

The Holy Spirit and People of Various Faiths, Cultures, and Ideologies

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When we speak of the Spirit we think of life and its unpredictable growing points, of truth and moments of enlightenment. We also think of inspiration, creativity, and boundless freedom. The ultimate source of all these is God himself. Any attempt to understand God's activity in the world must acknowledge that we are groping after a mystery. Therefore, the limitation of words and the inadequacy of conceptual forms are perhaps nowhere more consciously to be acknowledged than in a discussion on the Holy Spirit.

The subject itself has become important for at least two reasons. First, it is being increasingly recognized that all human life, not just an artificially isolated segment called the "religious" dimension, comes within the purview of God's activity. Second, there is the existential fact that *all* human beings, not just Christians but people of all living faiths, cultures, and ideologies, share a common future, either for survival or for annihilation. This makes them inter-dependent in their search for the meaning of life and existence. The theological significance of this fact cannot be ignored any longer. That all people are open to the activity of God's Spirit seriously challenges a legalistic dogmatism which limits the work of the Spirit to a narrow segment of time, to an isolated bit of geographic location, and to the history of a particular people. The Spirit of God should not be regarded as the monopolistic possession of the Judaeo-Christian tradition imprisoned within the steel and concrete structure of Western dogma and a permanent Atlantic Charter. As Metropolitan Khodr

remarks, "It is totally inconceivable that theologians should speak authoritatively of the relation between Christianity and the religions without having first, critically yet creatively, integrated the data from outside Christianity into their thinking."¹ Therefore, what we seek here is not so much to extend the work of the Holy Spirit outside the hedges of the church as a more inclusive doctrine of God himself. A more sensitive recognition of the wider work of the Holy Spirit may also help us to broaden our understanding of God's saving activity, thus correcting what our Orthodox friends describe as a "Christo-monistic tendency" that seems to dominate Protestant theology, and preventing our conceptions of God from becoming too small and too static.

I.

Certain observations are necessary at the outset. There is the question of terminology—the Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit of Christ. It would be unwise to attempt a clarification of the terms here on the basis of biblical exegesis. That is a task for more competent biblical scholars. All these terms refer to the activity of God in the world. To draw any sharp lines of demarcation between them is like trying to slice a flowing river with a razor blade; it cannot be done. Moreover, we acknowledge that we speak within the community of Christians who believe in God through Christ in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. We are already in dialogue with people of various faiths and ideologies, and who therefore seek to recognize, interpret and understand this larger relationship in the light of our faith. In the Christian understanding of God and his activity, his transcendence is balanced by the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. But there are divergent views regarding the latter. There are those who reserve the use of the term "Holy Spirit" to God's relationship with personal beings and who emphasize

that, strictly speaking, the term Holy Spirit should be reserved exclusively to describe God's activity in making Christ known, (John 7:39) in assuring his continuing presence in the church, and finally presenting them to himself as sons and daughters in Christ. (Galatians 4:6, Romans 8:9-16) There are others who seem to be reluctant even to raise this question positively in relation to people of other faiths. Discussing the connection between Spirit and mission, Berkhof points out that in Roman Catholic theology the Spirit is institutionalized because he is regarded mainly as the soul and sustainer of the church. In Protestant theology the Spirit is individualized because he is regarded mainly as the awakener of individual spiritual life in justification and sanctification. He rightly concludes that both these lead to a "common pattern of an introverted and static pneumatology." He makes no reference to the possible work of the Spirit in the world of other religions, but in discussing the work of the Spirit in the "secularized" world he says, "The Spirit is not locked up in the church." Does this mean that there is more willingness to recognize the work of the Spirit in the "secularized" world than in the world of millions of people who follow "religions" other than the Christian? In many of the more recent books on the Holy Spirit there is no reference at all to the possible work of the Spirit among people of other faiths. The discussion is almost entirely limited to the church and to the "secular" world. There are others, however—of the Orthodox tradition, for example—who refuse to limit the work of the Holy Spirit to the area of rational beings only but would include all creation within the scope of his presence and activity. This would, by implication, have a more generous attitude toward recognizing the work of the Holy Spirit among people of other religions.

