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## OPTIONS TO CHOOSE

It can no longer be assumed that when two people speak about education for ministry they are referring to the same kind of experience: three years in a seminary with a set program leading to ordination. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has always included ministers who have received their theological education in Britain or the United States, sometimes from institutions very different from Knox or Presbyterian College. This has been not only necessary but helpful. It has, among other things, prevented us from becoming ingrown.

But there is more to this question than far-flung options. In the two institutions of our church which prepare people for ordination there are two very different approaches to theological education. In addition, as the article by Margaret Webster points out, Eeart College has a significant role to play in the development of people for a teaching ministry. Some might argue, along with John



Westerhoff, that the separation of this function into a specialization is not productive for the church. I further wonder whether our congregations are willing to employ such specialists. But Margaret assures me that her reading of the church is that there is a growing interest in engaging Christian Educators. Read for yourself.

But getting back to Knox and Presbyterian College plus the seminary and the Faculty of Religious Studies plus professional studies approaches. These are very different programs and those seeking to be candidates need to know the facts and choose what is best for their own development. As Alan Farris told me last Fall, "For some people, Presbyterian College would be a better choice than Knox." The reverse is also true.

Of course, both colleges must fulfill the basic requirements established by our church and both colleges are set in the context of major universities and have associations with the theological schools of other denominations. Neither is an island in the sense of the cloistered seminary (or monastery as we used to call them).

But at Knox one must take a stated number of basic courses from Knox professors while basic academic courses at Presbyterian College are studied in a university faculty. True, Knox students are encouraged to take some options at Anglican, United or Roman Catholic institutions. True also that there are four presbyterians in the McGill Faculty of Religious Studies, one of whom is now the dean. Yet the faculties are oriented by different factors—the college as an integrated unit in consultation with the wider university and theological community (Knox) or the University department in dialogue with other university departments in dialogue with the needs of three theological colleges (P.C.).

For some, the more seminary orientation of Knox with its perhaps more overt faith-commitment and the interspersing of practical subjects throughout the three years may seem the best way to prepare for ministry. For others who want to wrestle in a broader setting with the theological foundations of ministry followed by an intensive year of professional preparation under the more direct control of the theological colleges, Presbyterian College may be preferred.

Then too, there is the question of community identity. Those at Knox identify primarily with Knox, rather than with the University of Toronto or the Toronto School of Theology as far as I can tell. Presbyterian College also has its strong college identity but, in addition, there is a fairly significant identity also with McGill (8n the first two years) and with the Montreal Institute for Ministry (in the final year). Perhaps the P.C. students are thrown in with Anglicans and Uniteds more than the Knoxites though this may be true only for some. Am I favouring here over against another? I hope not. Originally I planned to have an article from Knox (similar to Bob Culley's on P.C.) in this issue but that did not work out. Perhaps this editorial or other material on the following pages will elicit a response. We'll be happy to give (equal) ? space!



What does seem important is that those considering ministry as a life's work should look carefully at our three colleges. As Jack Cooper points out, there is a tremendous challenge to each of the colleges and the whole church in the need to recruit many more people for ministry. Our colleges could have double their present enrolments and there would still be a shortage in the next ten years! But numbers aren't everything. We also need to continue to reflect on what this whole educational enterprise is all about. A good beginning is James McCord's address at last Spring's Centennial Convocation.

*Arthur van Seters*

#### HASIDIC WISDOM

"Remember that a good speaker must become one, not with his audience, but with his words: the moment he hears himself speak, he must conclude."

*The Maggid of Mezeritch*

The Maggid of Mezeritch

"Imagine two children playing hide-and-seek: one hides but the other does not look for him. God is hiding and man is not seeking. Imagine His distress."

*Rabbi Barukh of Medzebozh*

Rabbi Barukh of Medzebozh

It is told of Rabbi Levi-Yitzhak of Berditchev that he notices a coachman, who to save time runs through his morning prayers while greasing his carriage. He does not scold him. Instead, he lifts his eyes to heaven and asks it to be his witness:

"Look at Your people, God of Israel, and be proud. What does this man do while working on his cart? He prays. Tell me, do You know of any other nation that has You so completely in its thoughts?"



