-11

6. Romans 12:5;

I Corinthians 10:17

7. Colossians 1:18

8. Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:15; 5:23; I Corinthians 11:3.

teaching ministry of the church into a "fullgrown man",¹
the Christ.

(f) Faith is Essential in Becoming a Member of this Body

Although baptism is the visible sign of membership in the Body of Christ, faith is also essential. Without faith and all that it means, no person can rightfully become a member of the church, or accept her demands. This claim finds much support in the New Testament, where man's relationship to Christ is expressed in terms of belief and faith. The Lord began His ministry with a demand for faith. "...Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."² And when God called Peter and commanded him to go to Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian band, God had prepared the members of Cornelius' household for Peter and the gospel, and had cleansed their hearts by giving them faith.

Paul sees faith as a basic requirement for entrance into the church, or Body of Christ. He makes his position very clear in his letters to the Galatians and the Romans.

1. Ephesians 4: 11-16

2. Mark 1:14-15

In writing to the Galatians, the Apostle assured them that life in the church, or in Christ, is a life lived by faith, that is, faith in the Son of God who died for all. Paul never ceases to emphasize that God, through His grace, has given man the requirements for salvation and a complete life, and that his response to all this has to be one of faith. He insists that what God's grace has wrought ~~for~~ man should be made to live in man, otherwise he cannot become a true member of His church, and that only through faith is this possible. He says that it was by the "hearing of faith" that the Spirit of all God's works ~~was~~ made theirs.¹

Paul goes even behind the Mosaic Law and the institution of circumcision, to Abraham, and declares that even Abraham was accepted as righteous, on the grounds of his faith in God. Therefore the Galatians are reminded that it is through faith they are made members of Christ and the true seed of Abraham.² For Paul, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything. What really constitutes membership in Christ and His church is not an abiding by the Mosaic Law, or the doing of good works, but it is through faith in God's Spirit. Paul

1. Galatians 3:1-5

2. Ibid 3:19-29

sees the new man, that is, the man in Christ, as constituted from the divine side by the gift of the Spirit, and from the human side by faith. All this leads to the conclusion that Paul's thinking, as expressed in his Epistle to the Galatians, is firmly centered around the key words, Spirit and faith; and the truth which these words denote is basic to man's membership in Christ.

Again Paul places a strong emphasis on faith in the first eleven chapters of his Epistle to the Romans: There he makes it clear that all people, inside and outside the church, are sinners, that on the basis of their own resources they have no chance of being accepted by God. Paul, however, does not leave his readers without hope. He assures them that there is now revealed the righteousness of God which is by faith. The Apostle also emphasizes, in this letter, that Abraham's standing before God was in faith; only in this same faith can christians become incorporated into Christ, enjoy all the privileges, such as rejoicing in hope, and sharing in God's love which is shed abroad in their hearts through the Holy Spirit.¹ Therefore, Paul's main thesis, is that from the beginning, God's way of salvation was by faith; Abraham, Israel

1. Romans 5:1-11

and the Gentiles were given their standing before God, because of His righteousness and their faith.

2. Plans for the Church's Initial Ministry and Membership

The plans adopted by the Church of South India for establishing, (a) her initial ministry, and (b) initial membership contribute further light and guidance to an understanding of her doctrine of the church.

(a) Initial Ministry

Since this thesis will have a later chapter on the Church's ministry, only a brief outline of her initial ministry will be given at this time: Although there existed many different views regarding the episcopate, the Church of South India accepted the historic episcopacy in a constitutional form. Episcopacy had been associated with the Christian Church from early times; and the Church Fathers believed it to be necessary for the shepherding and extending of the Church in South India. Therefore, the Bishops of the dioceses of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon which were included in the union, were accepted as Bishops of the Church of South India. These Bishops are to enjoy the full privileges of their office: They have authority over the diocese and are responsible for fostering a deep spiritual unity among their people. The Bishop is also to give leadership

in teaching, worship, evangelism and discipline; he presides over the diocesan council and is an ex-officio member of the synod.

The episcopally ordained priests and the non-episcopally ordained ministers, involved in the union, also go to make up the Church's initial ministry. They are respected as equally and truly ordained to the Word and Sacraments and are officially known as Presbyters. These presbyters are free to administer the sacraments in any church of the Church of South India, and are eligible for appointment to any charge in the union. They are even at liberty to exercise any ministry in any church outside the Church of South India, in which they had authority to serve before the union. Along with enjoying this freedom, the presbyters are responsible for visiting the flock, preaching the Word, protecting doctrine and maintaining discipline.

The Order of Diaconate is also maintained: Those who were ordained deacons in their respective churches before union, are given the same status in the New Church after union. It is their duty to assist the Bishop in the celebrating of the Lord's Supper and in other services of the church, such as: Baptism; giving succour to the poor, needy and sick; instructing children in the faith; preaching the Word.

These three Orders, then, Bishop, Presbyter and

Deacon, constitute the initial ministry of the Church of South India. When any attempt is made to compare this ministry with the church's ministry in the first century, confusion and uncertainty are likely to result. In the New Testament there is only a rough and partial outline of the church's early ministry. The task of filling in the details is inevitably precarious. However, there are some references, indicating that such terms as bishop, presbyter and deacon were known terms for certain ministries of the church.

It appears that when an apostle was absent, the local churches were placed under the pastoral rule of πρεσβύτεροι which literally means, 'elders', or ἐπίσκοποι, which means 'overseers' or 'bishops'. But in apostolic days, these two words were used as two names for the same office-bearer and so were used interchangeably. It was not until after the apostles had died, that a bishop was distinguished from a presbyter. This led, by the end of the second century, to the universal arrangement of moniscopacy, which remained the universal form of church government until the time of the reformation.

Regarding deacons, the New Testament contains only one or two direct references: In I Timothy reference is

made to their moral character, but no hint is given as to their function.¹ The other possible reference is found in Philippians, but the word in this passage may have the general sense of 'servants'.² It was not until after New Testament times that deacons became an order of importance and honor, fulfilling the role of a bishop's assistant.

(b) Initial Membership

Setting up provisions for an initial membership was not a simple task. Each church, involved in the union, possessed different services for receiving new members and held different views as to what membership does and means. But the Church Fathers believed that each of these churches was an effective part of the true church, had been called, blessed and used by God. Therefore, the Church of South India was led to receive all members of these various churches, involved in the union, as members with full and equal status. They are given the privilege and responsibility of communicant members, and are free to receive communion in any church in the union. The ^NNew Church hopes that none of her members will have to forgo any of the rights or privileges regarding inter-communion and inter-

1. I Timothy 3:8-13

2. Philippians 1:1

celebration which they possessed before the union. Furthermore, the Church of South India hopes, that if any of her members visit with other churches with which they formerly had fellowship, they will be welcomed to take communion; and if a member of another church, because of residence, or for other reasons, joined the Church of South India, he would not be forced to sever his connections with the church to which he previously belonged.

This is a sound biblical approach. When the Bible is studied carefully and objectively it is difficult to be dogmatic or narrow about the scope of God's Will, or the channel through which He reaches out to man. From the biblical record comes the revelation that God has given man many signs, symbolizing His love and mercy, the greatest of which is Jesus Christ. He has also given to man the support of His Spirit and the privilege of prayer; and created him in such a fashion that he can possess a spirit, a mind and a freedom to reach out and use the gifts which are given him. Therefore, some may reach out one way, while others may reach out in a different direction. This process, over a period of time, leads to the formation of definite groups with varying traditions, none of which is perfect in itself, but all of which contain and contribute some valuable aspect of the meaning of God's Will. However, even though christians can

possess truth and blessings in their divisions, and can be used by God for His Purpose, they are not to be satisfied in their divisions. As has already been pointed out in this chapter, unity is the purpose and pleasure of God. Whether a man is Jew or Greek, bond or free, Roman Catholic or Protestant, it is God's Will for all to be one. The Church of South India, therefore, in respecting all her members as equal, regardless of their former tradition, in order that her members may receive a fuller and more complete unity in God, has made a supreme effort to face this whole problem with faith and hope.

3. The Attitude of the Church toward the Laity and other Churches not in the Union

The approach which a church makes toward her laity and sister churches helps to reveal whether or not she is taking New Testament teaching seriously, and permitting it to influence her thinking and activity.

(a) Her Laity

The Church of South India believes that all her members, according to their measure, share in the heavenly high priesthood of the risen and ascended Christ, from whom alone the church derives her character as a royal priesthood. That is to say, all are called to continue the work of Christ here on earth. The South India Church believes that no one order in

the church and no individual can claim exclusive possession of this heavenly priesthood. It falls to every member of the church, to accept the duty and privilege of spreading the good news of God's Kingdom and the living message of Jesus Christ. The Church of South India is not content with just welcoming the laity, but she is fully prepared to provide them with the opportunity to exercise their gifts of prophecy, evangelism, teaching, healing and other administrations which God might bestow upon them.

This attitude toward the laity is certainly in keeping with the teaching of the New Testament. The priesthood about which the New Testament speaks is a corporate priesthood of the whole christian community. The word ἱερεύς is never used in respect of any priestly order or caste within the priestly community. All members of the community, both men and women, are ἱερεῖς τῷ θεῷ¹. Theirs is a priesthood which is in relation to the world outside the church.² They exercise their corporate priesthood, by gathering every Lord's Day to offer the eucharistic sacrifice. They were made members

1. Revelations 1:6; 5:10; 20:6

2. 1 Peter 2:9

of this priesthood at their baptism; through this baptism they were ordained new members of the royal priesthood. Therefore, in the New Testament, a layman is more than just a church member, who has no ministerial responsibility, or who has handed over his responsibilities to certain professional and paid christians, rather, he is a priest and minister of the Church of Jesus Christ; and all ministers are equally laymen.

The priesthood of the laity means, then, that all church members in Christ have both an individual and corporate responsibility. Individuals in their lives of christian witness and service, whatever their secular profession or trade, have their λειτουργία or διακονία : Even the work of slaves (δοῦλος) can be an adornment of and an advertisement for christian doctrine;¹ and the christian worker does his work not for earthly praise or reward, but as unto the Lord.² Therefore, since the priesthood of the laity means that the whole church is the appointed priest-nation to the Gentile world, that is, to all that is nonchurch, the church is responsible before God for the world.

(b) Her Sister Churches

The Church of South India also has a sound attitude

-
1. Titus 2:10; I Timothy 6:1
 2. Ephesians 6:5-7

toward other churches. She expresses the desire to be in close fellowship with all the sister churches with which the uniting churches had fellowship before the union. This means that members from the sister churches are at liberty to communicate with any church of the Church of South India, and any minister, if invited, will be free to serve communion in any church of the United Church. Furthermore, the South India Church wishes to be affiliated with ecumenical conferences, alliances and unions which are dedicated to the cause of unity; the Church of South India is willing to send delegates to all such bodies.

This emphasis, on the part of South India, ~~to be in upon~~ close fellowship with all sister churches, is a timely and biblical one. From a study of the New Testament it becomes certain that only God can call the church into being; only He can bring judgment against her, or cast her off. Therefore, no church should regard herself as self-sufficient, perfect and possessing all truth, for when she does she becomes a product of the flesh and not the Spirit. Any church which sincerely follows New Testament teaching is led to see herself composed of sinners, possessing nothing in herself, but dependent upon the grace of Christ accepted in faith. This emphasis is further

supported by the eschatological factor found in the New Testament, which points the church to an end from which she has still much to learn; and cautions her that what she possesses here is only a foretaste of what is to come. Therefore the task of every church is to march on in faith, not alone, but with all other churches that go to make up the Church of Christ. This means that every part of God's Church should be patient and show a deep charitable tolerance toward all others. It was to this that Bishop Newbigin was alluding when he wrote: "I think that if we refuse fellowship in Christ to any body of men and women who accept Jesus as Lord and show the fruits of His Spirit in their corporate life, we do so at our peril. With what judgment we judge we shall be judged. It behoves us, therefore, to receive one another as Christ has received us."¹

4. The Church's Organization and Discipline

At the conclusion of the last section, it was indicated that the eschatological element is of great importance for a sound doctrine of the church. For that which constitutes the church is invisible, always beyond and above her. This does not mean,

1. Lesslie Newbigin, The Household of God, S.C.M. Press, London, 1957, p. 133

however, that the church is to be thought of as a totally unseen reality. The church ought to be seen as the visible company of all those who have been called by God into the fellowship of His Son. The christian community should be precisely as visible as the christian man. This means, therefore, that while the church is to witness to a truth and faith which are not entirely of this world, she has to function in history, in the world of flesh and shadow. In order for the church to do this courageously and efficiently, she needs a form of organization, through which God's wisdom is able to operate, and whereby she can exert any discipline, if needed, upon her clergy and members. So a brief survey of the organizational framework of the Church of South India and her program for discipline will now be made, beginning with a consideration of, (a) the courts of the Church, (b) the discipling courts of the Church, and (c) the disciplineⁱⁿ of marriage. This might not reveal too much about the doctrine of the church itself; nevertheless it will help to clarify terms which will be used in the next section, and will help to round out the image of the Church as a whole.

(a) The Courts of the Church

The first court of the Church is the pastorate committee, which is chaired by the presbyter in charge, and consists

of his assistant and representative lay communicants of the Church, elected by the communicants of the pastorate. The committee may also include ex-officio and nominated members. This pastorate committee, together with its presbyter, will have charge of the general oversight of the pastorate and its religious activities. The extent and limitation of this oversight will be defined by rules laid down by the diocesan council.

The next higher court is the diocesan council. This council consists of the bishop of the diocese, the assistant bishop if any, all presbyters in charge of pastorates and all presbyters assigned to other responsible offices in the diocese, and recognized by the council as such. The diocesan council shall also consist of lay representatives, who may be elected, nominated or ex-officio. The number of lay representatives shall be at least equal in number to the pastorates of the dioceses and not greater than twice that number. The bishop of the diocese shall be ex-officio president of the council, and will have the right to participate in the proceedings of any standing committee, board or council of the diocese. It is recommended that this council meet not less than once every two years.

The diocesan council has very definite rights and powers in the Church. It can make rules and take executive action for the good management and government of the church in the diocese, subject to the constitution and synod of the Church. This means that the council has an effective voice in the appointment of its bishops, and plays an important role in drawing up the regulations regarding the acceptance of candidates for the ministry. The council also seeks to develop the pastoral, evangelistic and educational work of the Church in the diocese.

This leads to the highest court in the Church's organization, the synod. The membership of the synod consists of all the bishops of the Church, whether diocesan or assistant, and all the officers of the synod will be ex-officio members. Each diocese will be represented in the synod by not fewer than two presbyters and four laymen for every ten thousand baptised members; for every ten thousand additional members, there will be one additional presbyter and lay representative. This ratio will continue up to a maximum of six presbyters and eight laymen. Each lay representative has to be a full communicant member, and reside in the diocese which he represents.

The officers of the synod are: A moderator, a deputy moderator, a general secretary and a treasurer; all these

officers will be elected by ballot. The moderator and deputy moderator shall be elected from among the bishops of the Church. The moderator represents the Church during his term of office; he presides over the synod and its executive committee. The executive committee shall be appointed at every ordinary meeting of the synod.¹ It consists of the officers of the synod, all the diocesan bishops of the Church and one presbyter and laymen elected from among the representatives of each diocese in the synod by those representatives. This committee acts as the ad interim committee of the synod. The moderator, with the advice of this executive committee, shall appoint to the synod not more than ten and not less than three as additional members of the synod. It will also be the moderator's duty to appoint not more than one presbyter and two laymen, as additional members of the executive committee, from among the members of the synod.

The other officers of the synod are: The deputy moderator, who will be in charge when the moderator is away; the general secretary, who will keep a faithful record of all proceedings in

1. "An ordinary meeting of the Synod shall be held once in every two years at such time and place as the Executive Committee may determine. Special meetings of the Synod may also be summoned by the Executive Committee." The Constitution, op. cit., p. 46

the synod. He will also be the correspondent between the synod and the diocesan councils. Then there is the treasurer, who is to look after all the finances belonging to the synod; it is also his duty to submit, from time to time, accurate statements of his accounts to the synod.

Since the synod is the supreme governing and legislative body of the Church, it has the final and ultimate authority in all questions regarding the interpretation of the constitution and other official documents of the Church. This means that the synod can make rules, pass resolutions and take executive action for the good of the Church. If a diocesan council fails in running its affairs, the synod, on the recommendation of the moderator, can take such steps as it considers necessary for the good administration of the internal affairs of the diocese.

(b) The Disciplining Courts of the Church

Next to be considered are the disciplining courts of the Church: First there is the local or panchayat court, appointed when necessary by the bishop for exerting church discipline upon church members, who may have transgressed against the Church's constitution. The powers of this court are limited. When major offences are involved, its authority is curtailed to that of making decisions on facts, and referring to the bishop

those whom it feels ought to be sentenced. Only the bishop can suspend one from taking Holy Communion, or excommunicate. However, when a bishop is not available, a presbyter can refuse Holy Communion to anyone in a scandal or malicious quarrel. But when this happens, the presbyter will report his actions to the local court, or if there is no local court, he shall report it to the diocese.

Then there is the court of the diocesan council, which deals with any presbyter or presbyters who have disobeyed the rule of the church. This court shall consist of the bishop of the diocese, or a presbyter commissioned by him. In addition there will be certain presbyters and laymen chosen by a bishop to assist him.

