

A HOLY PEOPLE

A Study in the Ecclesiology of Andrew Murray

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The thesis seeks to show Andrew Murray's growing understanding of what it meant to be the elect of God in contrast to other prevailing notions.

In his confrontation with the Trekker communities, the majority of whom were rigid Calvinists, stressing a divine election based on the notions of biological and cultural identity, Murray found little of the holy behaviour which ought to characterize the people of God. The elect should be seen to be the elect by their fruits. Instead there was divisiveness, discrimination, party spirit and other forms of ungodliness.

Faced with the immensity of the task in identifying the true Church and building God's people up in holiness, Murray began to sense the necessity of another 'dimension' within the Church's regular means of grace of preaching, the sacraments, and discipline.

The revival of 1860, focussed Murray's attention in a new and vital way on the work of the Holy Spirit in breathing new life into the Church and in empowering believers to live lives pleasing to God. The 'indiscriminate' effects of the Holy Spirit's work convinced Murray that the Gospel and thus the Church was not the possession of the white colonist, Dutch or English, but that the black and brown man had an equal claim on the Gospel and as much right to become a member of Christ's Church.

Murray's understanding of the Christian life as continual abiding in Christ by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit meant that the believer came to have the mind of Christ and to partake of His holiness. This holiness evidenced itself in the believer having Christ's concern for the lost. Mission, therefore, became the supreme end of the Church.

The struggle with the forces of liberalism raised the new issue that unbelievers could no longer be simply 'heathen blacks' or English but most of all Dutch. The support of the civil courts of those disciplined by the Church brought the whole problem of ecclesiology to the fore and led Murray to the conclusion of the necessary separation of the Church from the State.

Murray's discovery that in various ages, nations and Church traditions there were those with the same passionate desire for God's holiness, led him into an increasing awareness of the catholicity of the Church. True holiness demanded the love and unity of all God's children.

Murray's ecclesiology was a biblically-based one at a time when communities were beginning to be formed by other than biblical notions and principles and by a people who were trying to pack more into the notion of a people of God than Scripture gave warrant for.

The emphasis for which Murray stood made for an ecclesiology that simply could not be confined.

TO MARIA AND GABRIELLE

THAT THEY MAY GROW AND BECOME STRONG,
FILLED WITH WISDOM AND IN FAVOUR WITH GOD.

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the ages, in both the East and the West, men and women have appeared who have striven after that "holiness without which no one will see the Lord." (Heb. 12:14 RSV) Preachers of holiness have included those who exemplified their message by their living as well as those whose words and actions made a mockery of God's demand. Holiness has attracted persons of varying social, political, ecclesiastical and biblical points of view, with the result that numerous interpretations have been placed upon it. It has been viewed on the one hand, as by Augustine, as solely the work of God's grace and which the believer can do nothing to attain, and on the other hand, as by Pelagius, as the outcome of the believer's moral endeavour with the capability God has bestowed upon him for doing good.

Both views, pushed to their extremes, make nonsense of the testimony of Scripture which presents holiness or perfection as the work of God in His Church (Ezek.20:12; Heb.13:12) as well as the ideal after which His people must strive (1 Pet.1:13 - 16; Matt.5:48; 19:21).

It is essential, if a biblical understanding of holiness is to be attained, that these two aspects of the truth, be held in tension with each other.

The implications of such an understanding for the doctrine of the Church are that, as the Body of Christ, the Church is a holy people, having been made holy by virtue of its union with Christ. Yet there is another

sense in which it still has to become holy, to become the Body of Christ, falling, as it does, very far short from the ideal as presented in Scripture. It was this discrepancy between the ideal and the actual state of the visible Church, along with his own experience of the blessing and power for renewal of the indwelling Holy Spirit, that led Andrew Murray into an increasing insistence on the fruits of holiness being the characteristic mark of the true Church of Christ.

It is the intention of this Thesis to show how, in opposition to a society which prided itself on being God's elect while not bearing the fruits of such election, Murray increasingly stressed the necessity of holiness as the result of the believer's continual abiding in Christ. Murray's understanding of the Church as a holy people cut right across any ideas of national, denominational, racial or cultural election to include all those who showed themselves to be the Church by their "perseverance in sainthood, in sanctification and obedience."

Chapter One

THE TREKKER CHURCH

August, 1836, witnessed one of the most dramatic events in the history of South Africa as hundreds of dissatisfied Boer families set out on a mass exodus across the northern and north-eastern borders of the Cape Colony. Before departing, the ablest of the Trekkers, Piet Retief, issued a manifesto of grievances against the alleged injustices and restrictions placed on the Boer life-style by the British Colonial Government. It concluded with these words:

~~"We are now leaving the fruitful land of our birth, in which we have suffered enormous losses and continued vexation, and are about to enter a strange and dangerous territory; but we go with firm reliance on an all seeing, just and merciful God, whom we shall always fear and humbly endeavour to obey."~~ 1

The initial attitude of the Government was that it was unable to do anything to prevent the Trekkers from leaving.² However, in April 1838, Governor Sir George Napier, called on all ministers of the Colony to use their influence in preventing further emigrations. In July of that year, he notified the Trekkers by means of a letter published in the Government Gazette that their emigration beyond the Colonial borders in no way absolved them from their allegiance to the British Crown.

The D.R. Church at this time was very little more than a "Spiritual Department of State" and as a result it adopted the same attitude of censure towards the

Trekkers who had "left their houses and altars and (had) departed into the wilderness without a Moses or Aaron and without promise or guidance at present to seek a Canaan for themselves."³ The occasional minister who went to meet the spiritual needs of the Trekkers was only given permission to preach. Under no circumstances was he allowed to administer the sacraments or admit new members into the Church.⁴

The Trekkers were on the whole a deeply pious and devoted people in whom, writes Gerdener, "die Kalvinisme...in murg en in been gesit (het), nie maar as 'n saak van godsdienstige oortuiging nie, maar van die alledaagse lewe: God alleen en God altyd die eer..."⁵ Among their most treasured possessions were to be found the Bible, the "Psalm-en Gesangboek", and very likely the Catechism of Hellenbroek and Wilhelmus à Brackel's "Redelijke Godsdienst."⁶

Because of the centrality of religion in their whole manner of life and thought, to be cut off from their Church was, for the majority of Trekkers, a very grievous and painful matter. Numerous pleas were made to the Cape Church for their needs to be supplied either by permanent or visiting ministers, all without avail.

One cannot really speak about 'the Trekker Community' at this stage in anything other than a very secondary sense. What actually existed was a

number of Trekker 'tribal units' scattered from the Orange River north across the Vaal, each under the leadership of its local 'Chief'. This 'Chief', be he the father of a family or the leader of a Trekker group, was generally responsible for the daily devotional exercises. Sarel Cilliers was the most notable of such Trekker leaders. Peter Hinchliff describes the ecclesiastical situation thus:

"The patriarchal figure of the leader of each group of Trekkers became the prototype of the religious leader. He was much more real to his followers than the distant, critical predikant of the Colony... The polished, educated predikant, capable of writing official letters immaculately in both Dutch and English, praying for the Queen, and talking eloquently of ritual and doctrine, must have seemed like a visitor from another world. The Cape Church had remained what it had been, the official church of the Colony, and the Trekkers had moved away from it metaphorically as well as literally." 7

In spite of this ideological separation from the Cape Church the Trekkers did not wish to consider themselves as anything but members of the D.R. Church and hence their continued call for ministers to administer the sacraments, to marry, to baptize and instruct them in the doctrines of the Church. Under Trekker circumstances the role of the minister as constituent and upbuilder, became very important.

After almost a decade of fruitless pleas to the Cape Church for a permanent minister, Andrew Murray Jnr. was appointed by the Governor ⁸ to "the remote and unattractive parish" of Bloemfontein ⁹ as "the

first regular minister to live and labour among the Voortrekkers." He was inducted to the congregation by his father on 6th May, 1849, just three days before his 21st birthday and just a few months after the British had annexed the territory between the Orange and Vaal Rivers and had proclaimed it as the Orange River Sovereignty. After the Battle of Boomplaas the Boers most intolerant of British rule, sought freedom across the Vaal. Within a few days of his arrival Murray set out on his first pastoral tour of his vast parish which consisted of some 3 000 families scattered across an area of 50 000 square miles between the Orange and the Vaal.

In complete agreement with the first of the marks of the Reformed Church, Murray laid great stress on the true preaching of the Word. Central to his message was the preaching of Christ crucified.¹⁰ A month after his induction Murray wrote to his brother John:

"...I trust that our gracious God is bringing me somewhat to feel the necessity of an intimate experimental soul-knowledge of the precious truth to be proclaimed, and, above all, of that one glorious central truth - the amazing wonder of the love of a crucified Jesus. Let us, my dear brother, seek to drink much at the fountain-head, to make the love of Christ the ground of a continued trust and hope and rejoicing. Then shall we know what to preach to perishing sinners. Then shall we also know how to preach, with the earnestness of a burning love that is straining every nerve to save souls from eternal perdition..."¹¹

The community in and around Bloemfontein at this time included about 140 British soldiers, about 60

Blacks of the Cape Corps, 2 Dutch families in the Village (Murray mentions that he had an average Dutch congregation of about 70), and a group of Bushmen at Kafferfontein. Over the issue of racially mixed worship and communion services the Presbytery of Cape Town issued the following decision in 1829:

"That it is compulsory, according to the teachings of Scripture and the spirit of Christianity, to admit such persons (Blacks) simultaneously with born Christians to the communion table."

This standpoint was accepted by the Synod:

"As an unalterable axiom founded on the infallible Word of God... and that all Christian congregations and each Christian in particular has to act and think in accordance with it." ¹²

In accordance with this ruling of the Cape Church and with his own conviction Murray made no distinction between the various racial groups. While the community was split into Dutch and English congregations, this was the simplest way of dealing with the language barrier and Murray's bilingualism facilitated this arrangement. That the issue of language was the only reason for the separate services is borne out by the fact that Murray began a Saturday evening service for the Black Cape Corps men "at which", he writes, "there will of course be an opportunity for the Dutch Boers to attend."¹³ With equal freedom Murray invited the Bushmen (among whom he had begun a Sunday School) to come to Church. On 25th June, 1849, he writes to his sister Maria:

"...they (the Bushmen) came, headed by their Chief in a cast-off blue coat. The elder ones I took (as class). It was really sad to see them. Some of the real old Bushmen could not understand a word of Dutch, and none of them know much. I tried to make a beginning with teaching them some of the elements of Christian truth, and the first verse of the hymn 'God heeft de wereld zoo bemind'." 14

It is thus evident that in the Bloemfontein pastorate Murray saw simply "perishing sinners" - Dutch, English, Bushmen, Coloured - and as any of these responded to the preaching of the Word they were incorporated into the Church. The Church was, therefore, multiracial and, at this stage at least, bilingual. In addition, the proclamation of the Sovereignty had made all the members British subjects with a common allegiance to the Queen.

When Murray set out on his pastoral visits to the Trekkers across the Vaal the situation changed radically. First of all he was coming as the minister of a Church that was officially bound to an alien government - a fact that was enough to arouse many suspicions and became the continual bone of contention with a segment of the Trekker people. Murray, however, continually saw himself as the servant of the Church's Lord and not as the emissary of the British Government.¹⁵ Not only did he believe this himself but he successfully conveyed this image to the majority of Trekkers which resulted in their continual and united pleas to him to become their minister. His first visit across the Vaal certainly allayed their fears while during and after his second visit he often refers

to "the extraordinary unanimity of...the whole people,...otherwise so divided,...so firmly... fixing their choice upon me and... (taking) no refusal." 16

We have already drawn attention to the fact that the Trekkers were by no means a united or homogeneous community and this is precisely what Murray discovered - a number of little groups, scattered from the Vaal to the Zoutpansberg, all deeply divided on religious and political grounds. There were the regular orthodox, pious Boers, the rigidly puritanical "Doppers", for whom hymn-singing was anathema as a dangerous and radical departure from strict Calvinist tradition, and there were the extremely eccentric 'Jerusalemgangers' for whom salvation virtually lay in their political opposition to England as one of the horns of the beast. Politically the Trekkers were divided into various quarrelling groups, each establishing rival little republics with rival constitutions. Some groups sought to be reunited with the Cape Church while others desired complete ecclesiastical independence. The Sand River Convention of 1852, by which Britain had guaranteed the right of the Transvalers to manage their own affairs had done little to generate a real sense of identity among them. In fact even after the South African Republic was formed in 1857, the areas of Lydenburg and Zoutpansberg retained their independence for almost another ten years. The only real

sense of identity that these diverse groups had was the most obvious one of all - colour. Whiteness was what distinguished or characterised the members of these groups in their struggle against the common black enemy.