## RECRUITING FOR EXCELLENCE

The present severe shortage of ministers makes this a particularly dangerous time for the Church. Shortages foster carelessness in the admission of ministerial candidates, and reticence in examining them. Therefore, it is especially important at such a time to recruit for excellence in the ministry, to assess candidates carefully although not harshly, and to maintain a supportive contact with them.

Canadian churches in general still have a colonial mentality when it comes to recruitment. Ministers come from somewhere other than our congregation and our country. The problem is compounded by our participation in the consumer society. We love to obtain new things, use them, and throw them away. And we become consumers of ministers, preferably new (young) ones. If trouble develops in the congregation, presbytery will sometimes aid and abet the congregation in getting rid of the minister. Problems are solved by putting the blame on the scapegoat and driving him into the wilderness.

We have a shortfall of eighty-five ministers in the Presbyterian Church at the time of writing, which is a vacancy rate of over 12%. Allowing thirty-five vacancies for normal mobility of ministers, the real need is for fifty new ministers. There are gratifyingly large classes in our Theological Colleges, and by all reports the quality is as encouraging as the numbers. But these are needed just to keep pace with retirements. Obviously, we will be continuing our colonial attitude a little longer and looking outside Canada to fill vacancies.

We have had a large bulge in one age range of our ministry which is now producing an abnormally large number of retirements. The influx of young ministers in the thirties and the gradual increase in the average age of students entering theology in the forties and fifties have conspired to produce this present bulge of ministers all at retirement age.

The critical shortage of ministers simply points up a continuing deficiency in our recruitment of candidates since colonial times when the Church was established by immigrants and ministers came from abroad.

And when we *have* recruited, it has often been a kind of general appeal for volunteers as in mass rallies, choir tours and pulpit appeals. Unfortunately, that kind of approach is sometimes heard as "the Church is desperate", or the equally erroneous notion that the only appropriate form of Christian commitment is in the ministry of Word and Sacrament. The wrong kind of volunteers for wrong reasons can come forward and breeze through the admissions procedures and college requirements, which are careful not to discourage any candidate by enquiring too closely into his suitability. The cruelty of this carelessness can be seen in the suffering experienced by a misfit in the ministry.

The colleges of course are the most visible manifestation of the Church to the ministerial candidates. Unless they experience pastoral care in the college environment, there is no use teaching them about it as an abstract



subject. They are likely to graduate feeling that pastoral care is really unimportant, and that the authentic tradition is that ministers and candidates should be able to get along nicely without it.

We should overcome the notion that the initial call sufficiently stiffens the upper lip to carry one successfully through a ministerial career. With that notion goes the idea that ministers should show neither emotions nor emotional needs. Someone described the expressions of emotion on the face of a certain Presbyterian minister as limited to two, viz., nostrils flared and nostrils unflared! Can our colleges be sensitive to the emotional as well as the intellectual needs of candidates? If so, graduates can become more caring, and the ongoing life of presbyteries can be marked by a greater human concern for one another. And this in turn will be reflected in more careful recruitment, because we care enough not to press the candidate into an office for which he or she is unsuited.

At the congregational level, recruiting for excellence means interpreting the nature of the ministry to our people on a regular basis and asking those men and women with gifts for the ministry to consider it as a calling. Then it means supporting those who respond, and supporting the one we have called to be our minister. Recruitment never stops. Ministers often wonder what they are doing in this lonely profession, vulnerable to all manner of criticism and living as it were in a fish bowl. Behind every good minister is a congregation that cares enough about him to praise and criticize him honestly to his face as each is called for, and to defend him from the criticism and gossip that is behind his back. Congregations make ministers every bit as much as ministers make congregations.

Speaking the truth in love is contagious. When a minister experiences it, he can stop trying to be a "nice guy" and trying to please everybody. This is a losers' game. How many in the pulpit suffer from the inability to be open and candid with the congregation because it would mean no longer being the "nice guy" and hence a failure? And how many potential candidates are turned against the ministry because they can't be the "nice guy" they see their minister trying to be, and don't want the ulcers that go with it?