Although this court is free and able to proceed in proportion to its authority, it uses as much charitable discretion as possible. Since all charges have to be submitted to the bishop first, he will do all in his power to settle it himself. But if his own efforts fail, or if the accused requests it, the bishop will have the matter brought before the court. If a trial should take place, the whole court will have to decide regarding the charges brought against the presbyter, and, if he is found guilty, will have to decide what sentence will be passed. This court cannot

suspend anyone from Holy Communion, or give a sentence of ex-communication; it can recommend to the bishop that such a sentence should be passed. And when the charges brought against a presbyter relate to matters of faith and doctrine, a decision can be made only by the ministerial members of the court with the layfolk acting as assessors. Turning now to an even more serious sentence, that of depriving a presbyter of his authority to exercise his sacred calling, this requires the confirmation of the moderator, or, if the moderator is bishop of the diocese concerned, of the deputy moderator. But even when such a matter is in the hands of the moderator or deputy moderator, it has to be submitted to the court of the synod before a final decision is proclaimed.

Lastly there is the court of the synod in which accused bishops are tried. For such a trial the synod shall consist of the moderator or deputy moderator, as president, five bishops, two presbyters and two laymen selected by the moderator. During the trial, no member of the synod, who belongs to the diocese of that bishop, may be a member of the high court. The whole court has to bear the responsibility of deciding on the truth regarding the charges brought against the bishop, and upon any point of ecclesiastical law which may enter into

the proceedings. If the bishop is found guilty, sentence will be passed on him by the bishops only, who are sitting as members of the court.

The synod will also sit to hear an appeal from the court of a diocesan council. When this happens the synod will consist of the moderator as president, two bishops, two presbyters and ~~two~~ laymen selected by the moderator. The bishop of a diocese, from which an appeal has come, and any member of the synod from that diocese, will not be a member of the court while hearing the appeal. This rule can even disqualify the moderator, and when it does his place is taken by the deputy moderator.

The maintaining of discipline was a vital concern of the Church in the New Testament: In the Gospel of Matthew, chapters five to seven, traditionally known as the 'Sermon of the Mount', Jesus calls His disciples to a high standard of discipline both in social and personal matters. In the eighteenth chapter of Matthew there are these words, "...if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every

word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."¹ Discipline is also the concern when Timothy is urged to wage "a good warfare; Holding faith, and a good conscience";² when bishops are urged to be above reproach;³ when deacons are advised to be serious and not doubletongued;⁴ and when elders are not to be accused except before two or three witnesses.⁵

(c) The Discipline of Marriage

The Church of South India believes marriage to be an holy estate, ordained and blessed by God. It was the Church's hope, from the beginning, that firm and harmonious laws be instituted and enforced regarding the act of marriage. But, needless to say, this posed a serious problem for the New Union. The marriage laws in the various churches before union were not uniform. The New Church, therefore, had to take the attitude that complete legal harmony could not be achieved overnight. Only through time and effort, on the part of the synod, could these

-
1. Matthew 18:15-17
 2. I Timothy 1:18-19
 3. I Timothy 3:2
 4. I Timothy 3:8
 5. I Timothy 5:19

various laws be revised and developed into definitive laws of marriage for the Church of South India. So the provisions found in the constitution make up only the initial law of the Church.

According to this initial law, provision is made for marriages to be solemnized by bishops, presbyters and deacons holding the authorization of the bishop of the diocese; and that ministers and members who had authority in the uniting churches, before union, to solemnize marriage, are also able to do so in the Church of South India. However, although the New Church, in laying down her initial marriage laws, does not prohibit these marriages which have been permissible by the law in force in any of the uniting churches, no presbyter or minister, who has conscientious objections to solemnizing any such marriage, will be compelled to do so. This initial law is within the jurisdiction of the bishop. Therefore, under certain circumstances, he has the power to interpret it for the benefit of the Church.

In order to guide those who officiate, the Church of South India has established some general principles, similar to those governing the Canadian Marriage Act. Included in these principles is the rule that the names of those desiring

marriage, together with such information as age, profession, place of abode and names of their fathers, is to be published, during divine service, in the place where the parties to be married severally reside. If no lawful impediment has been shown, a certificate is given, after which the marriage is solemnized.

Some of the people of India may be able to accept Christ readily, but this does not mean that they can readily change cultural customs which have been held for generations. For this reason the whole discipline of marriage has to be approached with understanding and a degree of flexibility. However, a very rigid and firm position is taken regarding divorce. "No minister of the Church of South India...may solemnize the marriage with any other person or either of two persons who have been married together as Christians (or being married together as non-Christians have been received into the Church as husband and wife), so long as the other partner in that marriage is living; and any member of the Church who contracts such a marriage shall be liable to the discipline of the Church."¹

This kind of discipline has significant New Testament

1. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 61

support. In Mark the pharisees ask Jesus if it is lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause? In reply Jesus reminds the pharisees that God, from the beginning, made man male and female. And "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."¹ His disciples also asked Him of the same matter, "And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."² Paul also supplies support for the Church's attitude toward divorce. To cite only one example reference can be made to Corinthians, where he writes: "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife."³

1. Mark 10:6-9

2. Mark 10:10-12

3. I Corinthians 7:10-11

5. The Activity of the Church

Since the Church of South India believes herself to be a part of the church universal, and truly a member of the Body of Christ, it is important that she be an active, outgoing and missionary church. She should be a church with an evangelistic outreach and witness. However, in order for this to be possible, let alone effective, the church has to be active within; constantly renewing her manpower and inner life. Therefore, in this last section, still keeping in mind the task of assessing the doctrine of the church in the Church of South India, a brief description of the internal activity of the South India Church will be given, under the following headings:

- (a) Election, Appointment and Consecration of a Bishop.
- (b) Ordination of Presbyters and Deacons. (c) The Laying on of Hands. (f) Forms of Worship.

(a) Election, Appointment and Consecration of a Bishop

Nominations for the election of a diocesan bishop can be made by both the executive committee of the synod, and members of a diocesan council. These nominations are to be voted upon by the diocesan council concerned, or by an electoral body appointed by the council. The constitution of the South India

Church restricts the executive committee of the synod to nominating not more than three names, and these names are not to include any persons domiciled in the particular diocese. But the diocesan council is free to nominate as many as it wishes, regardless of the nominee's residence.

From this total list of nominations, made by the executive committee of the synod and the diocesan council, the diocesan council, or the electoral body which it appoints, shall elect not less than two and not more than four persons. Each person has to be supported by at least two-thirds of the diocesan council or electoral body present. The names of those elected, shall then be submitted to a board comprising the moderator, and six members appointed by the executive committee, excluding any members from the diocese concerned. From these names, then, submitted by the diocesan council or electoral body, the moderator and his six assistants will elect a bishop. This election, however, will be subject to the confirmation of the executive committee of the synod.

The approval of the executive committee of the synod is secured by the general secretary of the synod. When the general secretary is informed of a bishop's election and of his

willingness to accept the office, the secretary informs every member of the executive committee, by letter, asking for his confirmation. Public notice of the election is also given to all the churches of the diocese for which it has been made. If no objection is raised against an elected bishop within twenty-one days of the publication of this notice, and the secretary received letters of approval from the majority of the members of the executive committee and no letters of objection, the secretary will report it to the moderator. If the moderator wishes, he, the deputy moderator and the general secretary, in the name of the executive committee, shall execute a certificate of confirmation. Otherwise the moderator might bring the question of confirmation before a meeting of the executive committee. All this procedure points to the fact that both the diocese concerned and the Church as a whole play a significant role in the electing of a bishop.

When this stage is reached, the synod will outline a form for the service of consecration: The bishop to be consecrated will be presented to the bishop presiding by three presbyters of the diocese. A consecratory prayer will be offered, beseeching that the new bishop receive the gift of the

Holy Spirit. Then there will be the laying on of hands by at least three bishops and the three presbyters referred to above. All this is normally to take place during a communion service.

(b) Ordination of Presbyters and Deacons

To be ordained a presbyter, a man has to be conscious of a call from God, give affirmation of his sincere belief in the truths of the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds and give practical evidence that he accepts the doctrinal truths included in the governing principles of the Church. He should also receive sound academic training. When the diocesan council concerned is satisfied regarding all these requirements, preparations are made for the service of ordination.

During this service the Church offers a prayer of ordination, asking that the gift of the Holy Spirit be bestowed upon the presbyter. Provision is also made for extemporaneous prayer. The bishop and presbyters will then lay hands on the candidate.

Deacons are also accepted in a similar way. Their character, belief and training have to be acceptable to the diocesan authorities, after which they are ordained by the laying on of hands by the bishop of the diocese. Both services of

ordination are to be during the service of Holy Communion.

(c) The Laying on of Hands

A characteristic common to the services of consecration and ordination is the practice of the laying on of hands. This practice is referred to throughout the Bible. In the Old Testament Moses ordains Joshua, and Joshua becomes filled with the Spirit of wisdom.¹ In the New Testament, the Book of Acts records the ordaining of seven by the laying on of the hands of the congregation.² There are two other important New Testament references: One in I Timothy and the other in II Timothy: In I Timothy, the young Timothy is said to have been ordained by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.³ In II Timothy he is said to have been ordained by the laying on of the hands of Paul the apostle.⁴

These last two references are the only New Testament passage that refer to the Χάρισμα of ordination, yet one appears to contradict the other. In the first reference Timothy is ordained by the presbytery, and in the second he is

-
1. Numbers 27:18, 23; Deuteronomy 34:9
 2. Acts 6:6
 3. I Timothy 4:14
 4. II Timothy 1:6

ordained by Paul the apostle. These two texts point to different views about the ordaining authority in the Church which have divided christians for centuries. The question has to be faced with patience and understanding.

(d) Forms of Worship

The activity of the Church of South India as seen through her worship is rather varied and flexible. The Church permits the use of different forms of worship which were used by the various uniting churches before union, and she even permits the adopting of services from outside her uniting churches, providing such services will not contradict church belief, or bring in doctrines contrary to those accepted and expressed in her constitution. Such freedom enables the presbyters to try different forms, and even experiment with such forms, providing they notify their particular congregations and report it to the bishop of their diocese. Although this freedom is granted, the Church is hoping that as she "grows in unity of mind and spirit and experiences closer fellowship in worship, it may develop a common form or forms of the Service of Holy Communion adapted to the special needs and religious

experience of South India."¹

It is the responsibility of the synod to issue forms of worship which are to be used on special occasions, and to regulate the essential elements or parts in other services. The synod, in view of this responsibility, discovered, after studying the communion services of all the uniting churches, that there were nine points which they all had in common. Therefore, it recommended that these nine common points be included into the Communion Service of the Church of South India. These points may be listed as follows:

- (a) Introductory Prayer
- (b) The Reading of the Word
- (c) Preparation of Communicants
- (d) The Offering to God of the Gifts of the People
- (e) Thanksgiving unto God for His goodness and His Son Jesus Christ.
- (f) Intercession for the Whole Church
- (g) The Lord's Prayer
- (h) Administration of the Communion
- (i) Thanksgiving for the Grace received in the Communion

1. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 50

It becomes clear, from this general assessment, that the beliefs and practices of the Church of South India find significant scriptural support; that she is respectful and appreciative towards the beliefs and practices of other churches; and that she encourages among her members a valuable degree of tolerance and flexibility. The exciting and challenging fact about the South India Church is that even though she has been successful in achieving unity, her outlook remains broad and aggressive; she is ready and willing to work toward an even greater unity of christendom.

CHAPTER TWO

Scripture and Tradition

Generally speaking, Scripture and tradition have been related to each other in, at least, two different ways: On the one side there is the view which considers christianity as essentially a traditional pattern of belief and life, comprising the Scriptures, the Writings of the Fathers, decrees of councils, creeds, a large number of rites, ceremonies and customs. But Scripture, being the earliest written embodiment of that tradition, possesses a very special----possibly unique----authority. However the Scriptures are still considered as just part of the church's tradition, they are not to be held over against it. This view also includes the belief that there are other very important unwritten elements in the tradition, which antedate Scripture and are equal to it. These elements are the traditions of liturgical practice and the ministry.

On the other side there is the view which upholds Scripture as the supreme and decisive standard, the norm by which the church and tradition have to seek correction. Therefore, this view does not think of Scripture as being the beginning

and earliest expression of tradition, nor as just a part of tradition, but as holding a position supremely above tradition. This is the stand taken by the Church of South India. She states in her constitution that she "...accepts the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as containing all things necessary to salvation and as the supreme and decisive standard of faith; and acknowledges that the Church must always be ready to correct and reform itself in accordance with the teaching of those Scriptures as the Holy Spirit shall reveal it."¹ These words exclude any possibility of treating Scripture as merely the earliest expression of the continuous faith of the Church; and it sees the faith of the Church as a result of her response to God's revelation, which the Scriptures record, and which is confirmed in the life of the Church by the Holy Spirit.

This view held by the Church of South India is supported and further elucidated by Bishop Lesslie Newbigin, in his book: "The Reunion of the Church".² In this book, which is written in defence of the South India Scheme, Bishop Newbigin, stresses

1. The Constitution, op. cit., pp. 4-5

2. Bishop Lesslie Newbigin, The Reunion of the Church,
S.C.M. Press, London, 1948, p. 124

very strongly that the Church's faith is not finally and ultimately based on customs, creeds, confessions, historical continuity or doctrinal statements, but upon her response to God's revelation in Christ. He realizes and admits that the church is a society living in history and inheriting a tradition, but, he insists, that if she is to be a living church, she has to be constantly in close reference to something beyond history and tradition; to the eternal and ever present God to whom man responds in faith; to the Christ who lived, taught, did mighty works, died, rose again and appeared to His disciples. This, however, does not mean that the church, which appeals in faith, from the present to God's revelation, is appealing from a later to an earlier phase in her development. It means, rather, that the church is appealing to her living Lord who is present in the church, and who has revealed His will and purpose by a work done at a certain point in history.

This is why the Scriptures are so essential; they direct the church to this historical point. The Scriptures are able to do this because they contain the records written by those who claimed to have seen, heard and handled these things, or to have direct contact with those who had done so. This, says

Newbigin, is why the church canonized the Scriptures. The canon was not the result of the church selecting books which could best express her doctrines; nor did she choose them on the basis of her own tastes, but these books were chosen because they possessed the highest claim to be the true records of the teaching and testimony of those who had been eye-witnesses and the first ministers of the Word. Therefore, it is toward this teaching and testimony, produced by those who were eye-witnesses to what God had done in Christ, that the church has to turn and patiently await the power and wisdom of God's Spirit. This and this alone becomes her decisive standard for faith.

This view, held by the Church of South India, regarding the relationship between Scripture and tradition is not without its critics. To mention only two, there is C. F. Evans, Professor of New Testament at King's College, London University, who, in a paper on the Bible and Tradition, says: "...we can only have what the Lord said and did as seen in the light of, and in a measure identified with, that Christian life and experience which emerged out of what he said and did, so that the two [that is, Bible and Tradition] can no longer be disentangled... For it is not now the Bible and Tradition alongside each other, or over against each

other, but tradition within the Bible, and the Bible itself largely tradition." ¹ And there is Père Bouyer, a scholar in patristics, and a Roman Catholic, who says: "To attempt to arrive at a one-sided answer to the question of Scripture and Tradition is doomed to failure, since the Fathers can quite cheerfully say at one moment that the whole of faith is contained in the Scriptures, and at another with equal confidence that Scripture is of no avail without tradition as its complement or supplement, and they are able to speak like this because they do not, as we have tended to do, whether Catholic or Protestant, think of the faith as a list of propositions of divinity, but as a unity, a single living object under multiple forms. Moreover, they do not mean by Scripture primarily an authority under which we live, but a whole world in which we live, and everything in the world to be read through it, and the whole world to be found in it." ²

The question, therefore, which ought to be asked at this point, is whether or not the Church of South India is overestimating the importance of Scripture, and underestimating

1. C.F. Evans, Bible and Tradition, in: On the Authority of the Bible, S.P.C.K., London., 1960, pp. 77, 78.

2. The Eastern Churches Quarterly, Vol. vii, Supplementary Issue, quoted by C.F. Evans, op. cit., p. 78

the importance of tradition⁷. In order to answer this a clear and realistic view of the precise meaning of tradition is needed.

This poses a problem, however, since tradition has different meanings and not all churches hold the same view. Consequently, to achieve a satisfactory perspective of tradition some of these differing views have to be investigated and assessed. The views which will be considered are those held by, (a) the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, (b) the Lutheran Orthodoxy of the 17th century and Puritan Protestantism⁸, and, (c) Luther, the 16th century Reformer.

It should be noted: The last two views, (b) and (c), are chronologically reversed, due to the pattern of reasoning followed in this chapter; also, since the subject of tradition is so vast, and for brevity's sake, only the main points in these views will be summarized.

(a) In order to fully appreciate the view of the Eastern Orthodox¹ and Roman Catholic

1. Alexander Schmemmann, Eastern Orthodoxy, in: The Handbook of Christian Theology, Edited by, Marvin Halverson, Meridian Books, New York, 1958, p. 85

Sergiei Bulgakov, The Orthodox Church, The Centenary Press, London, 1935, p. 18

Georges Florovsky, Primitive Tradition and The Traditions, in: The Unity we Seek, Edited by William Morris, Ryerson Press, Toronto, 1962, p. 28.