A whole series of questions might then be raised which would have to be discussed in fresh ways for many years to come. For example, how do Christians clarify to themselves theologically the relationship between the work of the Holy Spirit in the church and the activity of God's Spirit among people of different religious traditions and ideological persuasions? Is it the same Spirit that brooded upon the waters over *all* creation, that spoke through the prophets of the Old Testament, that was with Jesus at the critical points of his life and ministry, that manifested itself in "the outpouring" in Acts which also activated Yajnavalkya, the Buddha, the Prophet Mohammed, and, why not—Mahatma Gandhi, Karl Marx, and Mao Tse-tung? Or is there a qualitative difference? Should we seek a difference? Why? If so, on the basis of what criteria? These are not easy questions but their implications are serious not only because they touch such topics as revelation, mission, peace, justice, and co-operation with people of other faiths, but also because the question of truth is involved. It certainly makes a difference whether we regard the work of the Holy Spirit as exclusive or inclusive. The style of Christian life and the Christians' attitude toward others would be different depending upon whether we regard God's truth to be confined to the historical limits of the church or whether we accept his truth to be as free as his Spirit, active at all times and working among all people.

A further consideration pertains to the nature of the sources from which we derive our theological observations. Here we immediately face the fact that neither the testimony of the Scripture nor the tradition of the church gives clear and consistent guidelines to discuss the larger work of the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament does make brief references to the Spirit of God and his concern with other nations and individuals (see, for example, Amos 9:7). George S. Hendry remarks

that the New Testament contains no trace of any understanding of the Spirit as the principle that animates human life as God's creature. Hendry draws attention to the fact that the activity of the Spirit is mentioned at the decisive points in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ—his conception, baptism, temptation, first preaching, the casting out of the demons, perhaps his death on the Cross. He goes on to say: "Thus the action of the Spirit is literally Christocentric inasmuch as it is always centered on Christ, whether it comes before or after the Incarnation. There is a difference in distribution and degree, but none of focus. The New Testament knows no work of the Spirit except in relation to the historical manifestation of Christ." The question which immediately arises is obvious: How then can any criteria be derived from the New Testament to discuss the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to people of other religions when the New Testament writers were concerned exclusively with the work of the Spirit within the community of the faithful? Even in the Fourth Gospel the Spirit is the "rememberer," not innovator. The Spirit's function is not to originate truth, but to recall, to represent, the scope of which is limited to the believing and expectant community of Christians. The references in the New Testament should be regarded as warmly personal, intensely joyful, and strongly affirmative statements of the early Christian community in the pre-Constantine era about the work of the Holy Spirit in their personal and community life. They surely cannot be regarded as negative statements or judgments on people of other religions about whom they knew nothing or very little. How then can theologians use them *now* as criteria to pass judgments on Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and others?

Historically, as soon as the Christian faith moved into the wider world of Greek culture and philosophy

with its different religions and lofty view of the human spirit, the question of the larger work of the Holy Spirit was bound to arise. In the aspiration of the human spirit, in the very core of the created being, St. Augustine, for example, did recognize an ontological affinity between the Creator and creature. "Man was so created that by means of that in him which transcends he should attain to that which transcends all things, that is the true and best and only God." The theological emphasis of Clement of Alexandria and Origen are well known in this connection. Gregory Nazianzen says that philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle "have caught a glimpse of the Holy Spirit." Irenaeus sums up the general trend in Patristic tradition in the words, "There is but one and the same God who, from the beginning to the end by various dispensations, comes to the rescue of mankind." The Orthodox tradition, following these insights, strongly emphasizes a more generous attitude toward others. Metropolitan George Khodr's address to the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches at Addis Ababa in 1971, dealing with the topic "Christianity in a Pluralistic World—the Economy of the Holy Spirit," drew a good deal from these Fathers and developed its implications to contemporary attitudes toward people of other religious traditions, and more particularly to a new style of "mission." It was not surprising, however, that the strongest criticisms against his position came from Protestant theologians, particularly those heavily influenced by Karl Barth and the dominant ideas of the Heilsgeschichte school.