Recruitment for excellence is not a programme added onto our church life. It is rather, systemic, involving as it does interpretation of the ministry to our congregations, challenging individuals (Jesus never called for volunteers), careful assessment of all candidates, supportive counselling and pastoral care of candidates throughout their college careers, followed by congregational life where the truth is told in love by both congregation and minister.

If we can do these things we can avoid most of the dangers of this period of ministerial shortage.

(The role of presbytery and a plan for the assessment and counselling of candidates are dealt with in the recent paper sent to all ministers from the Board of Ministry and by design are not dealt with in this article).

J.C. Cooper



## THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN THE SERVICE OF THE CHURCH

Theological schools have been entrusted with three basic responsibilities. The first is the education and continuing education of the professional leadership of the Church. Ordinarily the first thing a congregation requires is a trained minister who can perform effectively because he has been adequately trained. The second is the advancement of the horizons of theological knowledge. A theological faculty is responsible for research, experimentation, reflection, and publication. Perhaps this function is not often enough appreciated, but when properly discharged it enables the Church to see more clearly the nature of its mission to the world in any given period. Also, it is needed to keep pressure on faculty members in order to keep them growing throughout their productive careers. The third function is service to the Church. If an inventory were made of the use of theological faculties in the various aspects of the life of the Church, the results would be surprising to all of us. In my own communion, the United Presbyterian, the best known example of such service is in the writing of the Confession of 1967. An enormous amount of time over a number of years was given to this enterprise by members of theological faculties, and there are few important committees in the Church that do not call on members of faculties as resource persons.

### THE GOALS OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Since the first function enumerated above is the best known and involves the most time and persons, let us explore it further. In preparing the professional leadership of the Church there are four goals or objectives to be kept in mind. There may be a shift from time to time in the weight that is assigned to any one of them, but the goals remain more or less constant.

### THINKING AND LIVING THEOLOGICALLY

The first is to assist the student to see his or her life in the light of God and, further, to see the whole of the human enterprise in this light. A person equipped with such a perspective is on the way to becoming a new person and to responding to the world in a different way. This is more than simply conceptualizing in a different mode. It is no docetic activity. It is an attempt to introduce the student into the nature of theological existence, to living in such a way that one is guided by the living God and is nourished and sustained by Him throughout a career. Achieving this goal is not automatic in seminary education, but just now there is a strong assist from the students themselves. In a conference early in the past academic year, one of our students explained to me what was going on in his own mind and in the minds of his classmates. Above all, he said, we want to avoid becoming historical casualties. His generation has seen the drop-outs of the late nineteen sixties, and its members are determined that history will not pass them by, too, because they have followed a particular fad or have fallen prey to a false relevance. They believe that only by getting their heads right, by knowing whom they serve and by being personally related to Jesus Christ, will they be able to make it through to the end.



There is a grim resolve in all of this, along with a realistic appraisal of the requirements for ministry today, and I believe this accounts for much of the seriousness and maturity of the theological student in 1975.

### ACQUIRING A THEOLOGICAL CULTURE

The second goal is to assist the student in acquiring a broad theological culture. One of the most pervasive and pernicious problems in North American Protestantism is the heresy of primitivism, the queer notion that one can jump from any particular present all the way back into the first century and into the New Testament, without touching anything or without knowing any of the developments in between. This is a sectarian, a-historical notion of existence, and there is a particular type of anti-intellectualism that fuels it, and that it in turn fuels. Coupled with this is the heresy of subjectivism, where one attempts to enclose the whole of the Gospel into his tiny personal experience. This, too, is sectarian, and neither heresy has anything in common with the Calvinist tradition.

One of the principal functions of theological education is to introduce the student to the breadth of the Christian tradition, and to encourage him to enter into and possess as much of it as possible. If the word "tradition" confuses, then we can speak with equal propriety of the "body of divinity," or of our Christian heritage. But "tradition" is a good word, since it stands for the whole life and thought of the Church, as the Church has been nurtured, guided, and corrected by the Holy Spirit across the centuries. Reflect just for a moment on what we have received from the devotional life, the liturgical life, and the missionary life of the Church, as well as from its intellectual life. We would be spiritually barren without this legacy. Hence the desirability of acquiring as broad a theological culture as possible for ministry in today's complex world cannot be emphasized too strongly.