Churches,¹ there has to be some understanding of their thinking about the church: They see their respective Churches as based upon, not just the written Word, but the person of Jesus Christ Himself; upon the living, eternal and incarnate Word, to whom the Holy Scriptures bear witness. Therefore, their Church is thought of as Christ, the outward expression of the Word made flesh; during linear time the Church is the extension of the incarnation. Consequently, their Church lacks for nothing; she is already made pure, perfect, continuous and holy. What she possesses now is not just a foretaste of what is to come, but the complete revelation. It is here, in the Church, that the apostolic message is kept, that Christ continues His saving ministry, that one encounters a living experience of the Holy Spirit, and where the Bible can be fully and completely understood.

This view also believes that within the Church, from the time of the Apostles, there has been a constant movement and development, not in the sense of alteration, but in Christ, guided

1 Z. Emile Mersch, The Theology of the Mystical Body, Herder, St. Louis, 1958, Chapters: 16-17.

G.H. Tavad, Holy Writ and Holy Church, Burns, London, 1959, p. 195ff.

The 4th. session of the Council of Trent in 1556 marked the first time the Roman Catholic Church solemnly defined anything concerning tradition.

by the Holy Spirit. This movement is exemplified through the Church's liturgy, ritual, thought forms, customs, creeds, declarations, decrees, doctrine and dogma; and it is what they refer to as tradition. For them, tradition means the Church in her continuous life through the centuries. Holding, therefore, to this view of the Church, it becomes clear why they regard tradition in such an ultimate way. Since the Church has a continuous life, tradition is absolutely necessary; it is identical with the Church. Where there is an unbroken tradition, there is the Church, but where tradition is broken, there is no Church.

To clarify the picture one further word ought to be added: Although the thinking in the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches is similar in their emphasis on tradition, there is a difference. They believe that this continuous movement of the Church finds its expression through the voice of the Church. It is at this point that they differ. The Eastern Orthodox Church is more democratic, and the voice of their Church rests largely upon the consensus of their people. It is the consent of the people which makes an ecumenical council valid. They do not believe in the infallibility of the Pope. However, in the Roman Catholic Church, the hierarchy, with the Pope at the summit,

constitutes the living voice of the Church and their christian tradition.

Here is a view of tradition which is ultimate, absolute and holding a more important position than the Scriptures themselves. What tradition says is final and beyond question; christians have to look upon it always as the supreme standard of faith.

If this view is to be shared, certain beliefs will have to be adopted. First, that the church is the extension of the incarnation, which means that the visible church is to be regarded as the alter ego of Jesus Christ; furthermore, that the church is perfect and sinless, already possessing fulfillment and completion. This kind of thinking leads to problems, especially when seen in the light of the New Testament. The New Testament does not speak of this kind of relationship between the crucified risen and ascended Jesus Christ, and the present life of the church. But it bears witness to the fact that after Christ was crucified, risen and ascended to the Father, the Holy Spirit was given to the church, and is to be her guide and comforter as she strives toward the mark of her high calling. In fact the picture given in the Bible is that the church, which Christ in-

stituted and blessed with His Spirit, and which was composed of His followers, was not synonymous with Himself and, therefore, sinless, but composed of sinners and is still guilty of corporate acts marked by pride, greed and sloth. And according to the eschatological emphasis christians are led to believe that the church, instead of already possessing a completion and fulfillment, only possesses a foretaste of a fuller revelation which is to come. The church can never be completely defined in terms of what she is now, but only in terms of the mercy of God, "who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were".¹

Secondly, in adopting this view of tradition, there follows the belief that in the church, from the time of the Apostles, there has been a constant movement and development, not in the sense of alteration, but in Christ guided by the Holy Spirit; that this movement constitutes the church's tradition, and that it is a movement expressed through the infallible voice of the church. It can be rightly agreed that there is a constant movement in the church from the time of the Apostles, originated

1. Romans 4:17

by Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit; and it can also be believed that this movement finds partial fulfilment in the liturgy, ritual, customs, doctrines and pronouncements, all of which help constitute the tradition of the church. But what is difficult to accept is that this movement can find a full, perfect and infallible expression through the voice of the church, particularly when this voice can mean, either the consensus of the people as in the Eastern Orthodox Church or the decree of a Pope, as in the Roman Catholic church.

It is true that a movement can be fully, perfectly and infallibly wrought by the Holy Spirit in the spiritual realm, but surely this cannot apply to the physical realm, composed of sinners, subject to sins of many kinds. Therefore, it is presumptuous and unrealistic for a person or persons, confined as they are to the physical realm, to claim they can fully, completely and infallibly discern the things which the Holy Spirit has wrought. No matter how close God might be, or what view might be held of the church, or how clearly the Spirit speaks, it is still only a partial experience. The word infallibility has no place in human strivings or achievements. At best, Christians can only continue their strivings, under the judgment of God's revelation in Scripture.

(b) Turning now to the Lutheran Orthodoxy of the 17th. century and to Puritan Protestantism,¹ quite a different view of tradition is revealed; in fact it is just the opposite. Whereas Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic thinking elevates tradition to an ultimate and supremely authoritative position, Lutheran Orthodoxy and Puritan Protestantism suppress tradition as being purposeless and sinful. For Lutheran Orthodoxy, the problem of finding a satisfactory relationship between Scripture and tradition does not exist; because there ought not to be any connection; one opposes the other. They depict tradition as the result of human distortion and false reasoning. Therefore, it has a detrimental and contaminating effect upon Scripture which contains the revelation of God, and which ought to be forever freed from the human element. This negative attitude persists just as strongly in Puritan Protestantism. Such a spirit finds expression in John Bunyan's classic, "The Pilgrims Progress". Bunyan says that when the devil wants to attack and defeat the fortress of a

1. K.E. Skydsgaard, Tradition as an Ecumenical Problem, in: Faith and Order Findings, part 2 (The Report of the European Section), S.C.M. Press, London, 1963, p. 41

'Mansoul' he allies himself with Mr. Invention, Mr. Human Wisdom and Mr. Tradition. Both views regard tradition as against human freedom and destructive of the spiritual purpose. The attitude, therefore, is 'down with tradition'; and the watch word becomes, 'sola Scriptura'.

This attitude can be praised for the sacred, holy and transcendental character which it attributes to Holy Scripture, and for its attempt to free these writings from the suppression and distortion of the human element. But in spite of this exalted view regarding Scripture, it betrays too negative an attitude to tradition. As this chapter will try to show, tradition, although subordinate to Scripture and forever subjected to its judgment and revision, is nevertheless important in man's search for the perfect revelation of the Word of God. For tradition is a medium through which God's Word is able to come to man. To say that man can discern the true meaning and value of Scripture, apart from this limited medium, is to become far too idealistic. The chief criticism, therefore, of this view is that it believes man can achieve a meaningful understanding of revelation, and at the same time rule out tradition altogether as being detrimental and false.

(c) According to Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic thinking, tradition is exalted to an ultimate position, at the expense of Scripture; and according to the thinking of Lutheran Orthodoxy and Puritan Protestantism, Scripture is elevated to an ultimate position at the expense of tradition. Here are two extreme stands; one delimiting Scripture and the other delimiting tradition. Neither one is satisfactory. So attention is now focused upon Luther, the 16th. century Reformer.¹

Luther's view of tradition was so critical that it resulted in a permanent break with the Medieval Roman Catholic Church.² Reasons for such a break were not without historical and theological justification. Many of the customs, patterns and beliefs which were shaped and adopted by the early church, as part of her tradition, in order to help safeguard

1. K.E. Skydsgaard, op. cit., p. 39

J.M. Headley, Luther's View of History, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, 1963, p. 88ff

R.M. Jones, Spiritual Reformers, Mcmillan & Co., London, 1914, p. 12f

2. Writing to Count Albert of Brandenburg⁶ in 1535, Luther expressed dread over the thought that some things are believed which are contrary to the faith and testimony of the Holy Christian Church, and that they have been unanimously held from the beginning for over 15 hundred years.

the faith, became corrupt. Distortion, exploitation and falsehood entered the church, together with evil contamination and deceitful practices.¹ The church, which considered herself an extension of Jesus' earthly ministry, claimed to be an institution that could do no sin or wrong. This included the claim to control all biblical interpretation and human behaviour, to the extent, that her humble members could not ask questions about their faith, but only follow the dictates of the church. Therefore, Luther had become, perhaps as a result of his frustration and searching, keenly aware of the fact, that the Word of God was being covered over by many human and false teachings, and in order to free the Word from ~~this~~ distortion he had to break with the church in which he was born.

However, Luther was not so extreme in his view of tradition, that he discredited it altogether. Although he opposed the idea of making it the all important and authoritative norm, he realized and admitted that tradition did have a part to play. K.E. Skydsgaard says, "Luther did not at all deny that the Church

1. Indulgences: Emphasis on Eucharistic practices; Infallibility of the Pope. The underlying principle against which Luther so vehemently objected was justification by works, rather than by faith.

lived in history and therefore also in tradition. The Church was a living historical entity. Many ceremonies and human traditions were formed in the course of history. But what was absolutely necessary was that this historical tradition of the Church should be ruled by the living Word of God, and this means that it must be subject to Scripture as the only witness to the triune God in His saving Word to all mankind. All that happens in the people of God must be radically subordinated to this living Word. This and only this was Luther's intention."¹

It appears that Luther distinguished between, though never really separated, two aspects: First, the historical aspect, which sees the Bible as later than the church, to which she owes her existence, and which, as a historical document, bears witness to the church's experience of faith. Secondly, there is the theological aspect, which sees the Bible as before and above the church, because it is the Word of God. And as the Word of God it is not only the witness of the faith of the primitive church, but bearer of the very Word of God which creates the church and her faith, and which has, therefore, an absolute

1. K.E. Skydsgaard, op. cit., p. 40

priority in relation to the faith of the church through all ages. The Word of God meant much to Luther. He thought of it as the living Word synonymous with Christ Himself. Consequently it should never be stored in the church, but is to be proclaimed and shared freely. Man needs the Word, for it is the only true witness of God's revelation and standard of faith.

Luther, in the light of what has already been observed, does not elevate tradition as the ultimate and authoritative norm, nor does he condemn tradition to the point of ruling it out altogether; instead he takes an intermediate position. He believed that it had a necessary part and place to play in the whole scheme of God's revelation. This is a realistic approach, because the knowledge of God and the nature of man demands it.

This fact can be further elucidated with the help of Karl Barth in his *Church Dogmatics*.¹ Here Barth says that the basic reason why a knowledge of God is possible is because He reveals Himself in Holy Scripture as the Triune God, that is, as a God who is able to stand before Himself as the Father stands before the Son, and who is able to know Himself as the Father knows the Son, all in the unity of the Holy Spirit. This means that

1. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. 2-1, T & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1957, pp. 3-31

God possesses a self-knowledge or self-revelation of Himself, which Barth calls the primary objectivity. For Barth, this is the all important factor, because if God did not first know Himself, then He could never become knowable to man. It is because of this primary objectivity that God is able to stand before man and give Himself to be known by man.

But this primary objectivity is the way God knows and sees Himself. Therefore, He cannot become objective to man in the same way that He is objective to Himself, because His objectivity, which is primary, is complete, immediate and direct. Consequently there has to be a secondary objectivity, through which God is revealed to man, but which is incomplete, indirect and mediated. It is only in this secondary sense, that a knowledge of God can come to man in an objective and meaningful way. For in order to know God in the pure and primary sense, that is, as God knows Himself, man would have to be a god, but since he is not a god, and it is God's Will for man to share a knowledge of Him, there has to be a finite or secondary medium which helps convey to man this truth. Here is where tradition plays its part. The reason such factors as religious liturgy, ritual, practices, customs, creeds and doctrines can

all play a helpful role is because they can feed man a portion of God's truth in a finite way. But man should never forget that they can only feed him a portion, for revelation is constantly progressing in an infinite way, and the part man attains for his limited understanding and the way he attains it is never final. It has to stand always beneath the judgment and revision of revelation itself. Therefore, the church and her tradition ought not to be closed, but remain an open directive and discipline leading man ever closer to a fuller manifestation of the truth.

The reason Luther stresses so strongly that Holy Scripture should always transcend tradition is because the Scriptures are revered as the Word of God. But what is meant by this judgment? First it may be shown what it does not mean: When it is said that the Scriptures are the Word of God, this does not mean that every book, chapter, sentence, phrase, word and syllable is equally inspired by God, never to be changed, but to be accepted literally; nor does it mean that Scripture possesses a ready made doctrine and dogma, containing precise solutions to the manifold problems of life; nor that the first christian community of whose life it gives an

account, is the authoritative model for the church through all ages and in all circumstances. Rather, when it is said that the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, it means they possess a unique authority. But this gives rise to another question: What constitutes this authority, or wherein does it lie? Scholars have attempted to answer this in different ways.

C.H. Dodd has written an illuminating book on this subject.¹ In his book he sets forth the thesis, that all authority, including that of Scripture, is erected by human decisions, so that ultimate authority is man's observation and reason. To illustrate, a brief look might be taken at the scientist and his authority: The material world, together with its many realities, exerts an authority upon his mind, causing him to think in a very disciplined way. Through such disciplined thinking he himself becomes an authority. Therefore, his authority lies in the fact that his mind is open to realities and the pursuing of them. Dodd would say that this same process holds true regarding spiritual insight. The expert in religion is the saint or prophet whose character has been inspired and who is able to pursue that inspira-

1. C.H. Dodd, The Authority of the Bible, James Nesbit & Co., London, 1928.

tion. In the case of the prophet, God enters his consciousness in dramatic forms, which express themselves in poetical language. This language portrays a vivid description of God and His will to the hearer, thus making revelation a direct communication of ideas and experience. He calls these experts geniuses, and in Jesus this genius reaches so high a pitch that He can be referred to as the one and only absolute authority. Dodd considers the Mosaic period, the period of the 8th. to the 6th. century, and the New Testament period as times of flowering of the Spirit. These were times when geniuses in the sphere of religion asserted themselves. Therefore, according to this view, the authority of the Scriptures is the authority of the experts or geniuses in the knowledge of God.

By genius Dodd means men, who, by reason of some innate spiritual faculty, and by reason of the faithfulness with which they have followed its impulse, have attained experiences of divine things, fuller, deeper and more compelling than comes to the ordinary run of men. As 'genius' is not a biblical term, he extracts it from the general observation of life. He uses it to explain unique human achievements, for it points to the innate qualities of the human person, that make universal insights, ideas

and creative works possible.

But surely this category cannot be expected to explain the achievements of the Prophets, Apostles and Jesus, especially when they insisted that all they knew, said and did came from a source beyond themselves. Paul was an Apostle, not because he was a genius, but because he was called and commissioned by Christ.

Sören Kierkegaard comes to the rescue at this point, in his essay, "Genius and Apostle".¹ Here he gives an analysis of the two categories, showing the difference between them. He says a genius is born one, an apostle is called to be one. A genius brings forth a newness which later dies or is assimilated by the race; what an apostle brings forth remains through all time. He says a genius is what he is by what he possesses in himself, an apostle is what he is by divine revelation and authority.

This has been a rather subjective approach to the question of authority; a more objective one is put forth by

1. Soren Kierkegaard, Of the Difference Between a Genius and an Apostle, in: The Present Age, translated by Alexander Dru, Oxford University Press, London, 1940

H.H. Rowley.¹ In his book he tries to establish an ultimate relationship between God and the Scriptures, in a way that does not require faith, but can be demonstrated by human reason. He challenges all those who say the Bible is an authoritative book, to produce evidence which can stand the test of reason. He believes that others can only be convinced of the importance of Scripture in an intelligent and rational way. To say that by accepting the Scriptures in faith, their authority will become apparent, is not enough, because many, who need its message most, lack the proper faith. Therefore, scriptural authority for him, rests in a rational demonstration.

This is an approach which asserts, that the Bible alone, even if accepted in faith, is not an ultimate authority; room has to be made for reason, conscience, general human experience and the tradition of the church as well. It is true that all these factors have to enter into man's thinking about the Bible, but even after allowing for such things, the question remains: Where does scriptural authority reside? Who is capable of weighing all these factors, determining in which ~~ones and to what~~ ^{possess authority}

1. H.H. Rowley, The Authority of the Bible: An Apologetic Appealing to Objective Evidence, Encounter (Winter, 1957)

and to what degree
~~degree they possess authority?~~ And who is gullible enough to believe that all of them fall automatically into a God given harmony? Just as the written words in the Scriptures are time bound and depend upon the Spirit of God for their life and authority, so are reason, conscience, experience and tradition time bound, and are only meaningful when they submit to the same Spirit and are made channels through which truth may be revealed.

The danger of basing the authority of Scripture on human reason alone is that man rather than God becomes the ultimate authority. Man's will becomes more absolute than God's Will. This enables man to hold the balance between the authority of Scripture and the authority of culture. He is able to safeguard his cultural values from being put in question by Scripture, and it also serves as man's defence against the cutting edge of God's sword.

According to Dodd and Rowley, the authority of Scripture resides respectively in the decisions of the experts or geniuses in the knowledge of God, and in the rational demonstration of this authority. Such conclusions can greatly confuse the issue, because of their humanistic overtones. They

insinuate that the ultimate authority of Holy Scripture, originates and is completely dependent upon human decisions and reason. If this were so the Bible would be just the word of man, not the Word of God; and the church, from her first days would be guilty of preaching a human message. It is true that human decisions and reason play a significant role in man's relation to the authority of Scripture, but at best, all that such factors can do is to assist man in gaining a fuller understanding and clearer articulation of this authority, which has already been established by God. The ultimate authority of Scripture is not dependent upon anything man has done or can do; in fact, it is not dependent upon anything in the finite realm; it is dependent exclusively upon what God has done and continues to do. The reason man has been given the capacity to decide and reason is so that he can direct his life according to this authority.