The problem confronting Murray in the Transvaal was how it was possible to have a Reformed Church under such conditions of division, hatred and exclusivism.¹⁷ His pastoral work across the Vaal was, therefore, geared to creating a sense of community in Christ. Murray recognized the value and blessing of the preached Word in this respect. On a number of occasions, after hearing of strife in a region, Murray headed there to preach the Word in the hope that it would lead the contestants to peace. One notable occasion was his services at the session of the Volksraad in Potchefstroom in January, 1850. He preached from 1 John 4:7 and

"tried to speak as plainly as possible on all the contention and enmity which prevails amongst them, especially in reference to the Raad, where disputes sometimes run very high... Many professed to be very thankful, and I really think that a good feeling was produced, and that many felt the necessity of striving after peace and unity. In the evening I had another opportunity of speaking strongly on the same subject in my farewell address from Philipians 1:27." 18

At each community Murray visited, in the Sovereignty as well as in the Transvaal, he followed the same procedure. Church services generally lasted from Friday evening till Monday morning during which time up to nine services might be held. Marriages were solemn-

ized, church discipline was administered and children were baptized, but only after the parents had been thoroughly instructed. Because, naturally, only the children of believers are the proper subjects of infant baptism and because baptism is an ordinance of the Church and should be administered in the public assembly of believers, Murray refused to baptize children privately. He thus regarded the visible community gathered for worship as the Church and their presence at a baptism was essential. Murray's sense of the seriousness of such an occasion is borne out in the following instance: Having refused to administer baptism privately, he writes:

"I felt too that they were wholly unprepared for the administration of such a holy ordinance, drinking and cursing having been but too much the order of the day. The lager people, I should say, were mostly from the Hakie-doorns, where none but the wild sort live. I do not know whether I did right, but it is to me a very difficult matter to administer the ordinance to those who are without any preparation, though it is also hard to refuse it. And this appears to me to be one great argument for the first available minister being sent hither, as the ordinance is so often profaned unknowingly, while the people of the Colony all have a better opportunity of being instructed in the matter." 19

This incident also points to Murray's stress on the necessity of Church discipline with its twofold purpose of carrying "into effect the law of Christ concerning the admission and exclusion of members" (Matt. 16:19; John 20:23; 1 Cor. 5:2, 7) and of "promoting the spiritual edification of the members of the Church by

securing their obedience to the laws of Christ. Both these aims are subservient to a higher end, namely, the maintenance of the holiness of the Church of Jesus Christ." ²⁰

Candidates for Church membership were thoroughly examined as to their knowledge of the Bible and the Catechism. This general examination was followed by a personal interview with each candidate lasting a few hours "trying to ascertain his reasons for wishing to be received and to discover the state of mind in which he was." ²¹

His concern was, therefore, not simply that they mouth the correct answers but that they give evidence of a desire to live for Christ. Murray then discussed the acceptability of each candidate with two elders. Some were rejected because of insufficient knowledge and others because "by their own acknowledgment they had not yet sought to believe in Christ; or else while saying that they believed in Christ, their answers showed that they did not even know what they said." ²² In this way then Murray sought to distinguish the true Church community from the insincere, the heretical and the ignorant. The weekend climaxed with the celebration of Holy Communion and the community that gathered for this sacrament, constituted the Church.

In his work of establishing the Church in the Transvaal, Murray was confronted with three main

groups, each of which presented a different and opposing ecclesiology. The first group were the 'Jerusalemgangers'. These folk, with whom Murray had to deal on several occasions in his journeyings across the Vaal, equated themselves with the chosen people of Israel and believed that by this election God had called them to journey across Africa all the way to Israel. This belief was a more extreme version of the rather generally held Trekker conception of themselves as the new Israel, having been called by God out of the land of bondage, beset by heathen enemies, but being guided towards a promised land. Spoelstra notes that the outstanding characteristic of these people was not so much their desire to reach Israel, as their attempt to flee from the power of England, which, along with nine other European countries (excluding Holland and, as a result, all "ware Afrikaners") was seen as one of the horns of the beast.²³ Moorrees has this to say about them:

"By sommige van hulle word daar ook meer bedenklige verskynsels geopenbaar. Hulle maak hul aan oortreding van Gods heiligste gebode skuldig, en verontskuldig hul met die drogrede dat die saligheid nie van 'n mens se godsvrug nie, maar van die uitverkiesing van God afhang." ²⁴

The 'Jerusalemgangers' were staunch republicans²⁵ and this combination of a doctrine of election with a form of government expressing the will of an unrestricted people, seems to closely parallel what H. Richard Niebuhr describes as "the religion of the frontier" in contrast to "the faith of the poor". He writes:

"On the frontier...the enjoyment of economic and political liberty fostered the desire for similar privileges in religion, while the great interest in the retention of individual rights in every sphere naturally sought in faith the justification of practice. Furthermore, the same individualism which resented all absentee control in political and economic life...caused him to look with suspicion upon all administration of religion by superior powers ordained of God or of men... This democratic attitude also came to expression in the sectarian organization of the religious community." 26

The Calvinist doctrine of election as well as the marginal reading on Rev.17:12 in the Dutch State Bible²⁷ were useful allies to the Jerusalemers in the formulation of their own racialist ecclesiology. As Murray increasingly found his ministry discredited and his work interrupted and hampered by their disputations, so his opposition to them grew. He describes one of his encounters with them as follows:

"They exposed their own ignorance most completely in their misconceptions of the kanttekeningen (marginal glosses), and all but their own party were satisfied with the folly of their assertions about the marks of the beast, etc. I need not repeat all the nonsense, I may almost say blasphemy, which they uttered. I was very sorry to see them going in fancied security and holiness on the way of destruction; for they literally seek their salvation in their opposition to the Antichrist. May the Lord have mercy on them." 28

Considering the general Trekker conception of themselves as God's chosen 'volk', Murray's claim that "all but their own party were satisfied with the folly of their assertions" is highly questionable as will be seen in the attitude of the breakaway Hervormde Kerk.

In November, 1852, Rev. Dirk van der Hoff, a Dutch minister, arrived at the Cape in response to a

call from the Potchefstroom Consistory²⁹ to become minister to the pastorless Trekkers. After signing the formularies of the D.R.C., van der Hoff proceeded to Potchefstroom. The outcome of his arrival was that the combined Volksraad and "General Assembly" of the congregations refused permission for Murray to induct van der Hoff. They decided to cut their links with the Cape Church and form an entirely separate body known as the Hervormde Kerk. At this stage it would appear that they were simply rejecting organic union³⁰ with the Cape Church and not complete severance of communion.

The Hervormde historian, S.P. Engelbrecht, gives as the two basic reasons for the split, the Cape Governor's say in the affairs of the Cape Church and the Church's attitude of non-discrimination between whites and blacks - permitting them to be not only in the same congregation, but even to use the same church building and to sit at the same communion table! We see here other criteria for being a holy people, for being the Church of Christ, being introduced - opposition to British rule and segregation of blacks.

When the rural communities (from which the Voortrekkers also emigrated), objected to the equality between whites and blacks in the Cape Church, after much heated arguing, Andrew Murray Senior of Graaff-Reinet, suggested the compromise that separate buildings be used for the two race groups "ten gevolge

van swakheid van sommigen" and so that the work of evangelization could continue uninterrupted.

Engelbrecht gives an opposing interpretation:

"Die Voortrekkers het hieroor 'n ander beskouing gehad. Vir hulle was so 'n gelykstelling tussen Wit en Swart gevaarlik vir die voortbestaan van die Blanke ras, en daarom het hulle dit verbied en die oprigting van afsonderlike kerkgeboue vir die nie-Blankes op 'n ander as prinsipiële gronde geëis, en nie op grond van die swakheid van sommige mense nie." ³¹

Gradually the Hervormde Kerk became the established Church of the Transvaal Republic and the Constitution of 1856, formally recognised it as such. Articles 8 and 9 of that Constitution also declared that there was to be no equality of blacks with whites, neither in Church nor State. In 1860, the Hervormde Kerk was made the official State Church of the Republic. What had in fact happened was simply that a monarchist Conservative Erastianism had been replaced by a revolutionary republican and democratic Erastianism.

We can well imagine Murray's distress over this division in the unity of the Church. His brief reference in a letter to his brother regarding the proposed general assembly of all the Churches in Potchefstroom on 26th April, 1859, gives us some idea of his feelings. He requests the advice of the "Stellenbosch triumvirate"³²

"Dought we to decline going to the meeting at Potchefstroom? I cannot feel the very least sympathy in the prospect of co-operating with van der Hoff. And it may be just as well to prove to them the need there is of a union with the Synod." ³³

This very same letter gave occasion for Murray also to request urgently their advice about "the second Afgescheiden (Separatist) congregation" planning to set itself up in Bloemfontein. These congregations, composed largely of the Dopper element, broke away from the Transvaal Church early in 1859, to form the Gereformeerde Kerk. They were headed by Ds. D. Postma, a minister of the Christian Reformed Church in Holland which had broken away from the D.R. Church over the question of hymn-singing in Church. This same thorny issue was one of the major causes for the split in the Transvaal.³⁴

Postma had come to South Africa to offer the assistance of the Christian Reformed Church to the Trekker congregations, either as regards missionary work or to provide pastors for vacant charges. Murray approached Postma, en route to the Transvaal, with regard to his joining the D.R. Church. Postma declined until he had first seen the situation among the Trekkers. Murray writes:

"I spoke very seriously to him on the danger I thought there would be in his establishing a body of Separatists across the Vaal. I must confess I am not without very serious apprehensions as to the result of his mission."³⁵

The letter referred to above bore out the correctness of Murray's suspicions. The Hervormde Kerk was regarded by these ultra-conservatives as far too liberal and as having departed from the standards of faith, order and morals laid down by the Synod of Dort.

Beginning in Rustenburg, small groups of Doppers throughout the Transvaal broke away to form the free Gereformeerde Kerk. Thus arose a new community with a different understanding of what it meant to be a "holy people."

While Murray was naturally opposed to this further delineation of the bounds of the Church, he recognised that they had "never been able, even when willing, to reach the real, stiff Dopper mind." "Our language", he continues, "was strange to it: these new ministrations, possessing their confidence, may reach hearts that appear to us quite closed against the Gospel... I look upon the whole thing as the direct work of Providence, and though I would have been anxious to open our small church for psalm-singing congregations and ministers, yet as no opportunity for acting in the matter was afforded, I am content."³⁶

Once again we see Murray's Christian Catholicity in operation - his understanding that the Church not only consists of various races and various language groups, but also of various liturgical tastes. Further, the identification of the Christian community and its upbuilding in holiness was carried out in the traditionally Reformed manner through the true preaching of the Word, the right administration of the sacraments and the faithful exercise of discipline. However, Murray began to sense that there was a missing dimension. These "means of grace" along with the strictly Augustinian emphasis on "grace as the un-

merited favour of God shown to sinners" and "represented...in a manner which excluded all merit on the part of the sinner",³⁷ seemed to fail so frequently to produce obviously or recognizably gracious behaviour.³⁸

The biblical and doctrinal ignorance which Murray had encountered in the Transvaal with its resultant strife and division led him to see the answer in religious education - particularly of the younger generation. A little more than a year before he took charge of the Worcester pastorate, Murray wrote to his brother John:

"Religious education must, I think, become the watchword of our Church before we can expect abiding fruit on our labours. God forbid that I should limit the Holy One of Israel, or reject the lesson that He is teaching from America (in the great revival), but still I think, in the ordinary course of things education is our hope."³⁹

The lesson that God was teaching from America was soon to have its effect, in a most dramatic way, on the Churches in South Africa.

REFERENCES

Chapter One

1. Du Plessis, J., The Life of Andrew Murray of South Africa, p. 82.
2. This view was confirmed by Sir Benjamin D'Urban and Captain (later Sir) Andries Stockenström.
3. Quoted in van der Merwe, W.J., The Development of Missionary Attitudes in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, p. 126.
4. S.P. Engelbrecht, the Hervormde Kerk historian, claims that the D.R.C. adopted the "starvation principle" with regard to the Trekkers. He denies their claim that there was a shortage of ministers and alleges that there was far rather "'n gebrek aan simpatie met die Voortrekkers", Geskiedenis van die Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van Afrika, p. 42.
5. Gerdener, G.B.A., Ons Kerk in die Transkariep, p. 8.
6. An ultra-orthodox Reformed Theologian of the late 17th and early 18th centuries. This work was very popular among strict Calvinists.
7. Hinchliff, P., The Church in South Africa, p. 59.
8. In spite of the Church Ordinance of 1843 which gave to the Cape Church larger liberties than it had known before appointments continued to be made by the Governor and stipends were paid out of the public treasury. The Governor also had to approve any special calls made by congregations.
9. Murray was also "consulent" of the three neighbouring parishes of Winburg, Riet River (Faure-smith) and Rietpoort (Smithfield).
10. This message was his theme at his induction service where he preached from 1 Cor. 1:23.
11. Du Plessis, L.A.M., p. 91.
12. Quoted in van der Merwe, p. 149.
13. Du Plessis, L.A.M., p. 91. The reference here is to the two Dutch families in the village.
14. Ibid., p. 95.