### "DOING" THEOLOGY

In educating the student for ministry a third goal is to assist him/her in becoming a participant in the theological enterprise. This is a part of the genius of being Reformed. By definition our tradition has had no "classical age," a period when doctrine was authoritatively set down for all ages. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever, but the theological task must be done by each generation. To be sure, it is not carried out innocent of what other generations have accomplished. Nevertheless, the response of an earlier generation can never completely be our response, for our situation will be different from theirs. This is another way of saying that the essence of time is novelty, that today is always different from yesterday. The theological student should leave a campus equipped to be an active participant in the ongoing theological enterprise of the Church. He does this by interpreting the life of his congregation and the world around in the light of the Word of God. Preaching must be a theological responsibility, a creative process in which the minister is engaged throughout his life.



## ACQUIRING ARTS AND SKILLS

A fourth goal seeks to equip the student with the necessary arts and skills for the ministry. This involves an understanding of the world in which he lives, making use of old wisdom along with the new knowledge from the sciences that developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and seeing human nature and the social reality through the windows that have been opened by behavioral, psychological, and historical studies. Equipped with these new tools for human understanding, this generation of ministers should be amply prepared for the challenges of today.

Education, it is being increasingly acknowledged, is a lifelong enterprise, and theological schools are also responsible for the continuing education of the ministry. Here Presbyterian College has taken the lead, to the enrichment of the ministers involved in their program and to the enrichment of the Church.

Theological schools do not seek to accomplish these several goals in a single locus, the seminary campus, but in loci, many different educational environments. These several environments are partners in the educational enterprise and include local congregations, where field education takes place, the university, where part of the experience of the student is located, teaching hospitals in the program of Clinical Pastoral Education, etc. The monastic image of the theological school distorts the rich variety of educational experiences available to seminarians today.

## THE CHALLENGE OF THEOLOGICAL LEADERSHIP

Let me turn now to challenges facing theological education in the present situation, to the areas in which progress should be made in order that the seminaries may contribute most effectively to the health of the Church. It is apparent to all that we have suffered an erosion of faith and that the Church and the ministry have not escaped "the credibility gap." And theology has suffered the same fate. The results have been the loss of integrity in our witness, the loss of a sense of authority, and the loss of a direction for mission. It is a commonplace that the Church no longer leads. She does not act but reacts. A high priority must be given to the restoration of theology to a central place in the life of the Church. Most of today's questions are theological. They have to do with the meaning of existence. But a Church bemused by secular fads is ill-equipped to deal with these issues. One example, the ecological crisis, is enough to dramatize this weakness. The Church simply has not had a compelling doctrine of creation that deals with the stewardship of this planet. And stewardship in other dimensions, such as the relation between the rich nations and the poor nations of the world, has been left for one-sided ideologists outside the Church to capture. Even Presbyterians, heirs of the Reformed Reformation, seem today to be suffering from collective theological amnesia, which only the recapturing of a theological center will cure.



## PIETY AND LEARNING

A second challenge is as old as theological education itself, the relationship between piety and learning. A seminary is a graduate professional school, and it must live within the tension of this description. It should not be a graduate school exclusively, nor should it be a professional school exclusively. It must live creatively within this tension and seek to maintain a balance between the two legitimate emphases. Indeed, the tension may be even greater for the schools in North America because of the character of religion here. It has always carried a strong anti-intellectual bias, and one continues to be surprised by how little knowledge is needed to "get by" in the ministry. It is possible to develop a religious pattern and to remain at such a superficial level throughout a career. Every generation sees anti-intellectualism revived, and it has raised its head on this continent again today.

The problem is exacerbated by what Dr. Dean R. Hoge calls the two dominant cultures in North America, one religious and the other secular, one with its home in the Church and the other with its home in Academe. Hoge agrees with Parsons that this division has not yet produced the internecine warfare and strong anti-clericalism that are found, for example, in Mexico or France. Apparently our two cultures have agreed to co-exist, but the separation of religion and learning persists and can only be diagnosed as a disease in American Protestantism. It is equally a sin to be too sophisticated to pray or too pious to read!