It is significant that Karl Barth's section on "The Revelation of God as the Abolition of Religion" comes in the context of his discussion on "The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit." It is well known that Barth's judgment on "religion" as "ideology," "self-righteousness," and "unbelief" applies both to Christianity and

other religions and that it has influenced generations of theologians and missiologists in their understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit and their attitude to people of other faiths. If the premises of Karl Barth are taken for granted, then the rigor of his logic would probably lead to his conclusions. In the complex and highly sophisticated discussion, it is fairly clear what Barth means by "true religion." "That there is a true religion is an event in the act of the grace of God in Jesus Christ. To be more precise, it is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit."¹⁰ He goes on to say, ". . . in the very encounter with God, the site of which we call Peniel or, it may be Evangelical Reformed Christianity, that the face of God is seen, and therefore Peniel or Evangelical Reformed Christianity is the true religion."¹¹ And he goes further in drawing the implication, "And it (Christianity) alone has the commission and authority to be a missionary religion, i.e., to confront the world of religions as the one true religion, with absolute self-confidence to invite and challenge it to abandon its ways and to start on the Christian way."¹²

A few remarks may be made on this because of its implications to our attitudes to, and relations with, people of other religions. First, there is the use of the word "religion." In this and numerous other similar discussions coming from the West, the category of "religion" and the norms of theological debate derived entirely from within one dominant, historical culture and thought pattern are used to measure and dismiss apparently similar categories in other cultures. Thus it is almost wholly taken for granted that Barth's description of "religion" as "unbelief" includes Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, the Primal World Views, etc., and that "true religion," that is, that which is the bearer of God's revelation through the Holy Spirit, cannot be found among them. Is this conclusion justifiable? In many of these cultures the totality of life is

not split up into the "religious" and the "secular," and the word "religion" is not used in the same conceptual way as in the Western context. *Dharma*, for Hindus and Buddhists for example, is far more inclusive than what is denoted by "religion" in the West. It is both a way of life and a view of life that is much more inclusive. In addition to this, granting that for Christians "Peniel" or "Evangelical Reformed Christianity" or Methodism are the sites of God's encounter with humanity, does it follow that one should declare that Banaras, or Bodh Goya, or Mecca are outside the orbit of God's Spirit?¹³

Second, it limits "religion" very much to "belief" and "systems of thought" where people of other faiths are concerned. A long discussion on certain religions, e.g., *Yodo-Shin* and *Yodo-Shin-Shu*, and on the Indian *Bhakti* religion deals with ideas and techniques, not with *people* and their inner struggles to understand the relation between grace and freedom in other cultures. One of the most important lessons some Christians have learned reluctantly through the experience of actual dialogues is this *viz.*, that there can be no dialogue between "religions," between Christianity and Hinduism, between one "belief" and another. Dialogue can take place only between *people*, living persons, sharing the conflicts, ambiguities, tragedies, and hopes of human life. The co-existence of particular religions might provide the historical context in which such living encounters might take place. When a Christian and a Hindu or a Muslim or a Marxist meet, sharing the mystery of existence, longing for salvation and liberation, groping for meaning and struggling for strength, can one limit the work of the Holy Spirit only to the Christian partner?

Third, there is the difficult question of the relation between the human spirit and the Holy Spirit, between human freedom and the grace of God in the work of

salvation. It is obvious that the crucial point here—as with the Reformers—is the primacy of God's grace. But while acknowledging this, is it justifiable to state it in such a way as to deprive persons totally of their freedom in encounter with the Gospel? (A similar point was at issue in the *Bhakti* religion—the well-known *markata nyāya* and *mārjāla nyāya*—in the persistent debates between the priorities of *Sankara* and *Ramanuja*.) Can persons be deprived of active spirit, which is the principle of their freedom, creativity, and transcendence without ceasing to be human? Or, as Hendry puts it, granting that as Christians we apprehend God through Christ in the Holy Spirit, does it follow that apart from this spiritual relation, God and humanity stand completely unrelated to each other? To answer this in the affirmative would not only be “to maintain the sovereignty of grace at too great a cost,” but also to ignore the presence and fruits of grace in the lives of countless people of other faiths.