15. In the years ahead it became increasingly clear what grave problems for the Church were caused by its close connection with the State. At this stage it was simply assumed by Murray and others that the Church was spiritually independent and had the right to organize its own affairs. See Ds. van Velden's reply to the Potchefstroom congregation over their decision not to allow Murray to induct Ds. van der Hoff. Du Plessis, L.A.M. p. 143.
16. Ibid., p. 122.
17. The general Trekker attitude towards blacks was one of segregation and subordination. In the constitution of the eventual Z.A.R. (1858) it was specifically stated: "Het volk wil geene gelijkstelling van gekleurden met blanken ingezetenen toestaan, noch in Kerk noch in Staat." Quoted in van der Merwe, p. 131.
18. Du Plessis, L.A.M., p. 108.
19. Ibid., p. 121.
20. Berkhof, L., Systematic Theology, p. 599.
21. Du Plessis, L.A.M., p. 98.
22. Ibid., As evidence of Murray's thoroughness in such examination there is hardly a reference to indicate that the number of members received exceeded half the number of candidates.
23. Murray was continuously urged to come out of antichrist. It was said that he could only be a true minister if he came to their side of the Vaal River.
24. Moorrees, A., Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika 1652-1873, p. 748.
25. Adriaan Stander, a leader of one such group, was also a member of the "patriot party" who had been proscribed after the Battle of Boomplaas.
26. Niebuhr, H.R., The Social Sources of Denominationalism, pp. 142-3.
27. The reading listed the kings of ten European nations (including England) as corporately making up the beast.
28. Du Plessis, L.A.M., p. 123.

29. The Transvaal congregations had just a month previously been incorporated, at their own request, into the Presbytery of the Transgariep. Murray was, therefore, their recognized consultant.
30. They feared British influence in the Transvaal if they were to be in organic union with the Cape Church, e.g. that the Cape Governor would have a say in their Church affairs.
31. Engelbrecht, p. 37.
32. Professors John Murray and N.J. Hofmeyr and Rev. J.H. Neethling.
33. Du Plessis, L.A.M., p. 177.
34. Prof. J.P. Jooste stresses that the issue was not simply one over hymn-singing but also over the increasing dependence of the Hervormde Kerk on the State. The "Doppers" desired a free Church where they could regulate their life according to the Word of God. See his Die Geskiedenis van die Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika 1859-1959, pp. 57-61.
35. Du Plessis, L.A.M., p. 175
36. Ibid., p. 178.
37. Berkhof, p. 429.
38. It was this ethical concern that moved Pelagius into his spirited protest against the apparently unethical consequences of Augustine's "Da quod iubes."
39. Du Plessis, L.A.M., p. 176.

Chapter Two

REVIVAL IN THE CHURCH

Before Andrew Murray left Bloemfontein to take up his new pastorate in Worcester he experienced a time of acute self-accusation and deep dissatisfaction with the results of the first eleven years of his ministry. At times he would say:

"My work seems vain; the people have no real consciousness of sin, no real dread of it; there is so much frivolity and lightheartedness, they come so thoughtlessly before God and to His Table, with no real preparation and no deep heartsearching." 1

Four months before his induction at Worcester, Murray wrote to his brother expressing regret that the proposed Conference to be held in Worcester in April, 1860, was to be open to all the Christian Churches rather than for the present being limited to members of the D.R. Church. He saw that there were a number of problems which specifically concerned the D.R. Church, such as the need for a more strongly developed organizational life, the overcoming of the problems of their isolation and of the slow action of their Church courts, and these needed to be dealt with first before thought could be given to joint activities with the other Churches "in which the blood and power of a European life and organization circulates." He then continues:

"But I must confess I do not see much that will result from a Conference of English-speaking missionaries and ourselves. Our people are still so separated from the English on the one side and the natives on the other, that you will find harmonious action to any great extent an impossibility. You know what a friend of the (Evangelical) Alliance I

am, but I do think that a first meeting like that at Worcester would issue in higher results, if confined at present to the friends of our Church." 2

The strong denominational and national consciousness which Murray reveals in this letter contrasts markedly with the Evangelical notion of gathering the like-minded irrespective of denominational affiliation or national origin. Yet it was a consciousness that had been heightened by the various forces working for disunity and alienation within the D.R. Church and Murray believed that such "ecumenical" activities would be fruitless, and perhaps even harmful, until their own house had been put in order. It is evident from his own words that he was in favour of such contact in principle as well as from the fact that, of the D.R. ministers who eventually attended the Conference, there were only five of the older men, "...while of the eleven younger ministers", writes du Plessis, "seven were either sons or sons-in-law of the Rev. Andrew Murray, Senior, who was himself there to represent the old guard."³ The lack of support from the older ministers and the 'non-Murray Clan' bears out Murray's point and at the same time raises the question as to why it was decided to leave the Conference open in the face of such obvious D.R. opposition. The available evidence seems to suggest that the "Stellenbosch triumvirate" considered the pressing issues to be dealt with - missions, education, revivals, the sanctification of the Sabbath, intemperance, the Christian ministry, Christian literature,

the Public Press, etc. - as of much more than strictly D.R. Church concern and that far more was to be gained from joint discussion of these issues than by attempting to handle them alone.

Apart from his reasons, outlined above, for limiting the Conference to members of the D.R. Church, Murray stressed the necessity of a correct approach to stem the influence of liberalism on the community and of finding an answer to the growing feelings of dissatisfaction among D.R.C. members over the Church's failure to supply them with Ministers, and the even greater problem of unorthodox ministers spreading their poison in the Church.

The necessity of a thoroughgoing revival in the Church, coupled with his own deep spiritual wrestlings after Christlikeness, had already become a great burden for Murray back in 1853. In that year he wrote to his brother:

"...My prayer for a revival in which I have been somewhat careless for a little time back, is so much hampered by the increasing sense of unfitness for the holy work of the Spirit's ministry, especially with the unfitness rendered doubly vile by the awful pride and self-complacency which have hitherto ruled in my heart... I will even hope the increasing discovery of its presence and power may be the first fruits of an answer. Oh! to be one with Him who humbled Himself, and took upon Himself the form of a servant. Oh! to know Him in the likeness of His death and the fellowship of His sufferings, for nothing but a crucified Jesus revealed in the soul can give a humble spirit. Pray for me, my dear brother." 4

Union with Christ, not as a mere theological doctrine, but as the living experience of the Christian,

began increasingly to occupy Murray's thoughts. At a Keswick meeting in 1895, he described his present condition as follows:

"I was a minister, I may say, as zealous and as earnest and as happy in my work as anyone, as far as love of the work was concerned. Yet, all the time there was burning in my heart a dissatisfaction and restlessness inexpressible. What was the reason? I had never learnt with all my theology that obedience was possible. My justification was as clear as noonday. I knew the hour in which I received from God the joy of pardon. I remember in my little room at Bloemfontein how I used to sit and think, What is the matter? Here I am, knowing that God has justified me in the blood of Christ, but I have no power for service. My thoughts, my words, my actions, my unfaithfulness - everything troubled me. Though all around thought me one of the most earnest of men, my life was one of deep dissatisfaction. I struggled and prayed as best I could."⁵

The great spiritual revival, the so-called 'Second Great Awakening', which swept across America, Ireland, Scotland and England during the first decades of the 19th Century, reached the shores of South Africa in the early months of 1860, shortly after the conclusion of the Worcester Conference.⁶

Andrew Murray, whose earlier experiences had taught him the necessity of revival for bringing the Church to be its true self,⁷ quite understandably took a leading role right at the outset in diffusing the blessings of the revival. He was invited to speak at conferences from Cape Town to Graaff-Reinet with the result that by the end of 1861, many of the towns of the western Cape Colony and the central Karroo had been blessed by the revival in one degree or another.

Typical of a revival situation was the indiscriminate manner in which God dispensed the blessings of His Spirit,⁸ bringing an element of transcendence of the community structures, classes and customs by cutting across or disregarding the social, cultural, political and racial categories by which most humans like to distinguish themselves from others. In Murray's own congregation the revival began with the prayer of a young coloured girl, the servant of a Hex River farmer, du Plessis writes:

"The Revival was not confined to one section of the community but affected all ranks without distinction of age or colour."⁹

Children and adults, blacks, coloureds and whites, farm people and town people, educated and uneducated - as they came under the vivifying influence of God's Holy Spirit, they "flocked to the (prayer) gathering, driven by a common impulse to cast themselves before God and utter their souls in cries of penitence."¹⁰ True penitence and humility before God is the supreme leveller of persons resulting here in the complete disregard of the various separate communities, each with its own identity and the bringing into being of a new and greater community of believers with its identity of oneness in Jesus Christ. This sense of oneness was primarily spiritual, yet was made visible and observable in the fruits that flowed from the revival.

Out of the common experience of forgiveness and salvation came a common fervent concern for those outside this community of blessing to draw them also into

the Church. Auxiliary missionary societies were established in numerous congregations and people gave liberally to this work of extending the Kingdom of God. Du Plessis gives the example of the Calvinia villager who gave up his comfortable home in order to live amongst "a 'location' of half-breeds... (and) to proclaim to these neglected beings the love of God in Christ,"¹¹ while the local congregation took it upon themselves to provide the financial support of the 'missionary' and his family.

Over and above such local efforts the revival resulted in the first Foreign Mission of the D.R. Church - taking the Good News not simply beyond the community but beyond the boundaries of the Colony, "north of the Vaal River, if possible on the confines of the congregation of Lydenburg." Murray, as a member of the Mission Board, was specially commissioned to accompany the two missionaries, McKidd and Gonin, and make all necessary arrangements for furthering the work of Foreign Mission.

Murray wrote of this trip:

"How father would have rejoiced could he have heard of one farmer who is to accompany us, who is selling his farm for £1,500 that he may devote himself to mission work as a layman. The first African Boer that has done such a thing. A proof I trust that the Revival has been of God."¹²

The revival also resulted in a deep concern among those who had been most notably influenced for the reformation of the communities with which they were associated. Du Plessis gives surprisingly little information as to what in fact was undertaken by the new converts and revived believers apart from pointing out that

"many... who formerly were wholly given over to the pursuit of idle pleasures... immediately engaged in serious labours for the betterment of their surroundings." ¹³

He also mentions that reports were received from numerous towns throughout the Cape of the marvellous transformation that had taken place in the inhabitants and the rapid spiritual and moral progress observable in many parishioners.¹⁴ Evidence of the extent of the revival can also be gauged by the fact that fifty young men offered themselves as ministers at a time when there had been a severe shortage of available men.

The sudden influx of large numbers of people into the Church as a result of the revival presented at least one serious problem. In an address to the South African Branch of the Evangelical Alliance, Professor Hofmeyr expressed the concern of many Church leaders about those who "mistake the natural, sympathetic influence of one mind upon another for the immediate action of the Spirit of God." ¹⁵ Murray's own concern was evinced in his stern opposition to the emotional and noisy prayer meeting which took place after one of his evening services in Worcester. After a number of futile attempts to quieten the gathering he left the hall saying, "God is a God of order, and here everything is confusion." ¹⁶

As to the task of identifying the true Church, of sorting out the wheat from the chaff in this highly emotional situation, Murray did not let up at all in his preaching and catechizing to lay great stress on

conversion and faith, emphasizing the extreme seriousness of deciding to follow Christ. He preached from passages such as Mark 16:16, "He that believeth not shall be damned", and at a sacramental service from Matthew 22:12, "Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?" Intensely personal dealings with his catechumens, making sure that they both read and could explain passages of Scripture served either to lead the truly earnest to conversion and further growth in the faith or to reveal those for whom the seed had fallen on shallow ground.

Another more serious problem of which Murray had already made mention in 1860, but which in the years ahead weighed increasingly heavy upon him was his belief that converts were being brought into a Church which was ill-prepared to nourish and build them up or keep revived believers "pressing towards the mark." The spirit of liberalism and rationalism which had evidently eroded the spiritual life of many Churches in Europe was to make itself felt on the D.R. Church in South Africa during the 1860's and '70's.

Writing in 1911, on "The State of the Church" Murray looks back on this period of revival (including those associated with men like Moody and Torrey) and comments:

"The great defect of those revivals was that converts were received into a Church that was not living on a high level of consecration and holiness, and speedily they sank down to the average standard of ordinary religious life. Even the believers who had taken part in the work and had

been roused by it, also gradually returned to their former life of clouded fellowship and lack of power to testify for Christ." 17

For Andrew Murray personally the experience of the revival marked the beginning of a new phase in his thinking on the nature and calling of the Church. As so often was the case his vision of what the Church is called to be and to experience grew out of his own devoted study of Scripture and the discrepancy between what he saw in his own life and what he saw he was called to be.