Therefore, when Luther pointed to the Bible as the authoritative Word of God, he was not referring to an achievement wrought by human decisions and reason, but was referring to the witness it bears to God's great acts from the creation to the last days; the proclamation of God's law and gospel. In short: he was referring to the primary evidence of God's acts and words which

He gives to His creatures and to His people.

These acts are found throughout the Bible: There is the act of Creation, of calling and delivering the Israelites and of sending forth the Prophets, all of which culminated in the giving of His Son Jesus Christ. In Jesus, the world beheld the unique authority of God. During His earthly sojourn, He taught and preached with a sense of fearlessness and directness. At times he repudiated the Mosaic Law, claimed His gospel to be ~~the fulfilment~~ the fulfilment of the Old Testament, and upheld His Father's Kingdom as the new era in the life of Israel. There were times when He cut across even some of the practices of John the Baptist. The Disciples and the early Church recognized His authority by the way they answered His call.

However when Jesus was condemned and crucified, His authority seemed arrested and silenced at last; but this was only the beginning. Inherent in the resurrection was a victory and authority that defied not only worldly opposition, but death itself. Christ is now man's true Mediator; only through Him can mankind find God. It is to this that the Words in John's Gospel refer, "no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."¹

1. John 14:6

Although these acts of God have been recorded by men, dependent upon their human decisions and reason, such acts have been accepted by the church as evident acts of God. Therefore, to understand their true meaning man needs more than the wisdom and insight of the world, he needs faith. This means he has to die with Christ in His death and rise with Him in His resurrection into the life of the Spirit.¹

This thinking, inherent in Luther, reveals a respectful and realistic approach towards tradition. The emphasis it places upon tradition is such that it neither looks upon it as an authoritative and ultimate norm, nor rules it out as a human distortion and falsehood. Instead it is seen as a medium or context upon which man is dependent, if God's Word is to be communicated to him with meaning and relevance, but, to which he should never become a slave. For this medium, by its very nature, is always secondary to the Word and forever beneath its judgment.

This same type of thinking is found in the approach employed by the Church of South India. The South India Scheme

1. I Corinthians 2:10

does not naively discredit tradition altogether, but respects it in its right place. There is evidence of this within the Scheme itself. The Ministry of the Church certainly has a traditional form, as it consists of Bishops, Presbyters and **Deacons**. All of these are New Testament terms and were used by the early Church. One reason why the episcopal system was adopted was because it had been a part of the Church from early times. Similar overtones are found in the Church's worship. Much research work is being done to resurrect traditional patterns of worship for the conducting of the Sacraments. Traditional prayers and liturgies are used, and the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are recommended.

On the other hand, however, the Church believes that none of these elements carry an ultimate authority in themselves, but depend upon the authority of the Holy Scriptures. Although she accepts the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, as witnessing to and safeguarding the faith, she does not "intend thereby to demand the assent of individuals to every word and phrase in them, or to exclude reasonable liberty of interpretation, or to assert that these Creeds are a complete expression of the

Christian faith."¹

The Church of South India believes that her experience and traditional expression of faith should always be judged by the Word of God; the two are never to become parallel or equal. If this were to happen, the Church would forfeit the criterion of the ultimate truth of her own faith. The Church ought always to ask herself whether she is putting her own preaching and doctrine above the Word of God which is always above and before every tradition. It is true that any statement of doctrine has to be as accurate as possible, but it can never be equal to the Word; it should ever remain its servant. At its best, doctrinal tradition is always less than God's Word. It should ever be open and subject to change, for no matter how good or strong a church's tradition might be, the Word of God can force it into a radical process of re-evaluation. Therefore, the Church of South India, is not overestimating Scripture and underestimating Tradition.

1. The Basis of Union, in: Appendix I of, The Constitution, op. cit., Note (i), p. 72.

CHAPTER THREE

Sacramental Theology

"The Church of South India believes that the Sacraments of Baptism and the Supper of the Lord are means of grace through which God works in us, and that while the mercy of God to all mankind cannot be limited there is in the teaching of Christ the plain command that men should follow His appointed way of salvation by a definite act of reception into the family of God and by continued acts of fellowship with Him in that family, and that this teaching is made explicit in the two Sacraments which He has given us. In every communion the true Celebrant is Christ alone, who continues in the Church today that which He began in the upper room. In the visible Church, the celebration of the Lord's Supper is an act of the Church, the company of believers redeemed by Christ, who act as the local manifestation of the whole Church of Christ in heaven and on earth. . . . From very early times it has been the custom of the Church that those only should exercise this function who have received full and solemn commission from the Church to do so; this commission has ordinarily been given by the laying on of hands in ordination.

"The only indispensable conditions for the ministration of the grace of God in the Church are the unchangeable promise of God Himself and the gathering together of God's elect people in the power of the Holy Ghost. God is a God of order; it has been His good pleasure to use the visible Church and its regularly constituted ministries as the normal means of the operation of His Spirit. But it is not open to any to limit the operation of the grace of God to any particular channel, or to deny the reality of His grace when it is visibly manifest in the lives of Churches and individuals."¹

This statement, which is a summary of the Church's sacramental stand, contains three important declarations:

1. Baptism and the Supper of the Lord are means of grace, ordained by Christ. 2. Christ is the true Celebrant at the Supper, which is an act of the whole Church. 3. The restriction of the duty of celebration to Bishops and Presbyters is absolutely a rule of order. Each of these declarations will be dealt with in turn, trusting that the wider and deeper meaning of this rather brief statement will be revealed.

1. The Constitution, op. cit., pp. 5-6

1. Baptism and the Supper of the Lord are means of Grace,
Ordained by Christ.

The Church of South India believes that there are many channels through which God's grace can operate, but that Baptism and the Supper of the Lord are two very special and unique channels; that they have been instituted by Christ, and that all men are commanded to follow these appointed ways.

The doctrine of Baptism in the New Testament means the baptism into the death and resurrection of the Servant-Messiah. The origin of this statement is found in Jesus Himself. He was the first to teach that His own death was a baptism which had to be shared by all those who wished to participate in the messianic salvation. In Mark, Jesus is recorded as saying, "the βάπτισμα that I am baptized with",¹ and in Luke He is recorded as saying, "I have a βάπτισμα to be baptized with".² Here Mark and Luke are giving what they, as teachers of the church in their day, understood the thought of the Lord to be regarding the subject of baptism into the death of the Messiah. This teaching of

1. Mark 10:38

2. Luke 12:50

Christ about baptism was given a prominent position in the practice and theology of the Apostolic Church. Paul gives testimony to this teaching of Christ and the church when he writes: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."¹

Therefore, the only satisfying answer to the question why baptism was the universal and unquestioned method of initiation in the Apostolic Church from the days before the conversion of St. Paul is that Jesus Himself had taught His Disciples the necessity of baptism into His death and resurrection, the great act of messianic salvation by which the new age was inaugurated and the outpouring of the Spirit begun.

The other special channel of grace, instituted by Christ, is the Supper of the Lord. It is now believed that the New Testament accounts² of the words and actions of Jesus at

1. Romans 6:3f; see also Colossians 2:12

2. Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:15-19a; I Corinthians 11:23-26

the Last Supper in the Upper Room were not eyewitness reports.¹ However the content of these accounts do^{es} enshrine the apostolic tradition of what there took place. And since the church from apostolic days met to break bread and drink the cup, this is a continuing testimony to the truth of Jesus' interpretation and the teaching of the significance of His own death, as the means of ratifying a new covenant between God and man. This perpetual celebrating of the Lord's Supper, by every generation of christians, supplies more impressive testimony that this is an act instituted by Christ, the builder of the Church, than any documentary evidence. Paul says, "as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."² What Paul is really saying is that 'ye proclaim the Lord's saving death', ⁶ Because in the eucharistic action there is implied an interpretation of the fact of Christ's death, the interpretation which had been first perceived and taught by Jesus Himself. No other interpretation of the eucharistic action in the church is at all convincing. Each

1. J. Jeremias in "The Eucharistic Words of Jesus", Macmillan, New York, 1955, pp. 106-135, argues that Mark 14:22-25 preserves a liturgical formula which had already been fixed; and that in I Corinthians 11:23-26 Paul is passing on the formula in use at Antioch about 40 A.D.

2. I Corinthians 11:26

time the Supper of the Lord is celebrated it proclaims the saving death of Christ. "Every Eucharist proclaims the beginning of the time of God's salvation."¹

2. Christ is the true Celebrant at the Supper, which is an Act of the Whole Church

The Church of South India declares that Christ, who continues in the church, is the true celebrant at every celebration of the Supper of the Lord. This belief finds support in the definite promise which Christ made when He said that His presence would be wherever two or three are gathered together in ~~my~~^{his} name;² also on the general promise that He is with His people always, even to the end of the world.³ Then in the Upper Room Jesus is described as identifying His body with the bread, and the wine with His blood.⁴ And of course Christ is present in the Holy Spirit whom He has sent;⁵ the Spirit presents Christ to the church in this time between His coming and His coming again. The Holy Spirit mediates the presence of Christ in a two-fold way:

1. E. J. Jeremias, op. cit., p. 164

2. Matthew 18:20

3. Ibid, 28:20

4. Ibid, 26:26

5. John 14:18

He makes Christ present to the church, so that as she takes the bread and wine she is genuinely in the presence of the One who took flesh and gave His body and blood and was raised again for the church.¹ Secondly the Spirit leads the church into the presence of Christ, who lived, died, rose and ascended for her. Her affections are thus called from earthly things, and she is set in the upward movement with Christ which is the gracious consequence of His downward movement for her.² Consequently, when the sacraments are duly administered Christ is present by the Spirit and His gifts of grace are proffered to all those who come. There should, however, be repentance and faith on the part of the recipient. Although Christ is always present in the Sacraments, only those who receive in repentance and faith may know His presence to their soul's profit.

Another significant factor which makes this fact of Christ's presence real and meaningful is that the Supper of the Lord is an act of remembrance (ἀνάμνησις). The Bible takes a very realistic view of memory. When man remembers

1. John 16:14

2. Colossians 3:1ff

something from the past, he does not merely entertain a pale idea of it; he actually makes it present again, makes it once more potent in his life for good or evil.¹ In the Old Testament a man who is dead lives on in his sons, or whenever his 'name' is remembered.² The horror of Sheol is that it is a land of forgetfulness,³ the dead are not remembered in Sheol, even by Yahweh.⁴ Non-existent means not being 'remembered' by God.

Therefore, when a man remembers, according to the biblical meaning of remembrance, he makes the past present. It is no longer the dead-and-gone past, but it is the past which is even now present again and active for his salvation. Consequently, every time the **Supper** of the Lord is celebrated the scene in the Upper Room is made present, so is Golgotha, the death of Jesus, His broken Body, His shed Blood, and His Resurrection ----the whole Gospel is made present. Christ's once-for-all full perfect and sufficient sacrifice and oblation is held in perpetual remembrance and becomes newly present.

The Church of South India also states that the

1. See J. Pedersen, Israel, Milford, London, (Two Vol.), E.T., 1926, pp. 245-259

2. 2 Samuel 18:18

3. Psalms 88:12

4. Psalms 88:5

celebration of the Supper of the Lord is an act of the Church, the company of believers redeemed by Christ. This is because the South India Scheme conceives of the church as a Royal Priesthood derived from the heavenly High Priesthood of the risen and ascended Christ, asserting that all priesthood exists in Christ and apart from participating in His risen and ascended life there is no priesthood. It is in this priesthood that the whole church and all her members are called to share, thus giving all faithful christians an equal spiritual status before God. Therefore the Church of South India considers it false for any doctrine of the ministry to make it appear that the priesthood is the exclusive possession of the ^{ordained} ministry. The Scheme views this as a violation of the character of the church. Consequently, in the Service of the Lord's Supper the whole church meets as a holy priesthood and as the local manifestation of the whole church of Christ in heaven and on earth. The celebration is a sacrifice offered by the church in her corporate unity; it is not a sacrifice offered by a celebrant on behalf of the church. Bishop Newbigin says that "If a validly ordained celebrant is the absolute indispensable condition of a sacrament, so that without this there is no sacrament, then this fact must determine the

whole doctrine of the church. In that case one will be committed to a view which bases the church entirely on valid ministerial succession. When this is accepted the whole Biblical view of the nature of the church is lost."¹

3. The Restriction of the duty of Celebration to Bishops and Presbyters is Absolutely a Rule of Order

From this follows the Church's attitude toward the place of the ministry in regard to the Sacraments. The Church of South India realizes, and is willing to accept the tradition, that from early times it has been the custom of the church that only those who have been fully and solemnly commissioned by the church, through the laying on of hands in ordination, should exercise the function of celebrating the sacraments. But the Scheme goes on to state that the only absolutely essential conditions for the ministration of the sacraments are the certain and abiding promises of God and the gathering together of the church in the Holy Spirit. The Scheme does not state that the efficacy of the sacraments depends, as an essential condition, upon the grace of orders, and that this grace is transmitted from its depository in the Apostles only through episcopal

1. Lesslie Newbigin, op. cit., p. 178

ordination. Instead it emphasizes, in keeping with its view of the church as a priesthood, that the regularly constituted ministry of the church is essential not for the sake of making the sacraments valid, but from the standpoint of order; and that this order can be given by any duly and regularly constituted ministry. Bishop Palmer, in a sermon,¹ said: "I will withstand anyone to the face who wishes to say that for this Sacrament, or for the forgiveness of sins, a priest is essentially and independently necessary. There is no evidence for that in the Bible, and there is much against it... At the same time, I will not cease to say that the Church was quite right in making the rules by which the celebration of the Eucharist is confined to the priest, a very good rule of order----probably the best that could be made----but not an essential condition of the celebration of the Sacrament."

Bishops Newbigin and Palmer agree that it would be wrong, from the standpoint of order, to permit non-ordained people to administer the sacraments, except regarding baptism,

1. Sermon preached in Westminster Abbey, June 29, 1933, p. 31
This excerpt from Bishop Palmer's Sermon, is quoted by Lesslie Newbigin, op. cit., p. 177.

and then only in the case of an emergency. Newbigin says it is not known for certain when this rule came into being, but it does belong to the whole nature of the church and the sacraments. This rule, he continues, "is not an accident of history, but of the essence of the Church, that this ministry should be both conjoined to the permanent exercise of pastoral responsibility in the church, and also connected with a succession of authority binding the church in all ages and places into one. Yet it remains still a rule of order, derivative from and subordinate to the fundamental truth that the whole Church is a sharing in the heavenly High Priesthood of Christ."¹

II.

It is precisely at this point that the sacramental theology of the Church of South India shows great differences from the views held by, (a) Roman Catholicism, (b) Orthodoxy, and (c) Anglicanism. It is also at this point that the church's theology of the sacraments faces its greatest test. In order to apprehend a clearer perspective of these differences, each view

1. Lesslie Newbigin, op. cit., p. 178.

will be treated briefly in the following manner:

(a) Roman Catholicism

Among the conditions laid down by the Roman Catholic Church¹ for valid sacraments is that they can only be performed by the proper person with the right intention. Regarding Baptism and the Lord's Supper only an episcopally ordained priest can officiate.² This is basically why catholicism considers the sacraments of most other churches invalid. It is imperative that the sacraments, particularly the Supper of the Lord, be celebrated by a priest, ordained in the apostolic tradition, if such acts are to be effective ex opere operato, and the transmission of sacramental grace is to take place. Holy orders, according to Roman Catholic Thought, lies at the heart of the whole sacramental system. This is why sacraments, if they are to be valid, have to be administered by a duly authorized priest.

Basic to Roman Catholic belief³ is the assertion that

1. Einar Molland, Christendom, A. R. Mowbray & Co., London, 1959, p. 59f

2. Baptism can be administered by a lay-person in case of emergency.

3. The Church and Ecumenism, Editor: Hans Küng, Paulist Press, New York, 1965, Vol. 4, p. 177f

bishops are the successors of the Apostles. They are respected as receiving the gift of the Spirit through the laying on of hands, thus making them leaders and high priests of the New Israel.

"Around the bishop, priests form a sacerdotal body and they share in his priesthood, as the 72 ancients of the Book of Exodus participated in the Spirit of Moses and the 72 disciples in the Gospel were associated with the ministry of the apostles."¹

They believe that "the priesthood was instituted by Christ Himself in and through His institution of the Eucharist as the sacrifice of the New Covenant. The special authority vested in the priest is the power to consecrate the Eucharist, to offer it to God and to distribute it to the people, as well as to remit or retain sins. At the ordination of priests the candidate is handed a Chalice and the following formula is pronounced by the bishop: "Receive the power to offer sacrifice in the Church for the living and the dead in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost". . . ."²

Therefore, Roman Catholicism believes that there is a special spiritual estate of the clergy in distinction from the

1. The Church and Ecumenism, op. cit., p. 178.

2. Einar Molland, op. cit., p. 75.

laity. They link the ministerial office with the sacraments by a two-fold essential and indissoluble connection: They believe Christ established the office of priesthood for the sake of celebrating the Mass; also that the priesthood receives a sacramental and ineffaceably qualifying consecration, through the special sacrament of Holy Orders.¹

(b) Orthodoxy

The Orthodox Church says, "The active presence of the minister is absolutely necessary, and for the performance of the Sacraments indispensable, and no layman has authority to perform any of them, except in cases of emergency (i. e. danger of death) the Sacrament of Baptism only... The indispensable position of the minister for the only possible administration of the Sacraments through him is based on the fact that our Lord did not order laymen and the simple faithful to baptise themselves and others, nor did He with the other Sacraments, but chose His disciples and ordered them to do so, i. e. to guide (Πολυαίετα) the faithful spiritually and to perform the Sacraments, which is one of the most important parts of

1. Council of Trent, Session 33

spiritual guidance. That is why the Church regards the active presence of the rightly and canonically ordained and appointed minister as indispensable."¹ It is clear from this that the Orthodox Church believes the validity of the sacraments depends greatly upon the status of the minister who has performed them. They also stress church order together with other points for the validity of sacraments: "...for the valid performance of Sacraments, all liturgical rites and rules of the Church must be observed and kept regarding place, time and mode of performance, in which is included, of course, the right use of the principal outward and visible signs of the Sacraments. The violation of these rules, even by the rightly ordained and canonically appointed minister, has a direct influence on the validity of the Sacraments thus performed."²

(c) Anglicanism

All Anglicans are not in complete agreement as to what constitutes a valid sacrament. There are some who would say that the only conditions necessary for validity are: "...a

1. H.S. Alivisatos, The Orthodox Point of View, in: The Ministry and the Sacraments, Edited by Roderic Dunkerley, S.C.M. Press, London, 1937, p. 76.