This leads to a fourth observation *viz.*, the question of authority to which some reference was made earlier. A discussion on the larger work of the Holy Spirit cannot limit itself to the Scriptures alone. It must also take into account the different trends within the tradition of the church during the centuries. But if we are serious when we say we believe in the *living* God who is the Lord of history, then the present, the contemporary historic context in which people of various faiths are inter-dependent and have to live together as neighbors, is equally important. Thus scriptural evidence, the trends in the tradition of the church, and the sensitivity of Christians to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, *now* in obedience to the *living* God and in relation to other people, must all be taken into account. Therefore, it is important to break out of the narrow corridors of *Heilsgeschichte* theology which, as a hermeneutical method, has unduly dominated bib-

lical studies for decades—and as a consequence of which, Christian attitude toward people of other religious traditions has been almost exclusively negative. Its narrow view of revelation, and exclusive attitude toward the work of the Holy Spirit, have marked Christians with an arrogance which is at variance with Christ-like humility. It has confused Christian communities wherever they have sought to be responsibly involved with their neighbors in tackling common concerns in society. In recent years it has been challenged on various grounds. For one thing, it is now more clearly recognized that the Bible contains many theologies and different historical perspectives. Therefore, no single method of interpretation should be taken as the norm to judge all others. For another, there are many who question whether Israel's faith and conception of history was as “distinctive” or “unique” in the ancient world as it is claimed. Bertil Albrektson remarks that a detailed comparison of Near Eastern and biblical texts have convinced him that on point after point “the Old Testament has no real claim to a special kind of history that is in any way distinct from its environment.”¹⁴ More important, the basic assumption that there are two kinds of history—*Geschichte* and *Historie*—is seriously questioned by many scholars as being unnecessary and artificial. Weiss says the distinction between two levels of history “is not only necessary but an exercise in self-defeat.”¹⁵ Lastly, one should ask the question: Are *Heilsgeschichte* and the attitudes engendered by it really relevant to Christians *now* in inescapably multi-religious and multi-cultural societies struggling with the question of how to live together in peace and harmony? Or does it merely refer back to certain ideological assumptions of the colonial era?¹⁶ “Contemporary theology must therefore transcend the notion of ‘salvation history’ in order to recover the meaning of *oikonomia*. The economy of Christ cannot

be reduced to its unfolding in history; the heart of it is the fact that it makes us participants in the very life of God. It must involve reference to eternity and to the work of the Holy Spirit. For inherent in the term of 'economy' is the idea of mystery."¹⁷

II.

It would be premature and less than helpful to attempt any systematic treatment of the topic before us. The data are insufficient, criteria have to be developed responsibly and the insights gained through actual dialogues have to be carefully evaluated. The most that can be done at this stage is to give reasons to reject the negative attitudes, to raise exploratory questions in more positive ways, and to emphasize the context of living in dialogue in which this question can more fruitfully be discussed in a more challenging manner. In view of the lack of authoritative guidelines, perhaps it would be wiser at this stage in our relationships with people of other faiths to look for existential criteria rather than conceptual criteria. In other words, the question seems to be not what theological reasons we can advance to ourselves and to our fellow theologians to justify why we are talking kindly to our neighbors of other faiths—sometimes condescendingly—but how do we understand the work of the Spirit in our relationships to each other and to God in a world that is becoming increasingly inter-dependent? Certain points seem to be fairly clear.

1. There is little said in the Scriptures on the question of the relationship between the Holy Spirit and people of other faiths. What is said about the Spirit's activity is within the context of the life and work of the believing community and should not be regarded as negative judgment on Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and others today. Therefore, one may at least raise the question whether it is the most fruitful attitude to claim the authority of the Scriptures for an exclusive or an

inclusive attitude toward the work of the Spirit in relation to people of other faiths.

2. Sufficient weight must be given to the fact that within the tradition of the church there are divergent tendencies in the Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant heritages and that, therefore, it is possible for Christians to hold different views on the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to people of other religions. No one particular tendency can be regarded as the norm to judge others. Perhaps there is need for clarification of related questions within the Christian tradition itself, e.g., it would be worthwhile to see what the real issues are if the position of the early Greek Fathers is confronted with that of the Reformers, not in abstract debate, but in the living context of multi-religious and ideological relationships. The real issue may turn out to be not how the two might be theologically divergent but how, together as Christians, those who feel persuaded to follow these respective tendencies relate themselves *now* to others under God. The present and future dimensions of our response to the guidance of the Spirit are more important than obsessive clinging to the controversies of the past.