Two days before Pentecost in 1862, while Murray was waiting on Paul Kruger's farm (during the first Foreign Mission tour), he had an intensely moving experience of God's Holy Spirit. In a letter to his wife he writes:

".. The thought of the blessing of the indwelling Spirit appears so clear, the prospect of being with Him at moments so near, that I could almost feel sure we would yet attain this happiness. The wretchedness of the uncertain life we mostly lead, the certainty that it cannot be the Lord's pleasure to withhold from His bride the full communion of His love, the glorious prospect of what we could be and do if truly filled with the Spirit of God - all this combines to force one to be bold with God and say, 'I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me'." 18

Murray's desire after complete and unbroken communion with Christ, to satisfy the deep unrest in his heart and the dissatisfaction with his own life, becomes at the same time his desire for all believers, for the Church, as the way to overcome the disunity among members, to fortify the Church against the forces of liberalism and unorthodoxy and to inspire ever-increasing zeal in the Church for the work of mission. To quote again from his "The State of the Church", Murray writes:

"... the revival we need calls for... (an) entire upheaval of the Church... (a) revival of holiness, in which the consecration of the whole being to the service of Christ, and that for the whole life, shall be counted possible." 19

Having thus set out on the road of holiness and sanctification Murray soon realised how little the Reformation fathers had to say on this important aspect of the Church's life. In his "The Spirit of Christ" of 1888, he supports the Puritan pastor, John Robinson, who bewailed the stubbornness of the Reformed Churches to accept that God had much more truth about Himself to reveal from Scripture than had been comprehended by either Luther or Calvin. The inevitable outcome of such a recognition was that Murray looked beyond the confines of his own denomination to see what God had taught other Christians about the life of holiness.

Christian mystics such as Bernard of Clairvaux, Madame Guyon, Johann Tauler and the Friends of God, Jacob Böhme, the Quaker George Fox and particularly William Law, as well as other Christians who have been concerned with sanctification or entire consecration such as Wesley, William Burns and D.L. Moody - these, together with the influence of the Holiness Movement all served to direct Murray's thinking to the necessity and the possibility of the believer's complete and unbroken union with Christ through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. But it also served once again, to highlight Murray's concept of the Church as the 'community of the consecrated' which superseded and ignored the bounds of nationality and denominationalism.

The question of holiness raised the traditional conflict of Calvinist as over against Arminian theories of redemption. How was it possible to stress that "all was of grace" and at the same time to urge the Church to holiness? Murray recognized that Scripture presented an ideal for the life of the Church and he believed that it was impossible that God would demand holiness of His people without at the same time providing the means of its attainment. While all was to be of God, the believer's union with Christ and the power of the indwelling Spirit made holiness possible. As the believer submitted himself more fully to God so more of His holiness would become evident in the believer's life. Yet all the while it remained His holiness and not the work of man. The believer bore "the fruit of the Spirit" only while "the branch" remained in intimate and uninterrupted union with "the Vine". That union, the work of the Holy Spirit, was affected by the degree of submission on the part of the believer.

Scripture reveals this non-reductionist approach to the matter of salvation and holiness. It does not see it as being either simply the work of God or simply the work of man but as the work of both, locked in tension with each other. Thus Paul could say:

"work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:12)

or,

"...in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself... We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." (2 Cor. 5:19-20)

It was in this dynamic Biblical sense that Murray viewed the issue of holiness. It was to show itself in the Church in increasing Christlikeness and in the elimination of all that prevented the entire consecration of believers.

In 1877, the same year in which Britain annexed the Transvaal, Murray addressed a Y.M.C.A. gathering in Stellenbosch during which he made an earnest appeal to every Christian society to follow the good example provided by the temperance movement in America in doing everything in its power to eliminate the evils of drink by promoting the cause of total abstinence. The issue was a crucial one and during the 1880's it led to a heated and angry controversy in the Church. Du Plessis notes that "from the outset" it assumed "a pronouncedly personal character". A certain element in the D.R. Church was quick to catch onto this issue and politicize it by associating it with all other British attempts to Americanize and Anglicize the Afrikaner. The annexation of the Transvaal simply provided the necessary evidence for those who were prepared to let the "heart and the blood" rule over the mind in this matter. Professor T.R.H. Davenport, in his work on the Afrikaner Bond, mentions how two or three branches of the Bond grew out of ecclesiastical disputes over this question of temperance. He writes:

"Abstinence from liquor (afschaffing) was one of the 'Methodist' tendencies which Du Toit (Rev. S.J. du Toit - D.R.C. Minister and founder of the Bond) wished to see eradicated from the Dutch Reformed social teachings." ²⁰

While it seems that Murray never became involved in the actual struggle his support lay firmly with the promoters of the Abstinence cause. Professor Hofmeyr of Stellenbosch stressed that "alcohol is a poison, and that therefore, according to the will of God, its use is forbidden to the healthy human being."²¹

The Stellenbosch wine farmers "staunch upholders of the Church of their fathers, and liberal in their support of foreign missions and home philanthropies" ²² reacted with immediate and vehement protest. They reminded Professor Hofmeyr that the Theological Seminary, of which he was senior professor, had been erected and was maintained largely by their financial contributions and threatened to withdraw their support unless all Abstinence propaganda ceased. Hofmeyr refused with the result that the issue erupted even more. Many absented themselves from worship services when it was known that he was preaching.

The issue was a major one at the Synods of 1883, and 1886, and as Moderator and minister of Wellington, also a large wine-producing area, Murray was in an extremely difficult position. Du Plessis writes:

"The most faithful and pious members of his flock were wine farmers. It was their money that had built both Church and Parsonage, both hall and school. Unconditionally to condemn the industry which they pursued, would be to wound their tenderest susceptibilities, and to disturb and perhaps

destroy the confidence which they had hitherto reposed in their beloved pastor." 23

In addition to the support of the wine farmers the Anti-Abstinence party led by Rev. du Toit was able to depend on the support of all strict Calvinists in attacking Murray's so-called "Methodist" tendencies. Du Toit's party could plead their fidelity to Calvinism as against the Pelagianism inherent in the Abstinence movement.

In the March 19, 1886 issue of De Kerkbode, Murray replied to du Toit's views as expressed in his work, De Vrucht des Wijnstoks. He condemned the view that "there is no hope of getting him (a drunkard) sober without conversion" as "a very evil doctrine". He adds:

"Temperance is a social virtue of great value - The drunkard makes havoc of his own life and of that of his children. He is nothing but a burden and loss to society, because he does not perform his share of work for the benefit of the community. His example is infectious, and he leads others into the way of evil. This alone should make us eager to cure him from his drunken habits. Furthermore, it is not a matter of indifference to God whether an unconverted man remains a drunkard or forsakes his drunkenness. Mr. du Toit thinks it better to leave him in his drunkenness until he is converted. We act very differently with regard to other sins. If my child or my friend is a liar or a thief, I put forth every effort to persuade him to forsake these sins, even before he is converted. Many are engaged in the conflict with drunkenness for the purpose of furthering the Gospel, so that the poor confused drunkard may recover his wits sufficiently to listen to the call of God's Word." 24

Murray's concern was purely ethical - that the Church should be seen to be the Church by its fruits. Every influence which prevented God's people from exhibiting His holiness was to be eliminated, and every influence which prevented the progress of the Gospel in society was to be

removed.

The link between the Anti-Abstinence campaigns and the increasing formation of branches of the Afrikaner Bond, reveal that the Total Abstinence movement had served to unleash the elementary forces of an exclusivist nationalism which sought to eradicate from both 'Kerk' and 'Volk' any and every influence that was neither strictly Calvinist nor wholly Afrikaans.

A new concept of a "holy people" had begun to develop - one which was diametrically opposed to Murray's deepened understanding of the Church which had resulted from his experience of the Spirit in the revival. No longer could he see the Church simply as the community formed by its adherence to a particular creed or by the possession of a particular language or culture, but rather as all those who gave evidence of being God's holy people by their Christlikeness and by producing the fruits of His Spirit.

REFERENCES

Chapter Two

1. Douglas, W.M., Andrew Murray and His Message, p. 83.
2. Du Plessis, L.A.M., p. 185.
3. Ibid., pp. 186-7.
4. Ibid., pp. 84-5.
5. Ibid., p. 447.
6. The Rev. C. Rabie, writing after Murray's death, believed that the revival commenced with a prayer Murray offered at the Conference. "...it was a prayer so powerful and so moving that souls were instantly brought under deep conviction of sin, and we may safely say that the revival which ensued dated from that moment." Ibid., p. 199.
7. The importance of revival had been stressed in the parental home in the regular Friday evenings which Andrew Murray Snr. set aside for praying for revival and sharing with the family instances of revival in other countries. The powerful influence of William Burns in Scotland and Murray's close connection with the Réveil in Holland had all served to make revival a matter of vital concern for him.
8. cf. Joel 2: 28-29.
9. Du Plessis, L.A.M., pp. 197-8.
10. Ibid., p. 194.
11. Ibid., p. 199.
12. Douglas, pp. 91-2.
13. Du Plessis, L.A.M., p. 198.
14. There was also strenuous opposition to the revival meetings. Mrs. Murray mentions the instance of the man who, in the midst of an earnest address, drove a dog into the Church with a tin can tied to its tail and frightening the people. Douglas, p. 89.
15. Du Plessis, L.A.M., p. 197.
16. Ibid., p. 195.

17. Murray, A., The State of the Church, p. 67.
18. Du Plessis, L.A.M., p. 204.
19. Murray, The State of the Church, p. 67.
20. Davenport, T.R.H., The Afrikaner Bond, p. 39.
21. Du Plessis, L.A.M., p. 362.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid., p. 363.
24. Ibid., pp. 364-5.

Chapter Three

CHURCH vs ANTI-CHURCH

In 1862, Andrew Murray became Moderator of the D.R. Church for the first of six times and from that moment on throughout the next decade he stood at the centre of a crucial ecclesiological struggle. The controversy was brought to a head as a result of two major but to some extent, separate issues. The first, was the attack on orthodoxy by the proponents of rationalistic and theological liberalism, as in the cases of the Revs. J.J. Kotzé, T.F. Burgers and D.P. Fauré. The second, was the increasing and unwarrantable State interference in the internal affairs of the Church by preventing the Church from carrying out its own and necessary discipline and by presuming to be in a position to decide who may and who may not be members of the Church.

Neither of these two issues was new to Murray who had already been involved with both as a youth in Scotland and as a theological student in Holland. The events leading to the Disruption of 1843, in the Church of Scotland and the formation of the Free Evangelical Church¹ confronted Murray with the whole problem of establishment. The original doctrine of the Free Church was not that it was not to be established, but that it was to be free of State interference. It was not a voluntary association as was the United Presbyterian Church - completely separate from the State and able to regulate its own life. However, the logic of the Free

Church tradition led to voluntarism since a church could only be free from the State if it was not established. Murray took a keen interest in these developments and they began to raise questions in his mind as to the situation at the Cape. Already in 1842, he wrote to his father requesting him to "describe the Constitution of the D.R. Church in South Africa."²

In Holland, theological liberalism and rationalism was a major result of the rather lifeless orthodoxy of the Dutch Church.³ The Dutch historian, S.D. van der Veen, described the religious climate as "feeble and lacking in vitality", while Andrew's brother, John, wrote to his parents of the danger to which the Cape Church stood exposed by its dependence on Holland and urged it "to be clear of Holland as soon as possible" and to begin training their own ministers and catechists. He writes of "the contempt with which the most influential ministers... talk of Dordtsche regtzinnigheid,... of their alteration of the words of the formulas, for instance that of baptism" and also of "the scandalous morals of the theological students" including even the "orthodox and respectable" ones.⁴ Rationalism, with its stress on human reason over against the Divine Self-revelation, naturally had its effect on the baptismal formula. The 'de-supernaturalization' of the Trinity and the stress on the 'historical Jesus' meant that an alteration of the baptismal formula resulted in an altered ecclesiology. The Church had for many become the 'intellectual fellowship' of the followers of a 'demythologized' Jesus.

Andrew found it "impossible to get any good" out of the lectures and desired rather to study at Halle in Germany "where there are a great many excellent (both in head and heart) professors.. who at the present time oppose the German neology..."⁵

The Murrays responded to this situation by identifying themselves with the anti-Erastian and conservative Evangelical "orthodoxy" of the Réveil and by finding their fellowship among like-minded students in the "Prayer-Club", Sechor Dabar.