While not importing Catholic piety, the theological schools are beginning to take more seriously what the Catholics call "spiritual formation". For those of the Reformed faith this will involve a Reformed style of life. It is well known that to Luther's two marks of the Church Calvin added a third, discipline. By this he meant that not only must the Word be preached and the sacraments administered according to the Gospel ordinance, but the congregation's life must be lived in response to the Word and the believer must grow up into the mind of Christ. Such a conception of piety is synonymous with the stewardship of life and, far from bifurcating religion and learning, unites the two in a life of Christian vocation.

## THEORY AND PRACTICE

A third challenge which the seminaries face afresh today is the relation of theory to practice. This problem is as old as Aristotle, for whom theory was the important thing and practice only a matter of *techné*, arrangement. But ministerial practice should be inspired and informed by faith, else it slips into pragmatism, manipulation, and accommodation. Theology should illumine, guide, and enlarge practice. In recent years we have been involved in a Doctor of Ministry program, an important aspect of which is diagnostic. All members in this program are practicing ministers, and to our chagrin we have learned that many with superior cognitive theological knowledge see little or no relationship between their theology and their practice of ministry. We must find better ways of moving theology out of the minister's head, or from his notebooks, into his day-to-day ministry.



## THE PROPHETIC FUNCTION

Up to this point we have spoken descriptively, but we have not yet made clear the theological school's most important contribution to the life of the Church. This is its prophetic function, the service which it renders to the Head of the Church through the attentive listening to the Word and the declaration of God's will for men and nations. In order to perform this function the seminaries must be free to inquire, to study, and to speak. This is not freedom from the Church but freedom for the Church, for her life, health, and integrity. Just as no one generation owns the Church, so no one generation nor any single point of view can own the theological school. Its primary loyalty is to Jesus Christ, whose Word is the scepter by which He rules and the mandate under which the theological school lives.

James I. McCord  
*President, Princeton Theological Seminary*

## THE UNIQUE ROLE OF EWART COLLEGE

The Christian Church requires a diversified ministry. Preaching, teaching, pastoral care, social services and mission are all essential elements in the communication of the Gospel in the contemporary world. No one individual can be skilled in all aspects of ministry. No one type of preparation for ministry can meet the needs of the Church. There is no doubt that the Church needs ministers skilled in the preaching of the Gospel and the pastoral care of church members; there is also no doubt that the Church needs deaconesses, directors of Christian education, and missionaries skilled in teaching, counselling and the care of persons with special needs. The two theological colleges of the Presbyterian Church in Canada have been given the task of preparing persons for the preaching-pastoral ministry; Ewart College has been given the task of preparing persons for the specialized ministries of Christian education, social services and mission, with particular emphasis on the educational ministry of the Church.



The unique role of Ewart College in the life of the Church is obvious when it is recognized that the Church *must* teach. The Church must teach in response to Christ's commission "Go therefore and teach"; it must teach so that its members understand their faith and discover how to live that faith; it must teach so that, in the teaching, non-members hear the Gospel and learn to respond to it. Teaching and preaching are complementary aspects of the Church's ministry; they have a common kerygma, but they are not identical in process. Preaching involves proclamation; teaching involves interaction which promotes learning. Learning can take place only if the participants are actively involved in the process. In an educational setting, both teacher and students are learners; in the dialogue which takes place in any effective education, both are enriched. Within an educational setting it is also possible to provide for the fact that persons throughout their lifetime develop in cognitive ability and in understanding of faith; in teaching-learning situations content and method are planned in relation to the development of persons. In addition, some aspects of our heritage as Christians can be grasped much more readily through the educational ministry of the Church. We are, for instance, a people with a history; a sense of the history of God's dealing with his people can be grasped much more readily in an on-going educational process.

The primary task, then, of Ewart College is to prepare persons who are aware of developmental processes, Christian education theory and effective Christian education practice. The responsibilities of a majority of its graduates are to plan and administer educational programmes which are suitable for all age-groups; to train and support teachers for the schools of the Church and leaders for study groups for adults, youth and children; to know and interpret educational resources. In addition, of course, graduates must also be able to visit in homes and hospitals, to counsel persons with questions about faith and life, and to respond to a myriad of existential situations. Some graduates, for their work, require further specialization in social work or other professional education.