3. The context of living in dialogue is of particular significance and has to be taken more seriously. Perhaps it is too early to draw theological conclusions on the basis of insights gained and lessons learned in recent meetings. It must be emphasized that our concern here is not just with organized inter-religious meetings limited to intellectual exchanges. Murray Rogers rightly points out that to those who belong to the monotheistic family "true religion" is always a dialogue. First, it is a dialogue of God with us, followed by our response to him, as was most vividly lived by our Lord Jesus Christ. Second, it is dialogue between persons in sharing our experience and knowledge of the mystery of God in Christ. "This human exchange is always a

giving and receiving used by the Holy Spirit to awaken and to bring nearer to fulfillment what was already implanted by God in every man in the first step of creation, the first innumerable calls to participate in the Divine Life."¹⁸ In a real sense, therefore, the Holy Spirit is not a subject for reflection and talking, but for prayer and meditation. Third, it is an inner dialogue within us, with God, in "the cave of the heart," at the very source of our consciousness.

But one should also take into account those who do not belong to the "monotheistic family" of religions. There is a vast unexplored area here which, in the past, has been more or less dismissed as being outside the realm of revelation. For example, a fresh examination of the Hindu view of *ātman* and of *shakti* in connection with the nature and work of the Spirit is yet to be done. The experience of and attitude toward spirits or Spirit in primal world-views, e.g., in Africa, is yet another area to be explored.¹⁹ There is also the question whether God's activity through the work of the Spirit should be confined to the realm of "religions" only, and whether the connection between Spirit and history is the exclusive mark of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. If the prophet, inspired by the Spirit, should *then* describe Cyrus as "The Lord's shepherd" (Isaiah 44:28), and as "his anointed whose right hand I have grasped" (45:1), why not Mahatma Gandhi, Fidel Castro, or Mao Tse-tung *now*? Is the liberation of India under Gandhi, of Cuba under Castro, of China under Mao theologically less significant than the *Exodus*? Does not the Spirit of God touch other people in *their* history to transform a certain moment from being part of mere *chronos* to become a significant *kairos*? Or, have we started from a false premise and reached a faulty conclusion limiting him who cannot and should not be limited? "A heathen asked Rabbi Joshua ben Kaska, 'Why did

God speak to Moses from the thorn bush?' Rabbi Joshua replied, 'If he had spoken from a carob tree or from a sycamore you would have asked me the same question! But so as not to dismiss you without an answer, God spoke from the thorn bush to teach you that there is no place where the Shekinah is not, not even a thorn bush.'"²⁰

4. The moment we talk about criteria to discern the activity of the Spirit we are in a dilemma. If "boundless freedom" is of the very essence of the Spirit, then to put any limits on the Spirit's activity is to negate that freedom. However, without some discernible "signs" to recognize the work of the Spirit we could be lost like a boat without a rudder in a sea of relativism. The Scriptures, the tradition of the church and our obedience to the living God *now* do give us some signs to recognize his continuing work. Spirit means *life*, not death, and so vitality, creativity, and growth. Spirit means *order*, not chaos, and so meaning, significance, and truth become important. Spirit means *community*, not separation, and so sharing, fellowship, bearing one another's burden is another mark. Wherever these marks are found—life, order, and community—there one should sense the work of the Spirit. But these cannot be too heavily drawn up or over-emphasized in structures because any orderly patterns can be broken up by the "boundless freedom" of that very Spirit who refuses to be organized and smothered by human limitations.

5. This leads us to the observation that, at this stage, to be sensitive to the contemporary working of the Holy Spirit might mean getting into areas which may as yet be unfamiliar to most of us and that, therefore, we should probably look for existential rather than conceptual criteria. This does not mean that theological imperatives are to be solely determined by the pressures of history. Neither does it mean that Chris-

tians should be theologically indifferent to their basic commitments. But it does mean that when existential involvement of Christians with people of living faiths and ideologies is taken seriously, older methods of theological approach will inevitably be affected. Life may be recognized to be larger than logic; love may take precedence over truth; the neighbor as a person may become more important than his belief. Reflection on the work of the Spirit may be subordinated to a readiness to be led by the Spirit together with the partners into the depths of God's mystery. Meeting urgent human needs of neighbors may suddenly become more important than prior theological discussion about basis, purpose, and motivations. I wish to illustrate this briefly first by referring to certain ongoing dialogues between Christians and people of living faiths and ideologies, and second by pointing to a contemporary situation in Britain itself.