In January 1860, in the final months of his ministry in Bloemfontein and with reference to the forthcoming Worcester Conference, Murray wrote to his brother expressing his concern on a number of issues, in particular the entrance of "unorthodox" ministers into the Church. He writes:

"We retain the members of our Church, but supply them with poison. We compel orthodox churchwardens from very despair to call men whom they do not trust, but who will in course of time exercise a deadly influence upon them. Our conscience tells us that it is not a right state for Christ's Church to be in, when the unclean in life and the unsound in faith are welcome, yea, are introduced by the Church to the people as fit to lead them to heaven, as worthy of their confidence and entitled to their obedience. And yet we know not how to secure the action of the Church in removing this fearful stain of guilt. Surely those of us who mourn the evil ought to do anything to save our own consciences and our Church, as well as our fellow-men, from such dangers." ⁶

Murray saw loose morals and liberal theology as going hand in hand and he, therefore, called for stricter measures of control or an additional test of orthodoxy whereby the true Christians could be distinguished from the false. However, the problem was that 'orthodoxy' didn't guarantee righteous behaviour either and, at least in the case of

J.J. Kotzé, there was a man of outstanding morals, thus making easy equivalences unacceptable.

The Cape Church already had such a test to protect it from heresy. All candidates for ordination were required to sign a declaration of faith. In October 1860, Dr. William Robertson, on a mission to Europe and America to obtain ministers for the Church, wrote from Utrecht how few Dutch ministers were prepared to sign the declaration. In order to keep the Cape Church free of heresy, he suggested that they institute as an additional precaution

"a serious examination into the faith that is in them (the candidates), and obtaining from them a clear and unequivocal affirmation of their adherence to the fundamental truths which our Dutch Reformed Church confesses."⁷

What was being suggested, therefore, was not only proof of orthodoxy, but also of regeneration in the candidates. The Synod of 1862, was to act on this suggestion but by then it was already too late, for in 1858 and 1859 T.F. Burgers, J.J. Kotzé, H.C.V. Leibbrandt and S.P. Naudé, all to one degree or another, supporters of the "Liberal" movement, had been admitted to parishes as ministers of the D.R. Church. Their arrival heralded the start of the liberal attack on traditional orthodoxy and soon the battle was raging with articles pouring forth, on the one hand from the liberal mouthpiece, De Onderzoeker,⁸ supported in the struggle by the two Dutch newspapers, Het Volksblad and De Zuid-Afrikaan, and on the other hand from the conservative Church magazines De Kerkbode and Elpis and the Christian weekly, De Volksvriend.⁹

The above-mentioned Synod met under the cloud of this struggle and there seems to have been little of Christian brotherly affection and tolerance between the members of the opposing camps. Perhaps this is understandable since each party considered itself to be the true Church. In 1868, in his "Lecture on The Modern Theology", delivered before a gathering of the Y.M.C.A. in Cape Town, Murray asks of "this New Theology":

"Is it, indeed, as it professes to be, the essence of Christianity; the original religion of Jesus freed from the excrescences of past centuries? or is it, at all events, if not this, still with all its deficiencies, a form of error, in which the vital thought which constitutes the power of Christianity, has still been preserved?... Are we willing to... acknowledge the erring sister as a portion of Christ's true Church? Is this a case for the exercise of Christian tolerance, 'He that is not against us is for us': or does the intolerance of the Gospel here interpose, 'He that is not with me is against me?' " 11

For Murray, the latter Scripture was most definitely the appropriate one and in spite of his position as Moderator he emerged as champion of the "orthodox" party. 12

Hardly had the Synod got under way when Elder Loedolff of Malmesbury called into question the right of delegates from beyond the Cape Colonial borders to sit in the Synod. 13 He based his protest on the fact that the Church Ordinance of 1843 which, although it permitted the Church a greater measure of freedom in conducting its own internal affairs without the necessity of governmental authorization, had defined it as the Church in the colony. The Synod disputed this point by reference to the Governor-General, Sir William Porter's advice to the Synod of 1852, on the question of the incorporation of the Transvaal congregations, in which he is reported to have said:

"There is not in my opinion any impediment, which should prevent the Synod, acting under the provisions of Ordinance No.7 1843, Sec. 4, from admitting by some rule or regulation proper for the purpose, any ministers and congregations beyond the boundaries of the Colony, which if within these boundaries, would belong to the Dutch Reformed Church. The Ordinance appears to me to contemplate the Church as a Spiritual Body, unconfined by territorial, or, to speak more accurately, by Colonial limits. It designates that Spiritual Body as the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa. And to deprive that Church of the principle of gradual growth in reference to the members scattered over the territories adjacent to the Cape, would, I think, have been a proceeding so unwise, that the Legislation should not be presumed to have intended it." 14

His advice to the Church, writes Moorrees, was to alter all those regulations which gave to the Church a purely Colonial character. In spite of this unequivocal advice some doubt over the matter still existed. Loedolff, defeated in the Church Assembly, thereupon took the matter to the Supreme Court which after brief examination ruled that the Transgariep members had no right to take part in the Synod.

Whether the Court's ruling in this case was just or unjust is not the main issue. What is important is the response of the Synod, personified in Murray as the Moderator, to the decision.

Du Plessis writes:

"In announcing to the Synod the terms of the judgment, the Moderator voiced the grief of the gathering at the decision which severed them from their brethren on the distant frontiers, and before requesting the latter to withdraw, commended them in fervent prayer to God." 15

The submissive manner in which Murray and the Synod accepted the Court's ruling, is evidence of the confusion which existed in the D.R. Church regarding its true nature. While the Church was founded on impeccably Calvinist confessions - and Ds. van Velden gave ample evidence of this

in his letter to the leaders of the schismatic Hervormde Kerk¹⁶ - in practice it allowed the unwarrantable 'intrusion' of the State into its affairs. The issue did not seem to have bothered people before the 1860's because the understanding of an "established Church" was that it was recognized and protected by the laws of the Colony. The Church assumed that it was spiritually independent from the State and had the right to organize its own affairs with the cooperation and protection of the State. In terms of this relationship the Church permitted the State to appoint and pay its ministers. There was no need to work out the Church's relationship to the State so long as the State was "Christian". But it was really the overt and rapid secularization of the State, taking place throughout the 19th century, that forced on the Church the whole problem of ecclesiology. They suddenly began to find that all sorts of things they had taken for granted, were being jolted.

Understandably, the Court's decision was a severe blow to the conservative members for not only did it mean that their numbers were to be significantly depleted,¹⁷ but it also brought into question the legality of decisions of the Synods of 1852 and 1857 and of what had already been undertaken by the Synod of 1862, namely the election of Andrew Murray as Moderator.¹⁸

The conservative party deeply resented what they saw to be this civil interference in the Church's right to guard the purity of its doctrine. Alternatively, the Court was protecting the rights of ministers from interference by fanatics. Conservative resentment was to be further inten-

sified in the very near future over the cases of Revs. J.J. Kotzé and T.F. Burgers. These two cases once again raised the issue of the Church's spiritual independence, the latter case particularly so. Ds. Kotzé of Darling declared that he was both unable and unwilling to defend the wording of the Church catechism's teaching on sin and evil, believing it not only to be in conflict with Scripture (i.e. that the subordinate standard conflicted with the supreme) but also with other sections of the catechism. The re-assembled Synod of 1863 deposed Kotzé by a majority of 56 votes to 24. Murray in his capacity as Moderator, pronounced the resolution "(depriving) him for a time of the right which was bestowed upon him in the name of the Lord of the Church."

Following Loedolff's example, Kotzé too resorted to litigation and Murray was called on to defend the Church's position. In his defence Murray acknowledged the competence of the court to decide only whether the Synod had adopted the correct procedures in deposing Kotzé, not however its competence to decide on matters of doctrine or on the merits of the case. But the problem was that having acknowledged the right of the court to decide on the correct synodical procedures, they thereby opened the way for the court also to decide on the nature and merits of the case. By allowing the courts to decide on the regularity or irregularity of the Synod's procedures the Church permitted the Civil powers to grant or withhold spiritual liberties which are the sole jurisdiction of the Church. However, it took the judgment in the Kotzé case - in his favour - as well as

the other court cases of the 1860's to bring the Church to a measure of understanding of its "Erastian Captivity" and to encourage a new look at the true nature of the Christian Church. The Church was suddenly confronted with the fact that it still had many unacknowledged links which bound the Church to the State and as long as they were not acknowledged, they were bonds on the Church. The increasing secularization of the State resulted in the Cape Church of the 1860's reaping what had become the bitter fruit of its long dependence upon the close collusion in Amsterdam of Classis and Company.¹⁹

This close collusion had also resulted in the D.R. Church's dependence on the comforting myth that everyone at the Cape was a believing Dutchman. The court cases and the long struggle with the Modern Theology shattered that belief and once again raised the question of ecclesiology. Unbelievers could no longer be simply 'heathen blacks' or English, but most of all Dutch. This was a new issue.

While the Kotzé case was in progress, charges of heresy and the "taint of Rationalism" were brought against Ds. T.F. Burgers of Hanover, of whom it was alleged that he held and taught unorthodox opinions about the existence of a personal devil, the sinlessness of Christ's human nature, the resurrection of the body and the personal existence of the soul after death. In 1864 the Synodical Committee suspended Burgers from his pastoral office, but he, like Kotzé, continued to exercise his duties in defiance of the suspension. As soon as judgment was passed reinstating Kotzé

Burgers instituted court proceedings and again Murray was called to the defence.

Emboldened with a new recognition of the Church as distinct from the secular authorities, Murray claimed that the D.R. Church possessed

"volle inherente regte in geestelike sake oor sy lede... en dat die Hof geen bevoegdheid besit om enige beheer oor sodanige geestelike gesag uit te oefen nie." 20

He appealed to Section 9 of the Church Ordinance which prohibited legal action from being instituted for the purpose of circumventing the decisions and spiritual censure of the Church Courts. But once again, both here and in the appeal which Murray took before the Privy Council in 1866, judgment was passed in favour of the plaintiff and Burgers was reinstated. Unable to come to a decision over the correct course of action the Synod of 1867, followed Murray's suggestion to adjourn "until greater light and relief shall have been received."

Murray's own frustration at this state of affairs was no doubt considerable. Considering his strong emphasis on maintaining the purity of the Church's teaching on the one hand and his unwillingness to lead the Church in defiance of the Court rulings on the other, even where the Court was making use of powers not its own, the continued presence of Kotzé and Burgers in the Synod was a painful thorn in the flesh and the only possible course of action was to adjourn.

A sound ecclesiology, which put into practice, and did not simply pay lip service, to the absolute Lordship of Christ over His Church and the right of its ministers to organize their own affairs, would have avoided many of the unpleasant results which flowed from the Church's State connection. The Church would have been free to be itself - to discipline its own members, to extend itself beyond political boundaries and to avoid eventually becoming identified with a particular people and nationality. However, the obstacles in the way of the Voluntary Principle were great. Such an understanding of the Church was by no means acceptable to those who thought in establishment terms. In 1870 Mr. Saul Solomon, Member of Parliament for Cape Town, began to agitate for the introduction of the Voluntary Principle and the establishment of all congregations on the basis of the voluntary contributions of their members and without State support. Fiery discussions raged on this issue in the first half of the 1870's bringing from those who opposed the principle the charge that such removal of State support for the Church meant the equation of Christianity with heathenism, Mohammedanism or atheism. In 1875, after a stormy passage, Solomon's 'Bill' passed into law.

One of the fascinating by-products of the Church's struggle with liberalism was the proposals, in 1870, for a union between the Anglican and the Dutch Reformed Churches. Both Churches had suffered greatly under the attack of liberal heresies and from the State connection. Elsewhere it was liberal theology that was generally in favour of the

separation of the Church from the State but in South Africa it was the conservatives, like Murray and Bishop Gray, who came to the same conclusion. Their agreement on this matter was so important that it seemed to offer a basis for Church union on a separate basis.