Ewart College recognizes that graduates, to be able to promote learning which leads to faith development, must have a strong foundation of Biblical and Doctrinal studies; courses in these areas are required of all students and are designed to be of particular help in Church educational settings. Ewart College recognizes that graduates, to fulfill their educational responsibilities, must have courses in cognitive and faith development and in Christian education theory and practice, and that they must also have practical assignments; Christian education and field work (both during the academic year and in summer internship) are part of each student's programme each year. Ewart College, recognizing the wide variety of tasks that face its graduates, provides courses to aid with these varied responsibilities.



Ewart College recognizes that the Presbyterian Church in Canada has a tradition of providing thorough preparation for those who work professionally within the Church and of requiring of these persons high academic standards in their preparatory study. The College in its programmes and courses endeavours to maintain this tradition. Ewart operates chiefly at the undergraduate level. Since its inception in 1897 it has offered a diploma programme (normally three years beyond high school graduation). Since 1970 the College has, in addition, offered a Degree-Diploma programme in which students study concurrently in Ewart and the University of Toronto (largely in the Departments of Religious Studies and Near Eastern Studies, with over 100 course offerings from which to select), and receive, on graduation, both a Ewart Diploma and the Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Toronto. This program combines opportunities for intensive preparation for work in the educational ministry of the Church with the broadening experience of study in a large University; in addition graduates with Degrees are able to proceed to graduate study in any academic institution in the world. The Board of the College hopes eventually to be able to offer more opportunities for graduate study in Christian education, probably leading to a graduate degree. To provide graduates and ministers with opportunities for further study in Christian education, continuing education programmes in this field are offered each year.

Ewart College, since 1965, has begun to develop as a co-educational institution. Historically it was a college for women; today it is co-educational since it is recognized that men should be playing a much larger part in the specialized ministries of the Church. The Church now needs *both* men and women to undertake study in our theological Colleges and to serve in the preaching-pastoral ministry and *both* men and women to undertake study at Ewart College and to serve in the educational ministry.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada needs to recognize that the Church's educational work at present is far from adequate in most congregations. It frequently is designed only for children; the majority of older youth and adults have no church educational experience after the age of 12 or 14. The Church knows very little about sound educational theory and practice. It has tended to resort to "telling" and indoctrination.

As the need of the Church for effective education is urgent, so the need for the strengthening and expansion of the programme at Ewart is increasingly apparent, if not to the whole Church, at least to those who care about helping Christians of all ages develop faith based on understanding and faith which leads to intelligent action in the world today.

Margaret Webster



## PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE: TWO PLUS ONE

The present course of study leading to ordination has two phases. The first phase is two years of study at the Faculty of Religious Studies in McGill. Usually, those who have already completed an arts degree (or equivalent) elsewhere will enroll in a Bachelor of Theology program. However, those with sufficient background and standing may spend their two years in a master's program (S.T.M.). In these two degree programs (bachelor's and master's) the usual theological subjects are examined: Biblical Studies, Ethics, and Comparative Religion. Greek and Hebrew may also be taken (one is necessary for Presbyterians). There are 14 members (3 part-time) on the teaching staff, and 4 of these are women. As far as a church affiliation goes, one is Catholic, others United Church, some Anglicans, and four Presbyterians: J.C. McLelland (the dean of the Faculty), myself (Old Testament Studies), Donald MacMillan (Reformation Thought) and Keith Markell (Church History). Teaching is carried on with lectures and seminars but there are also experiments like learning cells and modules. Another current experiment is the Faculty-Student Seminar which meets six times a year to discuss major problems in the world and in life from the perspective of the study of theology. It should be added that the Bachelor of Theology degree may be taken in three years as a first university degree by anyone who is interested in spending this time at university studying theology, and there are two or three students who are occupied with a job or family but find time for two or three courses each term in our Faculty.