It is striking that in our recent dialogues the question was mainly: How do we live together, how do we understand our relationship to each other and to God even though we are committed to particular faiths? This surely was not avoiding fundamental issues because such matters as revelation, truth, worship, mission, etc., have come up openly during discussions and these organized dialogues have by no means been without tensions. But these tensions were accepted within a milieu of freedom and friendliness, of confidence and trust where attempts were made to be open to God and to each other. At Ajaltoun, Lebanon, 1970, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists shared with each other their respective experience of dialogues in their particular countries. For the first time, an attempt was made to go beyond religious "ideas" and to open ourselves to the symbols of worship and devotion in a multi-religious context. The Spirit was not a topic for discussion but the milieu in which we met as persons

and human beings. The Christian-Jewish meetings are continuing on a regular basis on the theme "The Search for World Community: Christian and Jewish Perspectives."²¹ Significantly, the questions of "election," "people of God," "revelation," etc., have not come up prominently in the conversations. The Jews seem to be less keen on "election" at present than some of the "neo-elect" Christians! In July, 1972, a group of forty-six Christians and Muslims, almost equally divided between the two communities of faith, met at Broumana, Lebanon, to consider the theme "In Search of Understanding and Cooperation: Christian and Muslim Contributions."²² In September, 1973, a consultation in Africa explored the theme: "The Wholeness of Human Life: Christian Involvement in Mankind's Inner Dialogue with Primal World-Views." A multi-religious dialogue on the theme "Towards World Community: Resources and Responsibilities for Living Together" is being prepared for 1974. This would bring together about fifty people from the Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities of faith. What is significant is perhaps not so much the topics discussed as the fact of their coming together and living together. It is the personal, living context and its inevitable consequences on the hearts and minds of people that must be taken seriously. This must increasingly provide us with the milieu in which the question of the continuing work of the Holy Spirit *now* must be experienced and pondered upon.

The second is an illustration taken from Britain itself. The reference is to the British Council of Churches' involvement with the question of the use of church properties for worship or other activities in multi-religious and multi-racial areas.²³ This has a bearing on our subject for several reasons. First, the theological question of what is holy and the work of the Holy Spirit is here discussed not in academic isolation, but

in response to actual and urgent human needs. People—not just Christians, but Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and Sikhs—are waiting. Second, not only a few theologians but committee members and congregations—and in an indirect way, people of other faiths—are already involved in the discussion. Clearly, existential urgency has become influential in considering priorities. Third, obviously the decisions taken will have consequences that will go far beyond the local context. This seems to be one of the questions where theological issues are inextricably bound up with political, economic, and sociological realities.

In the continuing debate, it was pointed out that the majority of churches hold “the moderate view which affirms *both* that Jesus Christ is unique *and* that God’s Spirit is and always has been at work in cultures and faiths of men.”²⁴ There is a certain impatience with ponderous theological deliberations. “Are we in danger of playing with the familiar game of discovering respectable and weighty reasons for supporting disreputable positions? Is not the essence of the matter enshrined in the parable of the Good Samaritan crystal clear?” “Let us not become Christian dogs in redundant manglers.”²⁵ In spite of this impatience, there is a considerable theological discussion on the question of what is “holy,” particularly in connection with church buildings once “consecrated,” but later on not used by Christians and now being asked for use by people of other faiths for their worship. It is recognized that “Asian Muslims living in our midst, far from being a threat, may prove to be catalysts who will help English Christians to rediscover the substance of the Gospel (often obscured by the inherited cubic footage of redundant fabric).”²⁶ This would apply not only to Muslims but also to Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, and others, and may bring before Christians the question of the larger work of the Holy Spirit in more urgent and con-

crete ways. Similar multi-religious and multi-racial situations are already developing in other parts of the world, particularly in Europe and America. Such situations are likely to raise perplexing issues to Christians unfamiliar with such experiences. Therefore, the issues raised and attitudes called for will be of considerable interest to others as well.