Bishop Robert Gray initiated the discussions on the 23rd June, 1870, in a letter to the D.R.C. Moderator, Ds. P.E. Fauré. He concluded his letter, on the sin of Christian division and the necessity of a visible union, by writing:

"We should rejoice if these views were shared by our fellow Christians in this land, which, with its various races and languages, appears eminently to need Unity of action through one Church, to overcome antipathies and soften asperities, and mould its population into one nationality and one Christian people." 21

The letter drew a favourable response from Ds. Fauré. He promised to bring the resolutions of the Anglican Synod before the next D.R. Synod with the fervent hope

"that it may tend, under Divine blessing, if not to effect the desired Unity, at least, to approximate to that kind and brotherly relation between the different branches of Christ's Church in this land, by which it will be both felt and seen that, although distinguished by different names, they are in reality branches of one and the same tree, members of the same body of which our Lord and Saviour is the Ever-blessed and Exalted Head." 22

The D.R. Church appointed a Committee consisting of the Revs. P.E. Fauré, Andrew Murray and W. Robertson (the Moderator, Actuarial and Scriba respectively) to enter into negotiations with the Bishops of the Anglican Church. While there seemed to be basic agreement on such matters as the authority of Scripture, the use of a liturgy, the necessity of discipline, and the acceptance of creeds, the discussions eventually floundered when a more ancient



conflict of tradition asserted itself. There was too much in Anglo-Scottish history to permit accommodation. For Gray, ecclesiology began with bishops. "We are persuaded," he writes, "that ours is the true and divine Order in Christ's Church, with which we may neither part nor tamper," and that "Episcopacy, in our meaning of the word, is ordained of God." ²³ For Murray and the D.R. Church such a view was eccentric and perverse. Quoting from Calvin's Institutes they stated their immovable position:

"In giving the names of Bishops, Presbyters and Pastors indiscriminately to those who govern Churches, I have done it on the authority of Scripture, which uses the words as synonomous." ²⁴

The Anglican Church's inability to give way on the issues of episcopacy and the Prayer Book and their refusal to permit exchanging of pulpits - "priests of the Church lowering their office by preaching in dissenting places of worship, and inviting dissenters to preach to their people," ²⁵ as well as the D.R. Church's interpretation of Scripture and their inability to depart from Calvin, brought the discussions to an abrupt end. The D.R.C Committee concluded

"We confess that we can hardly see how the proposals submitted can be called proposals for union. We seek in vain for any sign of the 'United Episcopalian and Presbyterian Churches of South Africa.' We see an Episcopalian Church enlarged by the incorporation or absorption of a Presbyterian body. But we miss entirely in practice what has been so well expressed in theory." ²⁶

Thus ended the first and last attempts at any rapprochement between these two Churches and one cannot help wondering

with Hinchliff, "what startling developments in both ecclesiastical and political history might not have followed from such a union!"²⁷

The conclusion of the Burger's case marked the beginning of a rapid decline of the fortunes of the liberal party in the D.R. Church. A number of factors contributed to the strengthening of the conservative party over the liberals in the Synod. The Synod of 1862 had taken up Dr. Robertson's suggestion about an additional test of orthodoxy and at the colloquium doctum had instituted. -

"a special enquiry... as to the opinions on regeneration by the Holy Spirit and the personal experience of God's grace, and also as to fidelity to the doctrine of our Church, which the Synod desires to be understood as being indispensable requirements in all who offer themselves as ministers." 28

What this test implied was that the true members of the Church could no longer be determined by their mere intellectual assent to orthodox formulas. The examiners believed that a true assessment of the candidate could only be made by their evaluation of his personal Christian testimony - an extremely subjective test. Whether or not Murray had a hand in wording this extended enquiry, it certainly would have met with his full and unequivocal approval. While we may sympathize with the motives expressed in this test - the desire for maintaining the purity and holiness of the Church - its practicality was dubious as it would always be determined by the personal experience or (hopefully not) lack of experience of the examiner.

In 1866, Rev. D.P. Fauré, after completion of his theological studies at Leyden, arrived at the Cape and finding the doors of the D.R. Church barred to him by the colloquium doctum, set out to form a Unitarian body known as the Free Protestant Church. This "church", tended to become a haven for the more radical liberals and thus helped to split the opposition to the conservatives.

Probably the most important contribution to the demise of liberalism was the establishment of the Stellenbosch Theological Seminary in 1859, from which the first batch of "orthodox" Calvinist ministers emerged in 1862, closely identified with the Afrikaner traditions and values, and by the end of the first decade had produced forty ministers - a decisive swing.

REFERENCES

Chapter Three

1. Murray's Uncle, Rev. John Murray, was the first Free Church minister in Aberdeen.
2. Du Plessis, L.A.M. p. 45.
3. The rise of theological liberalism was due to a number of factors such as the advent of the scientific method and the discipline of Biblical Criticism.
4. Du Plessis, L.A.M. p. 68.
5. Ibid. p. 67.
6. Ibid. p. 186.
7. Ibid. p. 191.
8. Edited by Leopold Marquard. The Journal had as its motto "Als tot verstandigen spreek ik, oordeelt gij hetgeen ik zeg." (1 Cor. 10:15)
9. Edited by Rev. D.J.H. Ruitenbeeck. Professor N.H. Hofmeyr was the inspiration behind the establishment of the paper in 1861. In 1860 he published his "Een getuigenis tegen de Hedendaagsche dwaling."
10. Note the cynical description of the "Liberals" given by the Rev. F. Lion Cachet Du Plessis, L.A.M., pp. 212-3.
11. Murray, A., A Lecture on the Modern Theology, p. 19.
12. Du Plessis notes that it was perhaps due to the fact that Murray "had identified himself somewhat markedly with one of the parties in the Church", and that a more neutral Moderator was needed, that he was not elected to this position at the two subsequent Synods of 1867 and 1873. L.A.M. p. 353.
13. He had already raised the issue at the Synod of 1857 and was expected to do so again in 1862.
14. Moorrees, p. 903. He mentions that Porter later justified himself in regard to the Court's decision limiting the D.R.C. to the Cape by saying that at the time he did not have the written document in front of him.
15. Du Plessis, L.A.M. pp. 214-5.

16. On 14th September, 1853, he wrote to the leaders of the schismatic Hervormde Kerk, who together with the Transvaal Volksraad had refused to allow Murray to induct Ds. van der Hoff at Potchefstroom: "What! does political authority decide ecclesiastical matters for you? Poor Church that must bow beneath the world.
The Gospel of my Saviour does indeed teach me to reverence the powers that are ordained of God... but the same Gospel forbids me absolutely to permit the Church of Christ to cringe to the world or worldly authority. That Church is free under her Head and King. That Church is exalted far above the world and the authority which that world wields." Du Plessis, L.A.M., p. 143.
17. The majority of extra-Colonial delegates were of conservative persuasion.
18. In order that the Synod might continue with its business a court ruling was passed presupposing all decisions of the three Synods as legal so long as they were not proved to be illegal.
19. The principle of cuius regio eius religio which had been the basis of that relationship could no longer be maintained once the Cape became British territory. The Colonial Government, however, undertook to preserve and maintain the privileges of the D.R.C. as the "established Church" of the Colony, but now burghers were required to take an oath of allegiance to the British Crown. Thus the religion of the ruler was no longer the religion of the territory.
20. Moorrees, A., Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika, p. 958.
21. From Bishop Gray's letter to Ds. P.E. Fauré in The Unity of Christendom : A Correspondence relative to Proposals for Union between the English and Dutch Reformed Churches in South Africa, p.7.
22. From Ds. P.E. Fauré's letter to Bishop Gray, Ibid., p.8.
23. Du Plessis, L.A.M., p.255.
24. Ibid., p. 256.
25. Ibid., p. 258.
26. Ibid., p. 257.
27. Hinchliff, P., The Church in South Africa, p. 83.
28. Du Plessis, L.A.M., pp. 230-1.

Chapter Four

MISSION : THE CHIEF END OF THE CHURCH

The planning committee for the Ecumenical Missionary Conference to be held in New York in 1900, sent an urgent invitation to Andrew Murray to be present as one of the speakers. The Anglo-Boer War had just broken out and in spite of a repeated and more urgent appeal from D.L. Moody Murray declined the invitation, unwilling to leave his people during this time of crisis.

The whole question of the mission of the Church had by this time become central to Murray's thinking and though he was unable to attend the Conference, on receipt of the report, he added his contribution in the form of "The Key to the Missionary Problem". This timeless book penetrated what seems to the present author the very heart and soul of the matter as over and over again Murray stressed that the missionary problem was really a personal problem, a matter of the relationship between the believer and his Lord. The book made a tremendous impact on leading churchmen of the time. Dr. Moule, Bishop of Durham, while he may not have agreed altogether with Murray's emphasis nevertheless wrote:

"With all my heart I commend this volume to the perusal, the thought and the prayers of all ministers of Christ and His flock. It is an appeal to the inmost soul of the Pastor, and at the same time a suggestion for the most practical possible application of his activities... and every reader who has indeed his eyes towards the will of God, will... kneel down after it, asking 'Lord, what wouldst Thou have me to do?'" 1

The theme of the book is that the Church exists for one thing only, its *raison d'être* is mission. "Missions",

he writes, " (are) the supreme end of the Church."² While this understanding of the calling of the Church crystallized in the book, it had already begun to emerge at a much earlier date. Our task is to trace the development of Murray's understanding of Mission and its implications for his understanding of the nature of the Church.

Murray grew up in a house that not only acknowledged the importance and necessity of missions but gave active support to the missionary effort irrespective of denomination. The Graaff-Reinet manse was a regular haven of hospitality for English, Scotch, French and German missionaries trekking into the interior or on their way back to Europe. During his schooling years in Scotland, his letters home reveal an active interest not only in matters of Church government but also in the missionary work of the Church. In 1844, he wrote to his father of the proposed adoption of the Glasgow Missionary Society by the Foreign Missions Scheme of the Free Church and then continued:

"Any news as regards missions in Africa will be much prized by us. Have you, as a Church, any missions? Because I do not remember collections being made in the Church." ³

The request is unspecific, "missions in Africa" - a recognition that missions was the task of individual churches and missionary societies but also that this work of God was greater than them all and encompassed the activities of each such body of believers. While he shows an interest in the activities of a missionary

society being brought under the auspices of the institutional Church, this does not indicate a decided preference on his part to such work being done by a church rather than by a missionary society. As a student in Holland he and his brother John were largely responsible for the establishment of just such a missionary society, known as 'Eltheto'.

He writes to his parents:

"We have also begun a missionary society to meet twice a month for communicating missionary intelligence, and prayer for the extension of the Kingdom of our God and His Christ; so that on the first Monday of the month we shall have the pleasant feeling of being engaged about the same time as you and thousands of God's children throughout the whole world in supplicating for the outpouring of God's Spirit on the world." 4

There, for Murray was the Church in operation: the "thousands of God's Children", all who claim the name of Christ, joining together wherever they are in the one task of praying for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the world.

What of course Murray was soon to discover was that not all "God's Children" showed the same deep concern for missions. In 1846, he wrote to his parents:

"We are now going to publish a missionary periodical in Dutch - sixteen pages monthly - consisting of extracts regarding the progress of the work of God throughout the whole world. The reason that we... are going to do this is, that Holland is lamentably deficient in interest in the missionary work, and the two existing periodicals are rather spiritless and confine themselves to rather small fields." 5

Murray increasingly began to discover the inconsistency involved in a people claiming to belong to Christ and yet not showing a deep interest in mission. His intention here was that by providing Dutch Christians

with examples of what God was doing the world over they would be moved out of their complacency and show their commitment to Christ by taking an active interest in His work.

Eleven years later at the Synod of 1857, Murray was confronted with a similar problem in the D.R. Church. Apart from the concerted efforts of the Revs. H.R. van Lier and M.C. Vos in the mid 18th Century little or no missionary work was undertaken by the D.R.C. before 1862. Between 1826 and 1842 only three D.R. missionaries were ordained. The greater part of the Church's missionary work during these years was conducted through independent local societies or the S.A.M.S.

The Synod of 1847, had recognized the necessity of adopting "strenuous measures for the extension of the Kingdom of our Saviour, within as well as without the Colony,"⁶ and so had appointed a "Committee for the Missionary Cause" to solve this serious deficiency in the life of the Church. After ten years in existence, however, the Committee could only present the disheartening report that "There were no men, there was no money, (and) they could effect very little."⁷ During the preceding five years they had received a mere £1,050 in contributions of which £700 had been spent in the missionary effort. These meagre results left Murray and his evangelical missionary-minded colleagues, J.H. Neethling and N.J. Hofmeyr, deeply dissatisfied.

Fired with enthusiasm they proposed that the Synod at last put into action the decision it had taken ten years

previously and commence a missionary undertaking somewhere north of the Vaal River, "if possible on the confines of the congregation of Lydenburg." Somewhat taken aback by the forcefulness with which the suggestion was put, the Synod, however, agreed to allow the three men who had made the proposal, together with Ds. P.K. Albertyn, to form a Committee entrusted with carrying out the task.

It is ironical that this very Synod which decided to act on Murray's suggestion and undertake its first Foreign Mission to the black tribes of the Transvaal also voted to organize separate congregations for black D.R. members. The issue of joint worship and communion services was hotly debated by two opposing parties - those, particularly from the rural areas, who were against any form of equality between white and black and those who refused to acknowledge or permit any division in the Church. Rev. Andrew Murray Snr. proposed the compromise solution that "while the Synod considered it desirable and Scriptural that the converted heathen be incorporated into the existing congregations wherever possible, where this principle, because of the weakness of some members hindered the furtherance of the cause of Christ among the heathen, the heathen should be allowed to carry out their Christian privileges in a separate building."⁸

By April 1860, in spite of serious attempts to obtain missionaries from overseas, nothing concrete had yet been accomplished. The necessary work of the Church was being hampered and Murray's sense of frustration over

this state of affairs is evident in his request on the second day of the Worcester Conference, that it terminate its proceedings in order to allow the D.R. delegates to discuss matters of grave concern.