2. H.S. Alivisatos, op. cit., p. 77.

partaking of bread and wine, and a use of such words as Christ uttered at the Last Supper concerning His Body and Blood, together with an intention to carry out the Sacraments which Christ appointed."¹ And according to Canon Quick, there is nothing in the Anglican Formularies which definitely contradicts this view. But according to the stricter school of anglo-catholic thought, "the celebration of the Eucharist is so strictly a function of the ordained priesthood that its celebration by a priest is one of the appointed conditions which constitute the Sacrament itself. According to this view, therefore, where there is no validly ordained priest there can be no valid Eucharist".² This is the traditional anglican view: without a validly ordained priest there can be no valid Eucharist, and that a valid ordination can only be performed by a bishop consecrated in the apostolic succession. However, the Anglican Church follows the general tradition of Catholicism and Orthodoxy in acknowledging the validity of Baptism administered by a layman or woman; and it is recognized that if an ordained minister is not available, a

1. Canon O.C. Quick, Anglican, in: "The Ministry and the Sacraments", Edited by, Roderic Dunkerley, S.C.M. Press, London, 1937, p. 130.

2. Ibid, p. 130

layman or woman should perform the rite in case of need.¹

There are two important New Testament references which can be quoted in support of these views: There is Christ's command to "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them. . . ."² This command was given not to the whole body of believers, but to the eleven. Then there is Paul's saying, "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God."³ In this last reference, the mysteries of God are understood by many expositors as synonymous with the sacraments. But in reply to both references, Henry J. Van Dyke says: "It must be confessed that these proof-texts are not conclusive. The most that can be claimed for them is that they fall in with the idea that the administration of the sacraments is the prerogative of the ministry. That idea is according to the eternal fitness of things. While it is not plainly expressed in Scripture, it is assumed and implied. Whether the Sacraments are among "the mysteries of God" or not, they are certainly the most sacred rites of Christianity,

1. Canon O.C. Quick, op. cit., p. 126

2. Matthew 28:19

3. I. Corinthians 4:1

and belong to the innermost sanctuary of Christian worship. There is therefore a manifest propriety in committing their administration to the Christian ministry."¹ Van Dyke goes on to make the point that since all these views permit the baptism of infants in times of emergency the main root of their whole theory concerning the validity of the sacraments is cut. "If, as they maintain, the efficacy of these holy ordinances depends, as an essential condition, upon the grace of orders, and this grace is transmitted from its depository in the Apostles only through episcopal ordination, how is it possible in any case to set aside this Divine constitution, and yet retain the validity of the sacraments? And if this may be done in one case, why not in another? If baptism may be lawfully and effectually administered by the physician or the nurse to a dying infant, why not, under similar circumstances, to a dying man? And if to the dying, why not to the living?---who are, in fact, all dying, seeing that "in the midst of life we are in death." Moreover, if one of the sacraments may be lawfully administered by those who are not episcopally ordained, why not both?

1. Henry J. Van Dyke, The Church: Her Ministry and Sacraments, Anson D.F. Randolph and Company, New York, 1890, pp. 202-3

It will perhaps be answered that the one is more necessary to salvation than the other. But even if this distinction be admitted, it has no pertinency to the question we are considering, which is not the necessity of the sacraments to salvation, but simply their validity. The theory which bases that validity upon the grace of orders received from an apostolic depository through a particular mode of ordination, breaks down and is abandoned by its strongest advocates as cruelly impracticable when it is put to the test of an emergency."¹

III.

Although criticism can be leveled against the Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican views, regarding the role of the priest or minister in the celebration of the sacraments, it should not be arbitrarily concluded that all such thinking is wrong. These views do have biblical support, perhaps not according to every church's interpretation, but, at least, according to their own. And this is possible and permissible in view of the fact that much of the biblical testimony lends itself to various interpretations, none of which may be conclusive, but all of which possess some element of truth.

1. Henry J. Van Dyke, op. cit., pp. 204-5

It should also be realized that these views have been steeped in time, tested and tempered by many dangers and circumstances and have succeeded in etching their way deeply and perhaps permanently into much of the tradition of christendom. Therefore the question ought to be asked: Has the Church of South India ruthlessly and irreverently pushed aside these views, in order to arrive at a more convenient and compromising approach to this problem of the role of the ministry in the celebrating of the sacraments, or has she viewed the matter with careful thought and consideration?

The answer seems clear: The South India Scheme, due to pastoral circumstances and theological principle, has given this matter of the ministry and the sacraments very careful and thorough consideration. Long before the union of the churches, lay celebration of both sacraments was permitted under certain conditions. This is understandable in ^{the} light of the Indian situation: There were many small and remote villages in which small pockets of christians lived. Many of these people were converts from the Hindu faith; as christians they were in their infancy and had a very real need for ministerial care. But, there were so many such villages, and so few

ministers, that such folk partook of the sacraments very infrequently; only if and when a minister could arrange a visit with them. There were others who would not have received the sacraments at all, if special layfolk had not been authorized to perform on certain occasions. Bishop Newbigin says, "In almost all parts of the Church the problem has simply been solved by leaving the village congregations with infrequent celebrations of the Sacrament. But in certain parts of the Methodist Church and of the South India United Church license has been given by the Synod or Council concerned to unordained Christian workers---such as senior evangelists---to administer the Sacrament in certain defined localities and for a defined period."¹

This was considered a temporary measure under special circumstances. The Methodists did not want to see it become a permanent law of the church. Indeed, the majority of the churches negotiating union opposed the practice. But some of the Congregationalists favoured it. "They urged on grounds of doctrine and of history that the fundamental Biblical

1. Lesslie Newbigin, op. cit., p. 174.

truth that the Church is a Holy Priesthood could only be safeguarded if permanent provision were made for the celebration of the Sacraments by duly authorized laymen, that only thus could a falsely sacerdotal view of the ministry be excluded, and that, in fact, Congregationalists could not abandon the practice "without abandoning their very raison d'etre."¹

Such an attitude gravely endangered the whole idea of unity.² To help meet the situation an intensive interchange of thought took place between the Congregationalists and Methodists,³ and a sub-committee was appointed. This committee discovered that the main reason the Congregationalists desired lay celebration was due to a deep rooted fear that the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers would not be adequately safeguarded by the Scheme of Union. Consequently, the committee realized that the theological implications of this doctrine had to be drawn out and articulated more firmly and fully. This is precisely what the Fathers of the Union strove to do. They began by making a study of the New Testa-

1. Lesslie Newbigin, op. cit., p. 175.

2. Bengt Sundkler, Church of South India, Lutterworth Press, London, 1954, p. 283ff

3. Out of this discussion came two short booklets:

(a) The Lay Celebration of the Lord's Supper, a congregationalist point of view, H.C. Lefever, C.L.S., Madras.

(b) The Lay Administration of the Lord's Supper, a methodist point of view, A.M. Ward, C.L.S., Madras.

ment to see what it had to say about this doctrine. And they discovered that the priesthood about which the New Testament speaks is a corporate priesthood; that all the laity are priests and ministers of the Church of Jesus Christ through their baptism, and all ministers are equally laymen; and that corporately, the laity of the church, that is, the whole membership of the people of God, exercise their priesthood in the offering of their priestly oblation, the Θυσία αἰνεσιῶν or eucharistic worship. As a result of this the Scheme strongly emphasizes the importance of the priesthood of all believers. Hence the idea of lay celebration was dropped and the restriction of the duty of celebration to bishops and presbyters became absolutely a rule of order.

Such emphasis rests on an understanding of the New Testament doctrine of the priesthood of all believers which is basic to the theology of the 16th century Reformer, Martin Luther. This is a significant fact for the South India Scheme, as it helps to guard the Scheme against critics who say it is too hasty and immature in its thinking. For Luther's thinking on this doctrine has been well tested and tempered by time, and has succeeded in etching its way deeply into the life and thinking

of the Christian Church. Therefore, since the thinking of the Church of South India is so closely aligned to Luther's, on this point, a brief survey will now be made of the Reformer's theology for the purpose of elucidating the South India position.

There are two emphases ^Nof priesthood inherent in Luther's theology: The priesthood of Jesus Christ; this means He is eternally active in His self-giving to the world. Then there is the priestly service which the church has to offer. This is the church's expression of her love toward Christ, and in this consists her royal priesthood which is the equivalent of the priesthood of all believers. All christians, stressed Luther, are made members of the royal priesthood through their baptism.¹ And when this happens they are given new birth through faith and consecrated as priests of Christ. For Luther such terms as christian and priests were synonymous.² He saw "...no other difference between laymen, priests, princes, bishops, or, in Romanist terminology, between religious and secular, than that of office or occupation, and not that of

1. Bertram Lee Woolf, Reformation Writings of Martin Luther, Lutterworth Press, London, 1952, Vol. I, p. 113.

2. The Ministry and the Sacraments, Edited by, Roderic Dunkerley, S.C.M. Press, London, 1937, p. 438

Christian status."¹ "Every one who has been baptized may claim that he has already been consecrated priest, bishop, or pope, even though it is not seemly for any particular person arbitrarily to exercise the office."² The Reformer believed that "...those now called 'the religious', i. e., priests, bishops, and popes, possess no further or greater dignity than other christians, except that their duty is to expound the Word of God and administer the sacraments---that being their office."³ All ministers and laymen stand together as servants of God's purpose; neither one possessing any special God given power over the other. Therefore, the ministry is not above the congregation, but in it, in the fellowship of all believers. All believers possess an essential equality, because they have all received the treasures which God has given. Luther summed up his thinking on this matter when he wrote: "For all Christians whatsoever really and truly belong to the religious class, and there is no difference among them except in so far as they do different work. That is St. Paul's meaning, in

1. Bertram Lee Woolf, op. cit., p. 115

2. Ibid, pp 114-5

3. Ibid, pp 115-6

I Corinthians 12, when he says: "We are all one body, yet each member hath his own work for serving other." This applies to us all, because we have one baptism, one gospel, one faith, and are all equally Christians. For baptism, gospel, and faith alone make men religious, and create a Christian people. . . . The fact is that our baptism consecrates us all without exception and makes us all priests."¹ All share this high dignity irrespective of their calling: "A shoemaker, a smith, a farmer, each has his manual occupation and work; and yet, at the same time, all are eligible to act as priests and bishops. Every one of them in his occupation or handicraft ought to be useful to his fellows, and serve them in such a way that the various trades are all directed to the best advantage of the community, and promote the well-being of body and soul, just as all the organs of the body serve each other."²

Luther, however, realized the need for a special priesthood or ministry constituted by God Himself. But by a special ministry he did not mean an elite group, each of whom

1. Bertram Lee Woolf, op. cit., p. 113

2. Ibid, p. 116

received a character indelibilis, as an undefined magical power, or 'special' grace. Rather, he was referring to those who had been called and commissioned by God and formally recognized as such by a congregation. It is to be a ministry in and for the church, possessing the authority to preach the Word, administer the sacraments and set forth the Lordship of Christ. He believed that the reason for having the Word preached and the sacraments administered by this special ministry was not to give these practices validity, because they have their validity solely in the virtue of Christ's Word and institution, but it is done in order that the Word will be faithfully preached and the sacraments regularly administered.

This is essentially the stand taken by the Church of South India, regarding the priesthood of all believers and the special ministry which God calls and gives to the church.

Therefore, the position of the Church of South India may be summarized as follows: She believes that the sacraments are not to be taken over by man; nor are they dependent, for their holiness, upon any act of sanctification performed by a priest ordained and sanctified to that end. The sacraments do not come from man to God, but from God to man. Furthermore,

the Church of South India does not believe that there is an absolute unbreakable connection between the ministerial office and the administration of the sacraments. She conceives of this connection as only relatively necessary, but to be retained for the sake of the necessary publicity of the administration of sacraments which results from the essential character of the sacrament as a publicum signum.¹ The connection between the two is not to indicate that the ministerial office has a sacramental quality. The minister ecclesiae has no specifically different relation to the ministerium regni Dei than any other christian. Priests or ministers are not lords but servants through whom God's work of salvation may be carried on.

1. The sacraments have been instituted by Christ for His Church. Therefore, they can be administered publicly only by those who have been given the proper authority ~~to~~ do so; ordination is the mark of this authority. It is the public confirmation that a minister has been called by God to serve in a particular way, and has been recognized as such by the whole Church.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Ministry

This Chapter proposes to analyse the thinking of the Church of South India regarding the ministry. Such an analysis will be made with the help of the following headings:

1. The Ministry as a Divine Gift. 2. The Vocation of the Ordained Ministry. 3. Ordination. 4. The Church's Initial Ministry and what the Critics say about it. 5. Basis for their Criticism. 6. Does the Church of South India have an invalid Ministry? 7. The Attitude of the Church of South India toward the Apostolate.

1. The Ministry as a Divine Gift

"The Church of South India believes that the ministry is a gift of God through Christ to His Church, which He has given for the perfecting of the life and service of all its members. All members of the Church have equally access to God. All, according to their measure, share in the heavenly High Priesthood of the risen and ascended Christ from which alone the Church derives its character as a royal priesthood. All alike are called to continue upon earth the priestly work of

Christ by showing forth in life and word the glory of the redeeming power of God in Him. No individual and no one order in the Church can claim exclusive possession of this heavenly priesthood.

"But in the Church there has at all times been a special ministry, to which men have been called by God and set apart in the Church. Those who are ordained to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments can exercise their offices only in and for the Church, through the power of Christ the one High Priest."¹

References have already been made, in Chapters one and three, to the strong emphasis which the Church of South India places upon the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. Here again she makes her belief clear that all christians who have been baptized are consecrated as priests and ministers of Christ. All have equal access to God, and all are called to continue the priestly work of Christ here on earth. The South India Church stresses that this privilege and responsibility which comes to all church members is not depen-

1. The Constitution, op. cit., pp. 6-7

dent upon their goodness or ingenuity, but upon the gift of the risen and ascended Christ. For He is the heavenly High Priest, from whom the Church derives her character as a royal priesthood and in whom her members are made priests and ministers.

But whilst she sees the ministry in this general sense, the Church of South India also accepts the fact that there is a particular and special ministry ordained to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. This ministry is also a gift from God through Christ. Its primary form in the early Church did not spring from human contriving, but from divine calling and inspiration. If the Christian Church is, as the New Testament represents, the Body of Christ, it follows that the Church's ministry is not merely a human arrangement, arising from the fact that like every association she needs officers and agents. It is this secondarily, but primarily and essentially the Church's ministry is a divine appointment; a gift from God to the Church which is forever dependent upon the risen and exalted Christ. T.W. Manson says, "...there is one essential ministry, the perpetual ministry of the Risen Lord, present,

as He promised to be, where His people are gathered in His name, and renewing to every generation the gifts they need to continue His Ministry."¹ Later on he adds, "All other ministries, apostles, prophets, teachers, evangelists, bishops, presbyters, deacons are derivative, functional, and dependent on Him."² Therefore ~~the ordained ministry, and each member thereof~~ *each member of the ordained ministry* ought to humble himself to the inflow of the Divine in order to receive his commission and authority, but above all, the supreme gift, the Word, which is the direct product of the Spirit, never dependent on any ecclesiastical form.

In Mark's Gospel Jesus is described as going up into a mountain and calling to Himself those whom He desired. "And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils..."³ Luke insists that this appointment was the sequel to a night spent in prayer with the

1. T.W. Manson, The Church's Ministry, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1948, p. 76.

2. Ibid, p. 95

3. Mark 3:13-15

Father;¹ a decision based on the will of God.