While this first phase of two years concentrates on the serious study of the academic disciplines of theology in the context of a University faculty, the second phase of one year focuses on the vocation of ministry in the setting of an institute (Montreal Institute for Ministry). The staff of the Institute consists of one person from each of the participating churches (Anglican, United and Presbyterian) and an Executive Director, who happens to be a Presbyterian, Art van Seters. This program has a number of elements: six weeks of clinical pastoral education in a hospital, field work throughout the year in parishes under trained supervisors, workshops, tutorials and seminars on pastoring, communication and preaching, urban training, church education, parish and community life, worship, case studies on field experiences, counselling etc. Presbyterian College teaches courses in Westminster Standards and Church Polity and attempts to provide a college base for Presbyterian students in theology, many of whom live in the college residence. Students and faculty meet in the college every Wednesday noon for Communion, followed by lunch and discussion. One of the more heated topics this year was the nature of a community in a theological college. Theological curriculum is next on the list for discussion, and this is expected to get hot and heavy.

*Robert C. Culley*

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MEDIA RARE . . . P.T.L.

What does "media wisdom" have to say about theological education? One thing might be its image of the church; or the clergyman. Another: in these days of "continuing education" (even "formation" in Québec) we need to ponder the impact of radio, TV, movies, newspapers, theatre. "Religion and culture" is not merely some academic pursuit, but the name of the Game.

Take P.T.L. for instance. If you haven't caught this little act on your television screen you've missed a precious example of the hard sell. P.T.L. of course (did you guess?) means Praise The Lord and represents the best and the worst of the Bible Belt's understanding of the Gospel. It is essentially a money-raising effort, a combination of the Johnny Carson Show format and a Telethon promotion. The beauty of the Old South (mansions and all—except slaves) forms a picturesque backdrop for song and sales pitch. Ostensibly the effort is to raise money to build a TV studio complex which will beam the Gospel across the nation. In fact what comes through is the old Protestant ethic-free enterprise-give-and-gain philosophy. "When you travel with the Lord you travel first class" as they say.

That's one way to use the media. After all, the word is *medium*, a means or mode of communication. One lesson is to adapt your message to that mode so that its particular modality will have greatest impact (consider the phenomenon of the radio D.J.). Another lesson is to consider whether the hard sell and the Hard Gospel behind it constitute the proper message (or *message*). For one thing, what we used to call "the ministry of the laity" may prove relevant. Why do we continue to assert that only the clergyman can represent church and Gospel? Is his image of the institutionalized Parson the right one (e.g. the biblical one?). He may provide theological commentary, of course, when opportunity is provided. But what if his role is to train and advise the *laity* for their proper ministry: the artists, the critics, the producers, the sponsors and so on? Then the media would have a sort of underground core of knowledgeable people whose vocation is clearly defined within society; and whose "other vocation" reflects an aggressive faith tackling the hardest places where the action is.

That's a theological view of church-and-media, quite different from P.T.L. and much current use of radio and TV by clergy. But really now—how *do* we help people to praise the Lord?



Rabbi Levi-Yitzhak prayed with fervour because he believed in prayer. A story he liked to tell: "I was there when a thief was being caught. I heard him whisper: "Too bad, I'll try again, and next time I'll do better." From this thief I learned that one must always be prepared to try again.

Adam, ancestor of all mankind, visited Rabbi Israel, Maggid of Kozhenitz, in a dream: "You have prayer for yourself - for your purity - and your prayer was heard. Now I would like you to pray for me."

Rabbi Israel, Maggid of Kozhenitz: "Master of the Universe, know that the children of Israel are suffering too much: they deserve redemption, they need it. But if, for reasons unknown to me, You are not willing, not yet, then redeem all the other nations but do it soon!"

*contributors to this issue:*

Dr. James I. McCord, President of Princeton Theological Seminary, is a leading speaker and author of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. He was invited as fraternal delegate to the centennial assembly and gave the address at the special convocation of Presbyterian College.

Dr. Margaret Webster is Principal of Ewart College, Toronto, where questions of the goals and methods of theological education have been under review.

The Rev. J.C. (Jack) Cooper is secretary for the new Board of Ministry, which combines the functions of the former personnel and theological education committees of the General Assembly.



BARC (ours instead of yours)

We usually reserve this column for your "barc" but either your mail hasn't gotten through or you aren't ready to bite (us anyway!)

But we are feeling the bite anyway 'cause some of our readers are only readers and not subscribers. We are hereby putting the bite on them in the hope that their bite may be better than their barc.

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Enclosed is my subscription of \$2 for one year.

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