At this special session Murray proposed that the Church depute Dr. William Robertson to "Holland, Germany, Scotland, and if necessary America" to recruit much-needed ministers, missionaries and teachers. Referring specifically to the missionary situation he said:

"The last Synod took a solemn decision to undertake a Foreign Mission, and not a moment too soon, too; for there is great danger that we shall be left completely behind, while the country is being occupied by other missionary bodies. In vain have we written to France, Germany, Switzerland and America for assistance in carrying out this project: no men can be found. We know that our mission work must be placed upon a better footing; but how are we to do that unless we can find men for the work?" 9

Murray's concern was that the D.R. Church find its own mission field soon before they were all taken up by overseas bodies. Such a state of affairs would have been a serious indictment of the Cape Church if mission work near home were to have been altogether undertaken by overseas churches and societies because the D.R.C. had failed in its responsibility.

While Murray's denominational consciousness is very evident at this point he was stressing far more the importance of mission for the Church - in this case of his own denomination - than that the D.R.C. as an institution should be pre-eminent. In order that the Church could get started with its mission work, Murray was prepared to import earnest-minded men from wherever they could be obtained.

The initial need was met in 1861 with the arrival in South Africa (as a result of Dr. Robertson's efforts) of two missionaries, the Scot, Alexander McKidd and the Swiss, Henri Gonin. In April 1862, Murray set out with the new missionaries to find suitable mission sites north of the Vaal. The Foreign Mission work of the D.R. Church had begun.

The main impetus behind this first missionary expedition was the revival of 1860. There again the result was an immediate new concern among believers for the spread of the Gospel among the heathen. Numerous auxiliary missionary societies sprang up in the awakened congregations and Murray rejoiced over the "farmer who is to accompany us (on the Transvaal expedition), who is selling his farm for £1,500 that he may devote himself to mission work as a layman. The first African Boer that has done such a thing. A proof I trust that the Revival has been of God." ¹⁰

The revival marks an important development in Murray's understanding of mission and as a result in his understanding of the Church. In 1864 he wrote, what turned out to be his most influential book, Blijf in Jezus. This book, a product of the revival, gave to the large numbers of new converts "simple, pertinent and loving advice to all who were seeking a better experimental knowledge of the Christian life."¹¹ In the English version of the book, Abide in Christ, which appeared in 1882, Murray wrote of the failure of even earnest Christians to realize "to what closeness of union, to

what intimacy of fellowship, to what wondrous oneness of life and interest, He (Jesus) invited (his followers) when He said, 'Abide in me'. This is not only an unspeakable loss to themselves, but the Church and the world suffer in what they lose." He then goes on to stress what he sees as the crux of the problem in the Church:

"If, in our orthodox Churches, the abiding in Christ, the living union with Him, the experience of His daily and hourly presence and keeping, were preached with the same distinctness and urgency as His atonement and pardon through His blood, I am confident that many would be found to accept with gladness the invitation to such a life, and that its influence would be manifest in their experience of the purity and the power, the love and the joy, the fruit-bearing, and all the blessedness which the Saviour connected with abiding in Him." 12

Murray's stress that the missionary problem was in fact a personal one begins to emerge at this point. If the believer is abiding in Christ then fruit, much fruit, must be the inevitable result. As the branch is united with the Vine it partakes of all that the Vine is.

Murray writes:

"Abiding in Him, you receive of Him His Spirit of love and compassion towards sinners, making you desirous to seek their good. By nature the heart is full of selfishness. Even in the believer, his own salvation and happiness are often too much his only object. But abiding in Jesus, you come into contact with His infinite love; ... your heart learns to feel the wretchedness of the sinner still in darkness, and the fearfulness of the dishonour done to your God. With Christ you begin to bear the burden of souls, the burden of sins not your own... and devote your life to win the souls Christ has taught you to love. The very spirit of the Vine is love. The spirit of love streams into the branch that abides in Him." 13

The missionary problem has suddenly been transformed from being simply an objective issue of lack of men and funds to being the subjective problem of the reality of the believer's experience of the living Christ. "If we are abiding in Jesus", he writes, "We must live so that somewhat of the holiness and the gentleness of Jesus may shine out in us... Let us work, not like those who are content if they follow the fashion, and take some share in religious work. No, let us work as those who are growing more like Christ... who, like Him, count the work of winning souls to the Father, the very joy and glory of heaven begun on earth." ¹⁴

Murray thus distinguished between two types of church member. Those who do the work because it is expected of them or to display their "earnestness" or for any other reason than that of the natural response of the believer to the love of Christ and the desire that all men may come to know Him.

As a result of the abiding, the work in fact no longer becomes that of the believer but that of Christ working through him. The work of missions, therefore, becomes Christ's work through those who are abiding in Him. It is here that we are confronted with part of the mystery of the Christian life and Murray was aware of this. While on the one hand the Church is called to the work of mission, and it becomes unfaithful when it fails in this respect, on the other hand it is not the Church that works but Christ working in and through the Church. The mission of the Church has thus become

a matter of the individual Christian's total submission to Christ in order that He may carry out His work through the believer individually and through the Church corporately. The amount of mission work thus being done, and the spirit in which it is being done, is indicative of the extent of the Church's commitment to its Lord.

In 1876, Murray came under the influence of the Holiness Movement with its prime concern being the deepening of the spiritual life of believers. But, as we have seen, Murray's concern for the deepening of the spiritual life was always so that the believer might increasingly come to have the mind of Christ. Holiness was to be seen in this regard, by the zeal of the believer for the missionary cause of his Master. This zeal was evident or observable in Christians of various denominations, races and nationalities, and as a result Murray's concept of the Church completely transcended these lines of demarcation.

This does not mean, however, that he totally ignored the denomination. He regarded the visible, institutional Church as a part of Christ's Church, with all its "formality, worldliness, ungodliness, rejection of Christ's service, ignorance and indifference... many in worse than heathen darkness,"¹⁵ but as a part that needed to become what Christ meant it to be.

In 1877, Murray attended the meetings of the Presbyterian Council in Edinburgh. Dr. Duff, that "prince of modern missionaries" was unable to attend but his paper was read to the gathering. In full agreement with Duff,

Murray quoted these words in his report to the Kerkbode:

"... Missions are not one of the activities of the Church, but the only object for which it exists... the sole and supreme duty of the Church of Christ (is) to devote all its strength to this cause... unless and until this supreme duty is more deeply felt, more powerfully realized, and more implicitly obeyed, not only by individual believers but by the Church at large, we are only playing at missions, deceiving our own selves, slighting the command of our blessed King, and expending in all manner of fruitless struggle the powers, the means and the abilities which should be devoted with undivided enthusiasm to the spiritual subjugation of the nations." 16

From this point till the end Murray's concern was to bring the Church to that state of Christlikeness where it would readily acknowledge and carry out the task of missions as its supreme end. The Church was to be brought to face the immensity of the task before it - the countless millions of heathen and unbelievers in the world. This, together with the Church's own unfitness for the task, was to encourage the Church to cast itself into the arms of God who longs to infuse His people with the power and love of His Spirit to equip them for the task. Thus Murray wrote in 1888 in The Spirit of Christ:

"Let us call on every Christian who would be a mission friend and mission worker to come with us and be filled with the Spirit whose is the work of missions. Let us lift up a clear testimony that the need of the Church and the world is, believers who can testify to an indwelling Christ in the Spirit, and prove it too." 17

Mere orthodoxy¹⁸ or membership of the visible church was no longer to be the distinguishing mark of the Christian: he was to be seen to be a Christian, to be in union with Christ by the fruit which the Holy Spirit always produces as a result of that union. In speaking thus against those

who pride themselves as members of Christ's Church by virtue of their acceptance of certain doctrines or membership of the institution, Murray was following in the footsteps of that great forerunner of Christ who told "the orthodox" of his day:

"Bear fruit that befits repentance, and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." 19

Beginning in the 1880's there was a growing interest in missions throughout the western world and the years 1890 to 1910 were marked by an unprecedented swell of missionary enthusiasm. This movement, together with Murray's own tireless efforts, brought about a growing interest in mission among D.R. ministers. On the 11th November, 1886, together with an initial group of 40 ministers, he initiated the Ministers' Mission Union (Predikanten Zending Vereeniging) and each member pledged to give between £5 and £20 per annum. In 1888 the Executive of the Union (of which Murray remained lifelong Chairman) accepted an offer from the Free Church of Scotland to labour together with them on the shores of Lake Nyasa. That same year Murray's nephew, Andrew Charles Murray, a graduate of the Stellenbosch Seminary and of Edinburgh University, was sent as the first D.R. missionary to the Nyasaland mission.

In the report of the Executive Committee, Murray gave three reasons why they believed it was essential that they undertake this work rather than seek to reinforce the Transvaal Mission:

- (i) The extent of the field in the Transvaal was small and the Gospel was within easy reach of the 3 000 odd souls in that area. The field in Nyasaland was "hundreds of miles in extent" and D.R. missionaries would therefore be able to "participate in the great work of preaching Christ to those who have never heard of Him."
- (ii) The work in the Transvaal was already reasonably well known. "While a mission undertaken at such a distance will bring us into contact with a new heathenism, wholly outside the influence of Christianity... we shall learn how great the kingdom of Satan is, and how small in proportion is the work being done for the Kingdom of God... This must of necessity have a beneficial effect upon our interest, our enthusiasm, our prayers and our faith."
- (iii) This remarkable offer by the Free Church was seen as the providence of God, added to which was the enthusiasm of the young missionary for this work. ²⁰

Characteristic of Murray's approach to mission and the work of the Church was his continual stress that the believer look beyond himself, that the Church look beyond itself, to the needs of those without Christ.

The Nyasaland Mission thus opened up a new frontier - a missionary rather than an expansionist frontier. All the territory north of the Transvaal as far as the Great Lakes of Central Africa had been secured to Britain by the enterprising efforts of Cecil Rhodes, thus putting an end to any further territorial expansion of the Trekker. The Nyasaland Mission offered a new interpretation of the national destiny - to be seen in terms of the Spiritual expansion of the Kingdom of God.²¹

By 1899, the work in Nyasaland had expanded to such an extent that A.C. Murray had to write to the Committee:

"You have been praying that God would open the door of the Word. That is no longer necessary. There are so many open doors that we are thrown into a condition of great perplexity." 22

The troublous years of 1899 to 1903, the years of the Anglo-Boer War, far from hindering the work of the mission, saw an additional fourteen labourers sent to the field.

In 1903, due to the tremendous expansion that had taken place, the work of the Nyasaland Mission was handed over to the Synod and brought under the control of a General Mission Committee which Murray served as Chairman till his retirement in 1906. In that same year Murray issued a little forty-page pamphlet, which in spite of its size, no doubt necessitated much work to compile. It was entitled The Kingdom of God in South Africa: A Brief Survey of Missions South of the Zambesi, and its aim was specifically ecumenical - "(that) the work of the different Societies labouring for the extension of Christ's Kingdom could be set forth in such a way as to make every worker acquainted with his fellow-labourers in the Lord's harvest-field."²³

Apart from statistics and details of the various missions, Murray shares his thoughts on subjects such as A Missionary Church, A Missionary Ministry, The Evangelistic Note, Education in the Mission Field, Spiritual Results and A Call to Prayer. Murray writes on the Missionary Church:

"This is the one thing the Church of our day needs, men and women in whom, through the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ lives, and through whom He does His saving work. All the complaints of the lack of labourers, of the lack of money, of the lack of prayer, have their root in this, that men are content with a Christ who can save themselves, and do

not know that He gave Himself for them and died for them that He might have them for Himself to live only to carry out the work of His saving love to those for whom He shed His blood.

For this the Church needs the renewal of the power of the Holy Ghost in the hearts and lives of her members, that every believer may become conscious of his blessed calling... Above all, pray earnestly, humbly, believingly for the coming of the Kingdom here in South Africa... as the one chief object for which the Church, and every congregation, and every believer exists." 24

Murray never stopped to work out the ecclesiological implications of his approach to mission. All important was the fact of the missionary obligation. The "vision of the King upon His throne... the sight of a world in all its terrible need... (and) the link between thinking of Glory and a sin-stricken world" combined to show the believer "how Christ calls His Church to the fellowship of His life and glory with the one view of making her partaker, too, in the fellowship of His sacrifice and His service in saving the lost."²⁵ All believers who were thus united with Christ were members of His Church and members of one another. The organizational expression as the result of this fundamental and all-important spiritual unity, had to wait for another day and another age.

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Chapter Five

ONE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH

In 1895, Andrew Murray was invited to England to address a series of conventions at Keswick, Guildford, Exeter and elsewhere. On the 6th December, 1894, the Rev. H.V. Taylor wrote an article on Murray in the British Weekly as a means of introducing him to the British people.