When Christ sat down with His disciples in the Upper Room another important moment for the christian ministry was made manifest. Christ said unto them, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer..."² The Master had willed this occasion. This moment was to be a test and a challenge to His ministers. But it was to be even more; it sent a great shaft of light forward into the darkness: "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom."³ He made these plain men realize that the hope of the New Covenant focalized on them. They had made a tryst with Him in the eternal mansions. And they would not come there alone: He had set a rainbow of promise over their faith and labours: "many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob..."⁴

-
1. Luke 6:12-13.
 2. Luke 22:15
 3. Matthew 26:29
 4. Matthew 8:11

The Supper discourses in John elaborate and confirm the inexhaustible legacy our Lord passed on to His ministers; too rich an inheritance for weak men to carry had they not had the assurance, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain...."¹

There was no doubt in Paul's mind as to where he received his credentials. Writing to the Galatians he introduces himself as an apostle, not of men, "...neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father..."² And in referring to his call into the ministry, he says: "...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood...."³

2. The Vocation of the Ordained Ministry

The Church of South India states that "The vocation of the ordained ministry is to bring sinners to repentance, and

1. John 15:16

2. Galatians 1:1; also, Ephesians 1:1

3. Galatians 3:15-16

to lead God's people in worship, prayer, and praise, and through pastoral ministrations, the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments (all these being made effective through faith) to assist men to receive the saving and sanctifying benefits of Christ and to fit them for service."¹

The preaching of the Word and the breaking of bread are considered, by the Church of South India, to be important tasks of the ordained ministry. A similar emphasis is found in the New Testament: When the Book of Acts unrolls the opening chapters in the story of the Church, the first christian assembly hears the proclamation of the Word.² God had shaken all souls there, and Peter rose to declare the meaning thereof. The Word had its first triumphs then at the hands of the chosen Apostles. And the secret of their sustained power in that life of witness was the fellowship when they recalled their Lord in the breaking of bread.³

Paul, in his epistles, lays great stress upon the Word and its proclamation. It might appear that he deals

1. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 7.

2. Acts 2:14.

3. Acts 2:42.

rather infrequently with the Sacraments. But that their proper administration weighs on his soul is clear from the solemn character of the charge he laid upon the Corinthians.¹ Another indication of his immense concern for the Holy Supper lies beneath the historic rebuke that he delivered to Peter, when Peter withdrew from eating with Gentile Christians because of scruples born of the Jewish law.²

The Church of South India sees the role of the minister, in all phases of his vocation, not as one removed or elevated above those to whom he ministers, but as one with them. He is to be his people's servant. It was this kind of ministry that Jesus was depicting when He took a towel and girded Himself and washed His disciples' feet: "...I have given you an example, that ye should also do as I have done to you."³ This incident vividly recalls the contention of which Luke tells⁴ as to which of the disciples was to be accounted the greatest: "And he said unto them, The Kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them

1. 1 Corinthians 11:23ff

2. Galatians 2:11

3. John 13:15

4. Luke 22:24

are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is Chief, as he that doth serve."¹ Every minister ought to have the passion to serve, not just to govern. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

3. Ordination

"The Church of South India believes that in ordination God, in answer to the prayers of His Church, bestows on and assures to those whom He has called and His Church has accepted for any particular form of the ministry a commission for it and the grace appropriate to it."²

Commission and grace are the two important words in this statement. If the Church's ministry is to be truly apostolic it has to be actively engaged by God and for God; it has to be given a commission with a sense of direction and challenge. Grace is also given; that is, God, out of His mercy, bestows unmerited favours and blessings upon the Church's ministry, enabling it to serve the Church in several

1. Luke 22:25-26; Mark 10:42-44

2. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 7

ways, so that all parts¹ of the Body of Christ will be united and made strong.

This idea of commission is certainly prevalent in the New Testament. After Jesus had called and set apart His followers, "...he called unto Him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits...."¹ According to Luke they were also commissioned to cure diseases, preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick.² And after the resurrection Christ says to His Apostles, "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."³ But the Apostles are not to go without a comforter: "And, being assembled together with them,^{he} commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me."⁴

In the New Testament, the grace of God is regarded as invariably given to the Church for her ministry. In his letter

-
1. Mark 6:7
 2. Luke 9:1-2
 3. John 20:21
 4. Acts 1:4

to the Romans, Paul says: "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness."¹ And in his letter to the Ephesians he says: "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ... And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...."²

The Church of South India, in her view of ordination, is not narrow or inflexible. She does not claim that this commission and grace are only given to certain ministries. The South India Church believes that any church, which considers herself to be called by God and reveals the fruits of His Spirit through her life, has equal access to this commission

1. Romans 12:6-8

2. Ephesians 4:7, 11-12

and grace for her ministry. The Church of South India is convinced that when ordination is administered with sincerity and faith, with prayer and, as has been generally the custom from apostolic days onwards, with the "laying on of hands" by the recognized ordaining authority---whether episcopal or presbyteral or congregational, the divine presence is there with the divine blessing accompanying it, and that 'grace'---which is God's presence and blessing through Christ---is given with the act. The Church of South India believes that the primary and essential fact about the christian ministry is the call and commission of Christ Himself---the call and commission of Christ to a man to be His servant or minister, the minister of the universal Church, the body of Christ, and not of any particular Church or denomination. Everything in ecclesiastical ordination and recognition is subsequent to, and has to be considered as secondary and subordinate to, this essential principle of the ministry.

This kind of thinking was prevalent among the uniting churches even prior to the union. The Basis of Union states that "The Uniting Churches recognize, however, that God has bestowed His grace with undistinguishing regard through all

their ministries, in His use of them for His work of enlightening the world, converting sinners and perfecting saints. They acknowledge each other's ministries to be real ministries of the Word and Sacraments, and thankfully recognize the spiritual efficacy of sacraments and other ministrations which God has clearly blessed. They confidently expect that these ministries hitherto separate will, when united, be used for a yet fuller manifestation of God's power and glory. Each Church, in separation, has borne special witness to certain elements of the truth; therefore for the perfecting of the whole body the heritage of each is needed. Each, maintaining the continuity of its own life, will be enriched by the gifts and graces of the others."¹

4. The Church's Initial Ministry and What the Critics say about it.

This broad approach taken by the Church of South India, toward the christian ministry, has played a significant part in the establishing of the Church's initial ministry: it enabled the South India Church to accept and maintain the historic episcopate in a constitutional form, without committing

1. The Basis of Union, op. cit., p. 69

herself, or her ministers, to any additional interpretation of episcopacy, or to any particular view or belief concerning orders of the ministry. The Scheme states it thus: "Whatever differing interpretations there may be, however, the Church of South India agrees that, as Episcopacy has been accepted in the Church from early times, it may in this sense fitly be called historic, and that it is needed for the shepherding and extension of the Church in South India. Any additional interpretations, though held by individuals, are not binding on the Church of South India."¹

Therefore, "The bishops of the dioceses of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon which are included in the Church of South India are accepted as bishops of that Church, provided that they assent to the Basis of Union and accept the Constitution of the Church.

"All the other ministers of the Uniting Churches in the area of the union who have been ordained as ministers of the Word and the Sacraments are acknowledged as such and have the status of presbyters in the Church of South India,

1. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 9.

provided that they assent to the Basis of Union and accept the Constitution of the Church. Every such presbyter of the Church of South India is at liberty to minister and to celebrate the Holy Communion in any Church of the Church of South India, subject to the pledge¹ given in section 13 above."²

It is at this point that the Scheme encounters its severest criticism from the Roman Catholic Church and some branches of the Anglican Church. The critics say that since the South India Church accepts the historic episcopate in a constitutional form, but does not commit herself or her ministers to any additional interpretation, she is depriving the episcopate of its true and complete meaning; and since, as a result of this, non-episcopally ordained ministers are permitted

1. In the pledge the Church of South India states "that it will at all times be careful not to allow any over-riding of conscience either by Church authorities or by majorities, and will not in any of its administrative acts knowingly transgress the longestablished traditions of any of the Churches from which it has been formed. Neither forms of worship or ritual, nor a ministry, to which they have not been accustomed, or to which they conscientiously object, will be imposed upon any congregation; and no arrangements with regard to these matters will knowingly be made, either generally or in particular cases, which would either offend the conscientious convictions of persons directly concerned, or which would hinder the development of complete unity within the Church or imperil its progress towards union with other Churches." The Constitution, op. cit., p. 12.

2. Ibid., p. 17

into the Church's ministry, and given equality with those episcopally ordained, the Scheme is depriving the episcopate of its true function. This shatters the guarantee of a valid ministry and surrenders something vital to the existence of the Church. Therefore the critics conclude that the Church, which holds such a view of the ministry is closing off the avenue through which God's grace and authority are extended to man, and is relying on her own strength and authority. They would therefore find it difficult to enter into relations of full Communion with the Church of South India.

5. Basis for Their Criticism

This criticism is based on the belief that there is much more to the episcopate than the fact that it is historic and constitutional. The critics believe that the office of the episcopate is the form which a continuing apostolate takes as it is transmitted. This means that the successors of the Apostles, namely the bishops, are recipients of the apostolic office, and that only those ordained by such a bishop are validly ordained. Two Anglican exponents of this thought are E.L. Mascall and A.M. Ramsey.

E.L. Mascall says that the Apostolate is "instituted

by Christ in the Twelve and expanded through the centuries into the universal Episcopate."¹ "...the Church's unity is established in our Lord's institution of the Apostolate, which is continued in the universal Episcopate; the bishop is the link between the local and the universal church."² A.M. Ramsey in putting forth his conclusions begins with the following questions: "Does this developed structure of Episcopacy fulfil the same place in the Church and express the same truth as did the Apostles' office in Samaria and in Corinth and throughout the Apostolic Church? If "Paul the Apostle" represents an important truth by his place and function in the one Body, does the Bishop represent the same truth?"³ Then he gives his answer: "Thus the same truth lies behind the Lord's commission to the Twelve, the episode of Peter and John laying hands on the Samaritans, the dealings of Paul the Apostle with the Corinthians, and the Episcopate which prevailed from the second century."⁴

1. E.L. Mascall, Corpus Christi, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1953, p. 13

2. Ibid, pp 18-19

3. A.M. Ramsey, The Gospel and the Catholic Church, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1936, p. 77

4. Ibid, p. 80

Therefore in the light of this, the argument is apparent: The Apostles assume successors into an office which they held, and which, in altered but essentially identical form, they discharge. Upon the Apostles' death, their places were filled by their successors. The same essential function is performed by the episcopate as was in apostolic days discharged by the Apostolate. It follows from this that the episcopate can rightly be called the 'essential ministry'.

6. Does the Church of South India have an invalid Ministry?

This is an important question. In order for it to be properly answered, a second question has to be answered first. Does this criticism rest on a sound basis? Can it be clearly and convincingly shown that the episcopate is the continuation of the Apostolate? Or to put it still another way, is the bishop the true successor of the Apostle and his office? There are ~~two~~ sources of evidence which might be consulted, extra-scriptural and scriptural.

The extra-scriptural evidence which comes from the end of the first century, just as the Apostolic Age was coming to a close, is slight. There is Polycarp of Smyrna in Asia,

Ignatius from Syria and I Clement from Rome. Then there is silence, until, beginning with Irenaeus, there is a stream of evidence, culminating in 200 with Clement of Alexandria. By this time it is clear that the establishing of bishops has taken place. The result of this process represented by these intervening years is clear, but the process itself remains obscure. According to A.M. Ramsey, "From early in the second century there appears a separation between the Bishops and the presbyters in the local churches, and a threefold ministry of Bishops, priests and deacons."¹

Attention, therefore, has to be directed to the Scriptures, to see if they afford any evidence which contributes to the understanding of this development. But the evidence of the New Testament on the subject of the ministry is found to be ambiguous on the very points which might help such an inquiry. For example, most of the New Testament references to 'bishops' afford a two-fold interpretation.

One of the important New Testament passages which speaks of 'elders' and 'bishops' is Titus 1:5-9. Here

1. A.M. Ramsey, op. cit., p. 76

Titus is left in Crete to "set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God;..." Various excellent qualities follow, and the passage concludes: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." When the question is asked as to the relation in which the elders and bishops stand to each other, at least two answers result: One interpretation is that this reference applies to two different classes. The writer passes from the appointment of elders to the qualifications of bishops. The appointment refers to elders alone and the qualifications refer to bishops alone. The writer says nothing about the qualifications of presbyters, whose appointment he has just mentioned, but something about the qualifications of bishops of whose appointment he has said nothing. This however, is a very unlikely exegesis of the passage. The other interpretation sees the terms 'elder' and 'bishop' as referring to the same people. Acts 20:28 supports this latter interpretation, for Paul is here said to address the

πρεσβύτεροι (meaning 'elder') of Ephesus as
ἐπίσκοποι (meaning 'overseer' or 'bishop').¹ And
 in I Peter the πρεσβύτεροι are bidden to lead the
 flock of God, exercising the oversight (ἐπισκοποῦντες).²

Therefore, although both these terms were used in the New Testament, it appears that they were used as two names for the same office bearer.

And when an attempt is made to discover the precise office of the Apostles, which the bishops are said to receive, a clear answer is not available. In Acts 8:14 Peter and John are sent down from Jerusalem to the believing Samaritans. But when it is asked why they are sent, what kind of ministry they represent, or in what capacity do they go, two interpretations emerge, depending on whether or not episcopacy is considered essential by the interpreter.

Representing one side, A.M. Ramsey says: "Now this event in Samaria is significant in the light of the whole teaching of the New Testament about the one ecclesia. When the Samaritans become Christians they are not to think of

1. Acts 20:28

2. I Peter 5:2

themselves as initiated into a Samaritan fellowship with its own isolated experience and spiritual life. They are to know that to be Christ's is to be included in the one life of the one people of God which sprang from the historical events in Jerusalem; the Holy Spirit who shall descend upon them is the Spirit who bears witness to the historical events, and who is known in the growth of the one universal fellowship. And these truths are vividly declared by the sending of S. Peter and S. John to lay hands on the Samaritans; and this function is restricted to them not because some special grace passes through them as an isolated channel, but because God, by using certain organs for certain functions, proclaims the fact of one Body in which alone men can grow into the fulness of Christ. The Apostles, as organs of the universal Church, lay hands upon the Samaritans."¹ Ramsey sees the apostolic office as essential to the unity and well being of the whole Church. It is the organ of the universal Church, through which God proclaims the fact of the one Body.

The second interpretation can be found in the words of

1. A.M. Ramsey, op. cit., pp 74-75

T.W. Manson: "It needs a long time to produce a mature settled ministry and a mature church membership, starting from zero. In the light of what happens on the Mission Field we need not be surprised at the immense importance of the Apostles in the Primitive Church: it is just what we should expect. For it is just in that situation that the need of apostolic guidance and help is greatest. It is true, and the New Testament is witness to the truth, that the individual Christian community may owe its existence, under God, to the Apostles, and not only its existence but also its continued spiritual health. But while the Apostle is essential in this way to the local community, it does not follow that he is essential in the same way to the Church as a whole. The Church of Christ was there before Paul the Apostle, though the Church at Corinth was not."¹ Manson believes that, since Peter and John are original witnesses to Christ whose Gospel it is they preach and by which the Church lives, it is only right and natural that they should offer help and guidance to the Samaritans, as well as confer gifts upon them. He believes that the Apostles were of great importance in the Primitive Church, helping new churches to get established. But

1. T.W. Manson, op. cit., p. 34

he sees the apostolic office in a limited sense: He does not conceive of it as being essential to the unity and well being of the Church as a whole.

Scripture, therefore, does not give clear cut evidence on this question, nor does it support discernible steps by which the Apostolate passes over to become the episcopate. The situation might be strengthened by a kind of corroboration, if the presence of an unmistakable identity of pattern apparent both in earlier and later times could be established. That is to say, if an identity could be established between Paul, who held a specific place in the Apostolic Age, and a Bishop of the succeeding age, this would help to establish a real correspondence between the office of Apostle and the office of Bishop. Ramsey thinks that such a pattern is discernible when he says, "Thus the same truth lies behind the Lord's commission to the Twelve, the episode of Peter and John laying hands on the Samaritans, the dealings of Paul the Apostle with the Corinthians, and the Episcopate which prevailed from the second century."¹ But this approach also suffers from a lack of evidence. In a sense the same truth lies

1. A.M. Ramsey, op. cit., p. 80

behind the Lord's commission to the Twelve, and their commissioning others in their turn. But when evidence is needed to show exactly that the same principle is at work and that the same relation reduplicates itself identically, as and when the episcopate appears, there precisely evidence is lacking.

Bishop Newbigin says, "Nothing can quite compensate for the fact that there is no single case recorded in the literature of the first century in which an Apostle indisputably transmitted his apostolic authority to a successor."¹ According to T. W. Manson, the office held by the Apostles is not transmissible but is "a personal thing and inalienable... it could not be transmitted to another. It did not pass at death."² *He also says that* ~~And that~~ it is "going beyond the evidence and beyond the inherent probabilities of the situation when the attempt is made to derive from these pieces of occasional Christian help and advice a "regional apostolate" held by "immediate 'successors' of the apostles" to act, it would seem as a bridge between the original Apostolate and the monarchical diocesan episcopate."³ The whole question is also

1. Lesslie Newbigin, op. cit., p. 153

2. T. W. Manson, op. cit., p. 51

3. Ibid, p. 61

challenged by J.A.T. Robinson, who contends that the "priorities" have been confused and that the slogan "no Bishop, no Church" is precisely to reverse the order of things as seen in the early days.¹

Therefore, since it cannot be shown clearly and convincingly that the episcopate is the form of the continuing apostolate, the criticism brought against the South India Scheme suffers from a dangerous shortage of evidence. This does not mean that the Church of South India and her ministry are perfect and beyond question, but neither does it mean that her ministry is invalid. The Fathers of the Scheme would be the last to claim their position as perfect; they readily agree that it has deficiencies. However it is a stand that is not without New Testament support. It is flexible and progressive, ever open to the revisions that renewed wisdom and insight always bring. In short, it is a ministry that is functional and already shows evidence of being blessed and used by God.²

1. J.A.T. Robinson, *Kingdom, Church, and Ministry*, in: *The Historic Episcopate*, Edited by, Kenneth M. Carey, Dacre Press, London, 1954, p. 12

2. See: *Renewal and Advance*. This is a "Report of the Church of South India Commission on Integration and Joint Action, 1963." Published for the Synod of the Church, by the Christian Literature Society.