In many of the textbooks on theology, even in those devoted particularly to the work of the Holy Spirit, one looks in vain for a careful, sympathetic, and extended treatment of the work of the Spirit in relation to the life and thought of people of other faiths, cultures, and ideologies. It may be that one has looked at the wrong type of books but it looks as if, after a long period of neglect, the question of the Holy Spirit and people of other faiths is only now beginning to enter into the spiritual consciousness of people. However, it is yet to be taken seriously into the total spectrum of theological reflection in the church. And the question of the Holy Spirit must inevitably lead to the doctrine of God himself and of the Trinity in far more inclusive ways than Christian theology has ever done before. It must take into account the unknowability, the incomprehensibility, and the mystery of God and the work of his Spirit among others no less than revelation in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. Questions of peace and justice, of development and education, of dialogue and cooperation, of truth and love, and the almost desperate search for a quality of life that can sustain personal values in an age of technology—these are matters that bring together various people as they share a troubled past and look into a common future. The noise of old crusades, the shelter of ancient fortresses, and the spent bullets of theological armories of the past must be left behind. What we need today is a theology that is not less but more true to God by being generous and open, a theology not less but more loving

toward the neighbor by being friendly and willing to listen, a theology that does not separate us from our fellow human beings but supports us in our common struggles and hopes. As we live together with our neighbors, what we need today is a theology that refuses to be impregnable, but which, in the spirit of Christ, is both ready and willing to be vulnerable.

Notes

1. S. J. Samartha, Editor, *Living Faiths and the Ecumenical Movement* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1971), p. 132.
2. Hendrikus Berkhof, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1964), p. 33.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 104.
4. See, for example, P. Evdokimov's paper on "Nature," presented to the Faith and Order Commission Meeting in Aarhus, 1964, published in *Verbum Caro*, 73, 1965. See also, *Mid-Stream*, Vol. X, No. 4, Summer 1971, pp. 6ff, for an article by Metropolitan Emilianos, "The Spirit Enlightens the Whole Mankind."
5. George S. Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965), p. 29.
6. Augustine, *De Civ. dei*, VIII, 4.
7. Gregory Nazianzen, *OV.31.5*; P.G. 36, 137 B.C.
8. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haeres.*, III, 12:13.
9. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1955), "The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit," Sec. 2, pp. 103ff; and "The Revelation of God in the Abolition of Religion," Sec. 17, pp. 280ff.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 344.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 339.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 357.
13. S. J. Samartha, "Religious Pluralism and the Quest for World Community;" R. Robert Nelson and E. J. Brill, Editors, *No Man is Alien* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971), pp. 132ff.
14. *History and the Gods* (Lund, C.W.K., Gleerup, 1967), quoted in *Religion and Life*, p. 92 (see footnote 16).
15. J. Weiss, "History and the Gospel," *Novum Testamentum*, 10, 1968, pp. 81-94.
16. For an excellent summary of recent debate on the whole question, see: James T. Clemons, "Critics and Criticism of Salvation History," *Religion in Life*, Vol. XLI, Spring, 1972, pp. 89-100.
17. Samartha, "Living Faiths and the Ecumenical Movement," *op. cit.*, p. 136.

18. Murray Rogers, "The Spirit: The Milieu of Inter-Faith Dialogue," *End and Odds*, Jerusalem, No. 7, 1972, pp. 1ff.
19. John S. Mbiti, "Spiritual Beings, Spirits, and the Living Dead," *African Religions and Philosophy* (London: Heinemann, 1969), pp. 75ff.
20. C. G. Montefiore and H. Loewe, *A Rabbinical Anthology* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), p. 13.
21. *Ecumenical Review*, Vol. XXV, No. 2.
22. *Study Encounter*, Vol. VIII, No. 3, 1972, SE/31. The papers presented at the meeting in Broumana, Lebanon, will be available before long.
23. See, *The Use of Church Properties for Community Activities—An Interim Report*, British Council of Churches, Sept., 1972; esp., the theological section by John Picket under the appropriate title, "Let These Stones Live," appendix G.; and *The Use of Church Properties for Community Activities in Multi-Racial Areas: Memorandum of Comment*, Report by the Standing Committee, January 11, 1973, W. D. Pattison, Secretary General.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 39.