7. The Attitude of the Church of South India toward the Apostolate

Even though a church does not believe her bishops to be the prime successors of the Apostles, it is important that she show respect for the Apostolate. For the Apostolate constituted the original ministry of the Church, and the same general truth which lies behind its commission lies behind the commission of the Church's ministry today. The Church of South India does not directly spell out her position on this issue. However her view of the ministry is such that it is possible to give, at least, a general assessment of her belief about the Apostolate.

In order for her belief to be given with meaning and purpose, the terms of explicit reference which define the apostolic office should be made clear: First of all, who were the Apostles? Alan Richardson says, "On the whole it seems reasonable to conclude that in the Church of apostolic times the only men who were regarded as apostles in the full and primary sense, i. e. ἀπόστολοι Χριστοῦ, were the Twelve, including Matthias, together with St. Paul and perhaps St. James." Richardson goes on to say that "In addition to

these there was another and altogether inferior class of

ἀποστολὴ ἐκκλησιῶν, that is, delegates who had

been sent on an errand from one church to another (e. g.

Epaphroditus) or upon some special commission on behalf of

their local church (e. g. Barnabas). The difference was that

the former received their commission (apostleship) directly

from the Lord himself while the latter were commissioned by

some local church".¹ Secondly, what qualifications did the

Apostles need for their apostolic office? In Acts 1:22 the

Apostles are declared as being witnesses of the resurrected

Jesus. They are to have "companied with us all the time that

the Lord Jesus went in and about among us..."² The Apostles

possessed the special quality of being eyewitnesses to the

entire career of Christ, incarnate, crucified and risen. It is not

known for certain whether Paul saw Jesus in the flesh, but he

does connect his apostleship with having seen the Lord, even if

'out of due time',³ Galatians 1:19 implies James' right to the

1. Alan Richardson, An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament, S.C.M. Press, London, 1958, p. 321

2. Acts 1:21

3. I Corinthians 9:1; I Corinthians 15:8f

title of Apostle, and I Corinthians 15:7 mentions a special resurrection appearance to him. However, apostleship depends on more than just having seen the Risen Lord, or having companied with Jesus and His entourage from the days of John the Baptist; a commissioning by the Risen Lord Himself is also necessary.¹ Paul strives to show that his commissioning was an authentic commissioning of the same order as those of the older Apostles.² He points to the evidence of the superabundance of his labours and suffering,³ to the solid reality of the churches he has fathered,⁴ and to the undeniable 'signs of an Apostle' which he has wrought---signs, wonders and miracles.⁵ Paul supplies sufficient evidence to show that the essential qualification of an apostle is that he should have been commissioned by the Risen Lord Himself.⁶

This means, then, that the Apostles, together, can effectively witness to the entire career and the full power of Christ, His incarnation, death and resurrection; and that they

1. Rom. 1:1, 5; Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:49; John 20:21-23; Acts 2:1-4; Ephesians 4:8-12

2. I Corinthians 9:1f; 15:7-9; II Corinthians 11:5; 12:11f; Galatians 2:7f

3. I Corinthians 15:10; II Corinthians 11:23-33

4. I Corinthians 9:2; II Corinthians 3:2

5. II Corinthians 12:12

6. Alan Richardson, op. cit., p. 323

have been commissioned by the Risen Lord Himself. Christ needs to do nothing now that has not had precedent in the witness provided by the Apostles. Even His newest act is only a repetition of those powers already witnessed to in their entirety. The story has now been fully and completely told of "All that Jesus began both to do and teach." He goes forward to His continuing work precisely "as it is written of Him."

Therefore, the Church of South India believes that a chapter closes when this witness is made. Just as a chapter closes when the books comprising the New Testament are written and canonized, so too an office comes to an end. The Apostles not only render complete and entire witness, they are also the first to do so. Therefore what they write is normative. In what the Church continues to say and do she can add nothing essential to what has already been said of Christ by them originally. And for precisely the same reason, no one can stand in their place, nor fill their places as their ranks thin and disappear. They were the first on the scene when the first testimony was made: this may be because of time, chance or the providence of God, nevertheless their place cannot be filled. The Church of South India believes, however, that the Apostles have successors, but not to their

office. The original witness has been made, there is no need to do it over again. As original and complete witnesses they mediate the gospel to all christians, whether lay or clergy; there is no distinction of essentiality. The Church of South India believes that the ministry belongs to the Church, and so far as apostolicity is concerned there is equality. All are successors of the Apostles and are given a commission to go forth ever in search of a clearer understanding of the Will of God, but none exactly ranking with the Apostles or reduplicating their office.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Church of South India and the Ecumenical Movement

Although the South India Scheme has been successful in uniting peoples of the Anglican, Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian Traditions, it would be unrealistic to expect it to solve all the problems facing ecumenism. This Scheme is neither perfect nor complete; in fact, some of its measures are still in the experimental stage.¹ Nevertheless the constituting of the Church of South India can be hailed as a great achievement for the cause of church union. It holds before all Christendom a noble example and an encouraging challenge. The contributions which the South India Church makes to the cause of union are seen best in the way she deals with some of the problems endangering present day ecumenical activity. These problems will be considered in the following order:

1. Ecumenical Imbalance. 2. Narrow Ecclesiastical Thinking.
3. Secondary Motives. 4. Spirit versus Organization.
5. Theological and Doctrinal Differences. 6. A Double

1. For example see The Constitution, op. cit., pp. 17-18

Standard. 7. The Church's Ministry.

1. Ecumenical Imbalance

There is the ever present danger of ecumenical planning becoming the private concern of a few national and international leaders representative of different denominations. Ecumenism then becomes confined to summit meetings and conference rooms, denying local congregations any participation or involvement. When this happens a serious imbalance sets in and the whole movement greatly suffers: Parish priests and ministers lose their ecumenical enthusiasm, and view the importance of unity with only a marginal concern; local congregations become misinformed, giving rise to disinterest and suspicion; denominational activities are given precedence over ecumenical ones; and the plan for church union is seen as a movement altogether outside and apart from the Church's mission. These conditions might not deny ecumenism of its ideal and theoretical existence, but they will impede its practical effectiveness.

The Church of South India is aware of this danger and puts forth a sincere effort to guard against it. Although she has appointed leaders and committees to deal with the liturgical, doctrinal and theological differences, represented

by the various uniting churches, she strives to keep her local congregations involved by challenging them with the tasks of evangelism.¹ The South India Church believes that an important part of her ecumenical planning is involving everyone in the mission of the Church of Christ; this affords her parish ministers and laity an opportunity to fulfil an important and effective role. South India strives for total involvement and takes care that all her local congregations, regardless of size, will not be excluded from her ecumenical endeavours. The South India Church would agree that ecumenism becomes strongest and gains most in communities and local parishes where the ecumenical challenge forms part of the attitude and thinking of all local activity; and that ecumenism progresses far less through what is done in any summit conference of the National Council or World Council, or even in offices of denominational boards, than through what happens in the community where christian people live together as neighbours. It is at the local level that ecumenism becomes a practical and relevant reality and continues its growth toward higher goals. Therefore, South India keeps her clergy and laity aware

1. See: Renewal and Advance, op. cit., pp. 70, 186

of their individual and corporate responsibility in going forth together with the missionary message of Jesus Christ.¹

One of the reasons the Church of South India emphasizes the importance of the local congregation is because she is conscious of her own heritage. She realizes that the churches which have united to give her birth, would never have existed, if christians in other parts of the world had not become involved in the cause of mission and unity. In her constitution she states: "The Church of South India thankfully acknowledges that the Churches which have been united to form it owed their existence mainly to the faith, zeal and prayers of many who either came themselves from other lands to India in order to preach the Gospel and build up the Church of Christ; or gave liberally of their time and money for the furtherance of that work. It believes that the Holy Spirit has guided those Churches into this union in order that this same work of evangelization may be the more effectually fulfilled, in accordance with the prayer which Christ prayed that by the unity of His disciples the world might know that He

1. Renewal and Advance, op. cit., p. 120

had been sent to be its Saviour. Therefore the Church of South India purposes ever to be mindful of its missionary calling; and prays that it may not only be greatly used of God for the evangelization of South India, but may also take its due share in the preaching of the Gospel and the building up of Christ's Church in other parts of the world."¹

2. Narrow Ecclesiastical Thinking

Churches can become very narrow in their thinking and outlook. When this happens their overall concern never extends beyond denominational boundaries, and their immediate responsibility remains relative to the size of the congregation. They involve themselves mainly with sending delegates to church courts and ministering to members and adherents. On special occasions, they might exchange gestures of good will with brethren from other churches, but apart from this the narrowness remains. It is possible for such churches to fail to see themselves embodying a portion of the Universal Church of Christ. Consequently they do not become dissatisfied with their present state of division and incompleteness, or show any desire to move

1. The Constitution, op. cit., pp. 3-4

toward greater fulness and unity. It is this narrow kind of thinking which weakens the extent and influence of the ecumenical movement. Churches in this category can easily develop a smugness and contentment, and see nothing wrong with their present state. Therefore, they regard the ecumenical cause as unimportant and unnecessary.

In order for ecumenism to be strong, it is important that all churches see themselves as embodying a portion of the Universal Church of Christ. It is this vision that helps a church to see her incompleteness and fragmentary witness, and challenges her to strive toward a greater unity. This is the approach taken by the Church of South India. She "accepts the principle that as the Church of a whole region, being in fellowship with other regional Churches, is ideally the embodiment of the Church Universal in that region, and as similarly the Church of a diocese as a living part of a regional Church is the Church Universal expressing its one life in that diocese, so also in the purpose of God every local group of the faithful, organized for Christian life and worship as a congregation or pastorate within the fellowship of the diocese, represents in that place the same one, holy,

catholic and apostolic Church."¹

Therefore, the Church of South India sees the Church as the Body of Christ in a specific area, carrying there her redemptive mission to the world; otherwise the Church has no real existence. This claim is made ⁱon the belief that the crucial test for every local church is whether she is functioning in such a way that the One Universal Church comes alive for the people in that community.² This belief adds a new dimension: The South India Church now realizes that she belongs to a movement peculiar not to India alone, but world wide. This broad outlook results in a keen ecumenical awareness, making her discontent and desirous to move forward in questiof even a greater union.³

The sincerity of this desire is made apparent in the way she challenges each of her churches to look beyond their immediate congregation, diocesan council, Synod and even India itself to "the building up of Christ's Church in other parts of the world."⁴

1. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 8

2. Ibid, p. 3

3. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 3

4. Ibid, p. 4

The Church of South India is willing to "accept invitations to send delegates as visitors to the assemblies or other representative bodies of the Churches through whose labours its constituent groups have come into being, and will seek, by interchange of visiting delegates or such other means as may be available, to promote and maintain brotherly relations with other Churches in India, Burma and Ceylon and to work towards a wider union of Churches in those countries."¹ And "The Church of South India, as a part of the Church Universal, is prepared to give full weight to the pronouncements of bodies representative of the whole Church, and in particular, will desire to take part in the deliberations and decisions of an Ecumenical Council, if such in the mercy of God be some day called together."²

This strong urge for union is revealed further through the work and teaching of her ministry, and her attitude toward worship: Her clergy and laity devote a large portion of their time to the work of evangelism, proclaiming the universal purpose and love of Christ toward all mankind.³ Her worship is broad and

1. The Constitution, op. cit., p.13

2. Ibid., p. 15

3. Renewal and Advance, op. cit., p. 168

ecumenical in outlook. "The Church of South India will aim at conserving for the common benefit whatever of good has been gained in the separate history of those Churches from which it has been formed, and therefore in its public worship will retain for its congregations freedom either to use historic forms or not to do so as may best conduce to edification and to the worship of God in spirit and in truth."¹

3. Secondary Motives

Many motives are given for church unity: Unity gives the Church a practical efficiency, by increasing her economic and physical power; unity gives the Church a sense of bigness, strengthening her image and increasing her prestige. It might also be said that unity is one of the signs of the twentieth century: The world is having much success in subduing geographical, cultural and racial barriers, permitting people to live in a closer fellowship than ever before. Therefore, if the Church wishes to keep pace, she too will have to dissolve her denominational differences. All these motives merit some truth, but in themselves they do not completely justify ecumenical activity. These are

1. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 11

secondary motives. If the ecumenical movement is to have an essential purpose and a strong sense of direction, it has to rest firmly on the primary motive which is the Will of God.

It would be easier and perhaps more advantageous if the Church of South India were to emphasize secondary motives for ecumenism rather than the primary one. For she is situated in a land where Christianity is in the minority and where it is important for the Church to possess strong economic and physical powers, and an attractive image; but it is the primary motive that South India strongly supports. She makes it very clear in the beginning of her constitution "that the purpose of the union by which it has been formed is the carrying out of God's Will, as this is expressed in our Lord's Prayer ---- 'That they may all be one... that the world may believe that Thou didst send me.' "¹ This emphasis has a profound effect upon ecumenism: It establishes the movement on a strong spiritual basis. Therefore, church union is not just the result of man's planning, but is ultimately dependent upon the Will and Purpose of God. It was, from the beginning, God's Will for His Church

1. The Constitution, op. cit., pp 1-2

to be united. Consequently, man, in his strivings to achieve church unity, is not involving himself in a figment of the imagination, rather, he is becoming involved in a truth which existed from the beginning of Creation, and has been obscured and deformed by short-sightedness and prejudice. Furthermore, since the author and authority of ecumenism is God, the cause of unity is more than an appendix to the Church's mission, but is integral to it. Therefore, every church that believes herself to be participating in the Church universal cannot help but proclaim with equal conviction: Christ's love for all people; and His desire for the unity of His Church.

4. Spirit Versus Organization

In the course of ecumenical discussions the belief is sometimes expressed, that true unity is constituted by the inner Spirit, not outward form. That is to say, the real requirement for church union is having the right spirit prevailing among the different denominations, rather than having such organizational expressions as worshipping together, sharing in the work of evangelism, or forming such bodies as the National and World Councils of Churches. The fact is, both are needed: Church union needs the support of the Spirit as well as organi-

zational planning; if either is upheld at the expense of the other ecumenicity faces a serious problem.

The Church of South India shares the view that inner Spirit and outward form cannot be severed without shattering ecumenical hopes. Although the South India Church lays great stress upon the Spirit, and believes the Spirit to be of fundamental importance in achieving church union, she insists that Spirit and body cannot be separated.¹ This means, then, that if ecumenism is to be effective and appreciated in any practical sense, it needs not only the right Spirit, but also organizational expression in the here and now. The ecumenical movement ought to be as real and visible as the christian man. Consequently, such expressions as worshipping together, sharing in the work of evangelism, and the formation of councils and committees are very important.

This is a sound approach: For at the center of biblical faith is the doctrine of Creation which affirms that the visible world is an expression of the Spirit of God; and at the centre of the christian Gospel is a doctrine of the Incarnation which declares that ^{God}~~He~~ has been made manifest in the flesh. It

1. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 2

was to this unity, between Spirit and body, that William Temple was alluding when he said that Christianity is "the most materialistic of the world's great religions." Body and Spirit are not antithetical but correlative parts of a vital whole. Even the Lord's ^PPrayer "that they may all be one", is followed by the explicit definition, "as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee", which can only refer to a unity of personal relationship. Therefore a unity which has the true Spirit but no outward form is nonsensical. Just as unity needs a true inner Spirit, so does it need an outward form and organization which can be recognized and understood by all peoples of the world. A unity not seen by the world can not persuade the world to unite.

5. Theological and Doctrinal Differences

The unwillingness to tolerate differences has been a prolific source of division throughout christian history. Many christians find it difficult to realize that much can be learned from each other, even though their thinking and outlook might differ radically; and it is equally difficult for them to realize that differences, when held together, can complement each other, but, when permitted to exist apart, lead to antagonism and fear. The problem, therefore, facing ecumeni^city is not one of d^evising

a theology and doctrine acceptable to all denominations, but ~~of~~ ^{impressing} ~~to impress~~ upon people that unity is possible and profitable even in diversity.

The Church of South India gives ecumenism strength and guidance to face this problem, since she is a unity in diversity. The South India Church realizes that if she had waited until all differences were dissolved among the uniting churches, unity would not have been achieved. Furthermore she believes, that there is much to be gained from these differences which the uniting churches brought into the union. She states in her constitution that, "the Church of South India needs the heritage of each of the uniting Churches, and each of those Churches will, it is hoped, not lose the continuity of its own life, but preserve that life enriched by the union with itself of the other two Churches. The Church of South India is thus formed by a combination of different elements each bringing its contribution to the whole, and not by the absorption of any one by any other. It is, therefore, also a comprehensive Church; and its members, firmly holding the fundamentals of the faith and order of the Church Universal, are allowed wide freedom of opinion in all other matters, and wide freedom of action in such differences of practice as are consistent

with the general framework of the Church as one organized body."¹

Therefore, according to South India, church union should not be sacrificed over differences in theology or doctrine. For when this happens unity can become the victim of such alternative approaches as : ^e devising an intellectual ^u formation of theology and doctrine acceptable to all the churches involved, or, by having the weaker churches absorbed by the stronger one; South India rejects both these measures. The South India Church sees the basis of unity at a much deeper level: It is in the experience of finding that God meets man in Christ and in his response to Him in faith.² Such an experience impels man to seek agreement in his verbal expression of this, but he ought not to identify the faith with the formula. To do so is to over-intellectualize the nature of the Christian Gospel. The Church of South India believes that the definition of faith is the work of the christian community, and the development of a fully articulated theology is a function of the United Church rather than the precondition of it. South India places the community of faith

1. The Constitution, op. cit., pp 2-3

2. Ibid, p. 4

and love first; agreement in doctrine and theology grows out of this, not vice versa.¹

In order to accommodate this approach South India is prepared for endless theological debate in the process of defining, refining, elaborating and systematizing doctrine and theology. But the Church strongly believes that such activity is a healthy sign of vigor provided it takes place within an ecumenical fellowship and moves in the orbit of the central proclamation that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." The christian fellowship is given primacy and, in due time, doctrinal and theological consensus will be achieved.²

This flexible and comprehensive view, held by the Church of South India, regarding the value of unity in diversity, finds significant support. William Temple cited that if differences were better in isolation "it is as though in one man's veins there were only red corpuscles and in another only white". "The total of both," he went on, "might be the right supply for both men, but health depends on their being mixed." And he commented that "every part of the Church now suffers more or less from

1. Renewal and Advance, op. cit., p. 131

2. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 12

one-sided development; the true balance is found nowhere."¹

J.H. Oldham also offers support when he says, "differences were meant by God not to divide but to enrich."² Theological differences are even mirrored in the New Testament when reflection is cast upon the divergencies among Paul, Peter, John and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. And the strategy of the South India Church, in putting the community of faith and love first and her dealings with doctrinal and theological differences second, is not without New Testament precedence: Jesus did not begin His earthly ministry by establishing a complete system of belief and doctrine and then ask all those who accepted it to follow Him. First He invited them to accept Himself and become acquainted with Him. And it was within this fellowship that theological and doctrinal perspectives began to take shape.

6. A Double Standard

Although unity can be achieved in diversity, these diversities are not to be disrespected or ignored. Churches that

1. Personal Religion and the Life of Fellowship, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1926, p. 30

2. Faith and Order, Edited by H.N. Bates, S.C.M. Press, London, 1927, p. 359.

are farsighted and courageous enough to unite, should also be willing to discuss their theological and doctrinal differences objectively and honestly. But what standard will be used to direct and assess such a discussion? Most of the churches in the Reformed Tradition will look to Holy Scripture as their guide, while the Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican Churches will look to Scripture and Tradition; Tradition meaning the writings of the Fathers, decrees of councils, doctrines, creeds, customs, ceremonies and rites of different kinds which have emerged in the church over the centuries. Ecumenism then becomes faced with the problem of a double standard. The acuteness of this problem becomes apparent when an issue like the episcopal ministry is discussed: Those, for whom Scripture constitutes the ultimate standard, will have some misgivings regarding the necessity of an episcopal ministry, since there is little definite scriptural evidence to warrant it. On the other hand, those, who respect Tradition as being equal to Scripture, will show strong feelings toward such a ministry. They will point to Tradition showing that

this type of ministry has been a distinct feature of the church since the second century. They will conclude, therefore, that the episcopal ministry is essential to the church and the validity of her sacraments.

The Church of South India guards against this problem by accepting one ultimate standard for her faith, thinking and activity. "The Church of South India accepts the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as containing all things necessary to salvation and as the supreme and decisive standard of faith; and acknowledges that the Church must always be ready to correct and reform itself in accordance with the teaching of those Scriptures as the Holy Spirit shall reveal it."¹ This does not mean, however, that South India rejects all Tradition as being unnecessary and evil. She "accepts the Apostles' Creed and the Creed commonly called the Nicene, as witnessing to and safeguarding that faith; and it thankfully acknowledges that same faith to be continuously confirmed by the Holy Spirit in the experience of the Church of

1. The Constitution, op. cit., pp. 4-5

Christ."¹ But, as was pointed out in Chapter Two of this thesis, the Church of South India does make a distinction between Scripture and Tradition: She believes the Scriptures to be primary, complete and normative, while Tradition is secondary, incomplete and open to correction. Her attitude toward the Creeds helps to reveal her thinking about Tradition: She "accepts the fundamental truths embodied in the Creeds... but does not intend thereby to demand the assent of individuals to every word and phrase in them, or to exclude reasonable liberty of interpretation, or to assert that those Creeds are a complete expression of the Christian faith."²

7. The Church's Ministry

The most thorny problem of all facing the ecumenical movement is the need for a common ministry or church order. If the problem were just one of pragmatic values, it might be dealt with on the basis of practical experience and an effective weighing of the advantages and disadvantages of the different types of ministries. But the problem is much more involved,

1. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 5

2. The Basis of Union, op. cit., p. 72

because for many it is a matter of faith. Faith is involved for all those who put the heaviest accent on the catholic heritage. For those people it involves not only matters of organization, but the basic issue whether there is one ---- and only one ---- divine plan for the order of the church as the Body of Christ in the world. The Catholic/----whether of the Roman, the Greek, or the Anglican type----insists that it is integral to God's pattern for the church that she have bishops in an apostolic succession; that ordination by such bishops is necessary for a full and valid ministry; and that the Eucharist is properly celebrated only by those thus ordained. This raises the question whether the gulf between the Catholic and Protestant view points can ever be bridged?

According to the Church of South India this gulf can be bridged. The approach taken by South India helps to clear up a very real misconception: There is the popular notion that Protestants are basically indifferent and uninterested toward any kind of apostolic succession. But the union in South India, which involves protestant as well as catholic thinking, is a testimony to the contrary. Here it is made clear that Protestants do have a high respect for the concept of the christian

community as continuous with the first community that gathered round Christ and His Apostles. However, the Church of South India conceives of this succession as pertaining to the whole church rather than just her ministers. The emphasis is that it is the church, rather than any group within her that is most truly apostolic, just as it was the whole christian community, not apostles or bishops or ministers, to whom the Spirit was given at Pentecost. The essential succession, for the South India Church, is the priesthood of all believers, going back in a straight line to Christ, and she believes it to be the prerogative of every faithful member of the christian community to carry on this succession.¹

The Church of South India emphasizes an important difference between this apostolic succession and the historic episcopate. She respects the episcopate as having an honored and venerable place in the christian community, but insists that it is the church that makes the episcopacy, not the episcopacy that makes the church. South India believes the

1. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 6

Church to be built upon "the foundation of Apostles";¹ a foundation which cannot repeat itself. The Apostolate is seen as unique and nontransmissible. Therefore the episcopate is not its official prolongation. Nevertheless the Church of South India does see in the episcopate an efficacious symbol of the continuity and unity of the Church; and although there is no biblical evidence for regarding episcopacy as necessary, it seems quite probable that it was a normal development. Consequently the feeling is quite strong, that though there is no ground for believing that God has bound Himself to grant greater blessings of grace through the bishop than through other ministers, the oversight of the church, especially in South India, through carefully chosen representative personalities can be and has been valuable.² But this is altogether different from saying that where there is no bishop there is no true church.

South India has made the acceptance of episcopacy more palatable for most Reformed Churches. She shows that

1. Ephesians 2:20

2. The Constitution, op. cit., p. 9

See also: The Basis of Union, op. cit., p. 76

such a ministry can be accepted without placing any specific interpretation upon it. This approach is not altogether without significant support: Several interpretations of the episcopate are also tolerated in the Anglican Communion where episcopacy is greatly treasured. Some Anglicans believe episcopacy to be the 'esse' of the church; others believe it to be the 'bene esse'; a third position regards it as the 'plene esse'. This gives rise to the question: Why cannot churches unite in accepting episcopacy as a natural historical development in the christian community, and then discuss its theology as much as ^{is} desired for generations to come?

CONCLUSION

This union in South India is comparatively new. It would be unwise to make any definite and precise forecast regarding its future. However, the fact remains, that the Church of South India does exist, and, in spite of her critics and problems, conducts a practical and effective ministry, indicating no small measure of success. All the while South India is girding her loins to meet the problems and challenges of church union, her Western brethren are struggling along in what appears, at times, to be an ecumenical darkness and confusion. So many ecumenical talks have taken place in the West, never to survive the confines of committee and conference rooms.

Although success is imminent in South India, it will be a long time before this union fully realizes what its inheritance is. The difficulties so far experienced may be followed by even greater ones. Perhaps just as the Elizabethan Settlement did not capture the imagination of the English people until the end of the Reign of Elizabeth I, or even until after the restoration, so too it may be a generation or more before the

Church of South India fully discovers herself. But perhaps the people have already seen enough to go forward with the conviction that the hope for the Church in the region of South India and for the Christian Church throughout the world, lies in the path which they have chosen.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. A Handbook of Christian Theology, Edited by Marvin Halverson, Meridian Books, New York, 1958.
2. An Order for the Lord's Supper. An Order Approved by the Synod of the Church of South India for general use wherever it is desired, January 1954, published by Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, Oxford House, Apollo Bunder, Bombay, 1950.
3. An Order for Holy Baptism, authorized by the Executive Committee of the Synod of the Church of South India, Oct., 1954 for optional and experimental use wherever it is desired, Oxford University Press, 1955.
4. Barth, Karl, The Doctrine of God, Vol. 2-1, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1957.
5. Briggs, C.A., Church Unity, Studies of its most important problems. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1909.
6. Bromiley, G.W., Sacramental Teaching and Practice in The Reformation Churches, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1957.
7. Bulgakov, Sergiei Nikolaevich, The Orthodox Church, The Centenary Press, London, 1935.
8. Cavert, Samuel McCrae, On The Road to Christian Unity. An appraisal of the Ecumenical Movement, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1961.
9. Cunliffe-Jones, H., The Authority of the Biblical Revelation, James Clark and Co., London, 1945.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (continued)

10. Dodd, C.H., The Authority of the Bible, James Nesbit Co., London, 1928.
11. Dow, John, This is Our Faith, An Exposition of the statement of faith of the United Church of Canada. Issued by the Board of Evangelism and Social Service. The United Church of Canada, Wesley Building, Toronto, 1943.
12. Dr. Mascall and South India---A Reply, printed by Home Words (Ashlock Dept.), 258 Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1., December 31, 1955.
13. Eastwood, Cyril, The Priesthood of all Believers. An examination of the Doctrine from the Reformation to the Present Day, The Epworth Press, London, 1960.
14. Faith and Order Findings. The final Report of the Theological Commissions to the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order, Montreal 1963, S.C.M. Press, London, 1963.
15. Faith and Order, Edited by H.N. Bates, S.C.M. Press, London, 1927.
16. Faith and Unity, Vol. IX, No. 6, a periodical published six times yearly. Printed by Gibbs and Sons, Canterbury, November issue, 1965.
17. Garrett, T.S., The Liturgy of the Church of South India. An introduction to and commentary on 'The Lord's Supper', Oxford University Press, 1952.
18. Garrett, T.S., Worship in the Church of South India, Lutterworth Press, London, 1958.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (continued)

19. Graham, Carol, The Church of South India. A short Handbook, Second Edition, Southern Publishing Co., Brighton, 1954.
20. Growth in Understanding. A Study Guide on Church Union. Under the Auspices of The Committee on Christian Unity and the Church Universal of the Anglican Church of Canada and The Commission on union of the United Church of Canada, 1959.
21. Hanson, R. P. C., Tradition in the Early Church, S.C.M. Press, London, 1962.
22. Headley, J. M., Luther's View of History, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1963.
23. Huxtable, John, The Bible Says, S.C.M. Press, London, 1962.
24. Jaeger, Lorenz, The Ecumenical Council, The Church and Christendom, Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1960.
25. Jenkins, Daniel, Tradition and the Spirit, Faber and Faber, London, 1951.
26. Jeremias, Joachim, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, translated from the second German edition by Arnold Ehrhardt, Macmillan, New York, 1955.
27. Jones, R. M., Spiritual Reformers, Mcmillan, London, 1914.
28. Kierkegaard, Sören, The Present Age, and Two Minor Ethico-Religious Treatises, Translated by Alexander Dru and Walter Lowrie, Oxford University Press, London, 1940.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (continued)

29. Manson, T.W., The Church's Ministry, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1948.
30. Mascall, E.L., Lambeth 1958 and Christian Unity, The Faith Press, London, 1958.
31. Mascall, E.L., The Convocations and South India. What did the Convocations decide, and how does their decision affect the Catholicity of the Church of England? A.R. Mowbray and Co., London, 1955.
32. Mascall, E.L., Corpus Christi. Essays on The Church and the Eucharist, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1953.
33. Mersch, Emile, The Theology of the Mystical Body, translated by Cyril Vollert, Herder, St. Louis, 1958.
34. Molland, Einar, Christendom. The Christian Churches, their Doctrines, Constitutional forms and ways of Worship. A.R. Mowbray and Co., London, 1959.
35. Newbigin, Lesslie, A South India Diary, S.C.M. Press, London, 1951.
36. Newbigin, Lesslie, The Household of God. Lectures on the Nature of the Church, S.C.M. Press, London, 1957.
37. Newbigin, Lesslie, The Reunion of the Church. A Defence of the South India Scheme, S.C.M. Press, London, 1948.
38. New Delhi Speaks About Christian Witness, Service and Unity, Edited by, W.A. Visser 't Hooft, Association Press, New York, 1962.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (continued)

39. On the Authority of the Bible. Some recent studies by: Leonard Hodgson, C.F. Evans, John Burnaby, Gerhard Ebeling, and D.E. Nineham, S.P.C.K., London, 1960.
40. Palmer, Bishop, Sermon Preached in Westminster Abbey, June 29, 1933.
41. Pedersen, J., Israel, Milford, London, two Vols., E.T., 1926.
42. Pendleton, Mervyn, The Nonconformity of South Indian Faith and Orders, Albert W. Green, Wollaston, Wellingborough, 1956.
43. Ramsey, Arthur Michael, The Gospel and the Catholic Church, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1936.
44. Rawlinson, A.E.J., Problems of Reunion, Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1950.
45. Reid, J.K.S., The Biblical Doctrine of the Ministry. Scottish Journal of Theology Occasional Papers No. 4, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1955.
46. Relations between Anglican and Presbyterian Churches, A Joint Report, S.P.C.K., London, 1957.
47. Renewal and Advance. Report of the Church of South India Commission on Integration and Joint Action, 1963. Published for the Synod of the Church of South India by The Christian Literature Society, Diocesan Press, Madras, 1963.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (continued)

48. Richardson, Alan, An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament, S.C.M. Press, London, 1958.
49. Rowley, H.H., The Authority of the Bible: An Apologetic appealing to objective Evidence, Encounter (Winter, 1957)
50. Scripture and Tradition, Essays by: F.W. Dillistone, G.W.H. Lampe, F.J. Taylor, R.R. Williams, D.E.W. Harrison, Lutterworth Press, London, 1955
51. Shaw, J.M., Christian Doctrine: A one-volume outline of Christian Belief, Lutterworth Press, London, 1953.
52. Smart, James D., The Interpretation of Scripture, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1961.
53. Stephenson, Anthony A., Anglican Orders, with Appendices by Walton Hannah and Hugh Ross Williamson, Burns and Oates, London, 1956.
54. Sundkler, Bengt, Church of South India: The Movement towards union 1900-1947, Lutterworth Press, London, 1954.
55. Tavard, G.H., Holy Writ and Holy Church, Burns, London, 1959.
56. The Historic Episcopate, Seven Essays by Priests of the Church of England, Edited by K.M. Carey, Dacre Press, 1954.
57. The Unity We Seek. Lectures on the Church and the Churches, Edited by William S. Morris, The Ryerson Press, Toronto, 1962.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (continued)

58. The Chronicle of Convocation. Being a Record of the Proceedings of the Convocation of Canterbury. The Second Elizabetha Secunda Regnante in the Sessions of July 4, 5 and 6, printed by Warren & Son, The Wykeham Press, Winchester, 1955.

59. The Ordinal. Orders for The Ordination of Deacons. The Ordination of Presbyters. The Consecration of Bishops. Authorized by the Synod of the Church of South India, 1958, published by John Brown, Oxford University Press, Madras 2, 1958.

60. The South India Church Scheme. Being a Report of a Committee of Theologians appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to consider the proposed Basis of Union and Constitution of the future Church of South India. Published by direction of the Archbishop of Canterbury by the Press and Publications Board of the Church Assembly, Church House, Dean's Yard, Westminster, 1946.

61. The Constitution of the Church of South India, with Amendments up to 31st December 1951 together with the Basis of Union as adopted by the Governing Bodies of the Uniting Churches in India and elsewhere. Published by the Christian Literature Society for India, Madras, 1952.

62. The Ministry and the Sacraments. Report of the Theological Commission appointed by the Continuation Committee of the Faith and Order movement under the Chairmanship of the Right Rev. Arthur Cayley Headlam, Edited by Roderic Dunkerley, S.C.M. Press, London, 1937.

63. The Church and Ecumenism. Concilium theology in the age of renewal. Vol. 4, Edited by Hans Küng, Paulist Press, New York, 1965.
64. Temple, William, Personal Religion and the Life of Fellowship, Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1926.
65. Van Dyke, Henry J., The Church: Her Ministry and Sacraments, Anson D. F. Randolph and Co., New York, 1890.
66. Webster, Douglas, What is this Church of South India? The Highway Press, London, 1954.
67. Woolf, Bertram Lee, Reformation Writings of Martin Luther, Translated with Introduction and Notes from the Definitive Weimar Edition, Vol. 1, Lutterworth Press, London, 1952.