" Andrew Murray, if any man, may justly claim the title of catholic, for his sympathies are un-faillingly given to each one who loves the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth. 'We are Christians first and Dutch Reformed afterwards', he said with vehemence when addressing the delegates from other churches who came to the opening of the recent Synod. And this saying gives the note of his life. He desires to be known as a Christian, as a follower of Jesus simply, and he seems to examine every one he meets for the Christian element in him. That is the impression left on the mind when one is in conversation with him. His keen, yearning look appears to scan the face of his interlocutor for the witness of the Christ-life there, and to plead above all things for loyalty to the one Master. You cannot help saying to yourself, 'This man wants me to belong to Jesus Christ.' No one who has talked with him, even on casual themes, can forget that wistful glance." 1

The truth of this portrait, it is hoped, will become clear as we observe Murray in his meetings with a variety of people, in his prolific and wide reading, in his attendance at conferences and conventions and in his attitude to worldly ideologies. As we do this it should once again become clear that for Murray the outstanding mark of the true Church, that which above all else gives it its visibility is its perseverance in holiness.

As we have already observed in previous chapters Murray grew up in an atmosphere of catholic Evangelicalism. Great interest in the Murray home was shown in

Christian revivals wherever they took place and active support was given to the missionary work of various denominations and missionary societies. In 1850, when Murray was minister of Bloemfontein, we see this same spirit in operation in his words to Bishop Gray that "if he sent a man of evangelical sentiments (to Bloemfontein), I would be delighted to welcome him as a brother."² This was still at a time which Murray later described as "the lower stage" of his spiritual life in which he was "as zealous and as earnest and as happy" as anyone as far as his love for his work was concerned. At this stage the depth of unity experienced with other believers and the extent of co-operation was determined by their corresponding 'zeal and earnestness and happiness' in the Christian life.³

Nine years later in his dealings with Ds. D. Postma of the Christian Reformed Church there was already a notable change. While Murray did not see eye-to-eye with Postma on the issue of hymn-singing nor over his eventual secession with the 'Doppers' to form the separate Gereformeerde Kerk, already the important question of 'fruit-bearing' was beginning to exercise his mind. "As to myself", he wrote to his brother, "the words have sometimes occurred very strongly, 'He will let out the vineyard to other husbandmen, which shall render Him the fruits in their season.' We have never been able, even when willing, to reach the real, stiff Dopper mind. Our language was strange to it: these new ministrations,

possessing their confidence, may reach hearts that appear to us quite closed against the Gospel." ⁴ Murray was thus prepared to make a distinction between the essentials and the non-essentials of the Christian faith. The issue of hymn-singing was for him such a non-essential as long as what was taught would lead the 'Doppers' to bear the fruit that God required. Murray's readiness to accept Postma as a brother by inviting him to preach in his church earned him a severe rebuke from his less 'catholic' brethren.

The following year, 1860, shortly after Murray had taken over the charge of Worcester, was marked by the notable revival which spread through many Cape towns and farms and eventually as far north as Bloemfontein. The revival was not limited to any one denomination, race, sex or age group. Murray believed the revival to have been truly the work of God by the fruits it produced - a deep consciousness of personal and societal sin, a turning to God in penitence and prayer, a new life and enthusiasm evident in the Church in the place of dull formalism, a new zeal in missions and the desire to share the blessings of the Gospel with the unconverted as well as the fact that fifty young men had offered themselves for the ministry at a time when it had been extremely difficult to obtain any. Because these "fruits of the Spirit" were evident in other than white Dutch-speaking colonists, Murray's understanding of the Church was enlarged to embrace all those who were thus "one in the Spirit."

Murray's pentecostal experience two years later on Paul Kruger's farm set him firmly on the ever-upward road of holiness. Having been brought to experience something of the blessedness of God's indwelling presence an unquenchable desire was begun in him for an ever-deepening and closer communion with God. He was soon to discover that there were many others of different nations and denominations and throughout the ages who had this same desire for God's holiness implanted in them. Murray believed that this desire was the direct work of God's Holy Spirit and if He had given this intense longing not only to him but to so many others how could there be anything but a deep and common bond of love between them.

Beginning in 1886, a number of these spokesmen for the "higher life" visited South Africa, "the Moderator (having) given them his countenance and benediction." Had they not had Murray's wholehearted support "many of them might have found the doors of the Dutch Reformed Churches closed against them - for the South African Dutch as a people and as a Church are averse from nieuwigheden (novelties)." ⁵

The first of these visitors was the well-known evangelist, Henry Varley, who set D.L. Moody "hungering and thirsting after a deeper Christian experience." One day in Dublin Varley said to Moody:

"The world has yet to see what God will do with and for and through and in and by the man who is fully consecrated to Him." ⁶

Other missionaries visited South Africa with Murray's support and ran campaigns in the leading towns. Of the

visit by Spencer Walton in 1888, Murray wrote in
The Christian -

"...There is hardly a place where one or more ministers will not be found who will rejoice to have a visit from time to time from one so fitted to help in rousing believers and in gathering in those who are outside." 7

Murray gave his full and active support to Walton's work in the Cape General Mission, especially with regard to the number of Holiness Conventions it organized where "crowded audiences not only listened to addresses on consecration, but many transacted the Solemn Deed and Covenant by dedicating their all to God." 8

Space does not permit to enlarge on the visits of others such as F.B. Meyer and John R. Mott, that "spiritual child of the revival movement" 9 who increasingly gave his life to the work of bringing Christians together in service and the spread of the Gospel in the world. In 1864, the missionary veteran, Dr. Alexander Duff visited South Africa and of whom Mrs. Murray writes:

"...He is an exemplification of the doctrines of Quietism in action - if you understand what I mean. All those expressions of being dead to self and lost in God which one finds in Madame Guyon seem to be exemplified in his experience and life." 10

In the visits of these and other men the theme that ran through all their messages and was exemplified in their lives in one degree or another, was that of entire consecration - calling on believers everywhere to give themselves entirely over to God that He may better use them to carry out His perfect will in the world.

Turning to examine the literature in which Murray centred his interest we find him in 1864 requesting from his father his copy of Bates' Spiritual Perfection. He had read T.C. Upham, one of the early American Holiness preachers as well as Madame Guyon, the celebrated French mystic of the 17th Century. With great simplicity and power she challenged the worldliness of "the religious" of her day by pointing in her life and in her message to what true holiness meant - her characteristic phrase being "death to self". While Murray was unable to agree with everything they wrote, he nevertheless felt justified in approving and recommending their books

"... because I think they put our high priveleges more clearly before us than is generally done, and thereby stir us to rise higher. The incorrectness of certain intellectual conceptions or expressions becomes a secondary matter, as long as we have God's Word to try and correct them by." 11

In other words Murray, correctly, did not decide to "throw the baby out with the bath-water". What mattered most was the disposition of the heart - the desire to lose oneself in God, giving Him complete control over one's life.

This same attitude is evident in Murray's approach to the writings of William Law, a writer who probably had a greater influence on Murray than any other - particularly in his "Serious Call". Murray writes:

"The more I read his writings, the more I am impressed by his insight, range and power. I marvel how it is that he has not been assigned a far higher place than he actually holds. For fine observation of the human heart there is surely no one like him among English writers." 12

In spite of this appraisal Murray never accepted any writing uncritically. While he acknowledged that in some respects Law "differs markedly... from what we hold to be fundamental doctrines of the evangelical faith... It is because I believe his teaching to supply what many are looking for, that I venture to recommend it. I do so in the confidence that no one will think that I have done so because I consider the truths he denies matters of minor importance, or have any sympathy with his views."¹³ We see here Murray's very definite stress on the importance of the evangelical doctrine but also his recognition that very few writers were able to hold in balance the two sides of truth - justification and regeneration. In Law's case, the latter side of truth was emphasized to the neglect or denial of the former: Yet he was to be accepted for that truth which he proclaimed with such intense fervour:

"The truth of God's inworking in regeneration, not only as the act of grace by which the divine life is imparted, but an unceasing maintenance of that life by the working of the indwelling Spirit..."¹⁴

Other writers in similar vein who influenced Murray include such figures as George Fox, David Brainerd, John Wesley, William Burns, George Müller, D.L. Moody, Hudson Taylor and Alexander Whyte. Murray also acknowledged the influence of some of the earlier mystics of the Church such as Bernard of Clairvaux, Catherine of Siena and St. Teresa of Avila. The message of each of these saints could be summed up in the words of St. Paul:

"I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."¹⁵

It was in this attitude of complete and continual submission to God, presenting oneself a living sacrifice, that Murray saw the true mark of the Church. God in His grace would provide His holiness as He drew the believer to Himself into "the Holiest of All."

In 1877 Murray represented the D.R. Church as Moderator at the Pan Presbyterian Council in Edinburgh. Prior to the Council he wrote a letter to the Kerkbode describing what he saw was missing in the Church and what ought to characterize the Body of Christ. As he saw it, the greatest need of the Church was to bring believers "to a deeper comprehension of Christian truth and privilege." There was little evidence in the Church that it had a "holy calling" and hence its "powerlessness.. against unbelief and semi-belief and superstition, against worldliness and sin and heathenism. The power of faith, the power of prayer, the power of the Holy Spirit, are all too greatly lacking. God's children in the first place require a revival - a new revelation by the Holy Spirit of what is the hope of their calling, of what God does indeed expect from them, and of the power and consecration, of joy and fruitfulness, which God has prepared for them in Christ..."¹⁶

It is impossible to provide sufficient evidence that would either support or disprove Murray's criticism of the state of the Church. As in every age so also in his time, there were those whose membership of the Church was a mere formality or who, while professing to be Christians, were living lives of open sin and wickedness. But there were also those who gave ample evidence of their union with Christ. The Church will always till the return of Christ, remain the Field of Wheat and Tares. However, this does not mean that Murray's charge can be rejected. To the man who has been given a vision of the beauty of God's holiness, even the Church's 'good works' may seem as "dirty rags". He performs the valuable, the essential and God-ordained function of ever calling the Church away from its conformity to the world, from its too frequent self-complacency and self-satisfaction and pointing the people of God to the perfection of Christ.

Of the Council itself Murray gave his impression of the meetings in two long papers. He mentioned Professor Flint of the Church of Scotland who spoke on the subject of Christian unity from John 17:20,21. Murray writes:

"He pointed out that this unity is a spiritual unity, which actually prevails; that the existence of separate denominations, due to differences of speech and nationality, cannot annul it; and that this virtual unity must be brought into more constant exercise by more frequent inter-communion with each other, and by the spirit of forbearance and love, in which we ought to bear with one another's differences of opinion." 17

It was this growing sense of spiritual unity which was to take on its first organizational expression at the World Missionary Conference there in Edinburgh 33 years later and thus initiate the great movement towards Christian unity.

Professor Schaff, the Swiss-American theologian, expressed much the same line of thinking. He doubted whether it was possible under the circumstances of the time to produce a general confession that would unite all the churches. Such confessions, he said, were only born out of the struggle for the faith and were not made to order. "In the meantime we have the best kind of unity - the unity of spiritual life, of faith and love which binds us to Christ and to those who are Christ's."¹⁸

Murray was in full agreement with all that was said, for his only unfavourable observation was the brief time devoted to "the renewal of those spiritual powers upon which everything depends."

The concluding words of the conference were spoken by Dr. Oswald Dykes of London who mentioned that both friend and foe would be watching expectantly to see whether the fruits that resulted from the new Alliance would justify its existence. In the following words he described in what sorts of ways the Alliance, as part of the Church of Christ, was to show itself to be the Church -

"Our Alliance will not live, and will not deserve to live unless it leads to worthy activity. We wait to see to what extent this Alliance will assist in strengthening weak Churches, in gently drawing closer the bond of intercourse between brothers who are separated, in contributing to the solution of difficult problems, and in helping all Churches to profit by the experience of some of the more privileged bodies. There can be no real co-operation before we are truly united in friendship and love. And the only way to united action is that we shall become better acquainted with each other, and shall foster a spirit of mutual love and confidence. In this manner the way will be paved, gradually if not all at once, for a more real unity, more hearty co-operation, and such a consolidation of the divided forces of the Church of Christ as shall give abundant proof that our gathering has not been without avail." 19

For Dr. Dykes, therefore, the Church within the Alliance was to show itself, its visibility was to consist in its being engaged in some "worthy activity". Murray gave these sentiments his wholehearted support. He wrote:

"I believe in the communion of saints, and am firmly convinced that such an exercise of Christian fellowship carries rich blessing with it... In the Church of Christ we have not merely 'one Spirit' but 'one body', and everything that tends to emphasize the unity of the body brings a blessing with it." 20

He then concludes with these words which, although they were indicated in what Dr. Dykes said, give an added emphasis and sum up Murray's thinking on ecumenical activities:

"The enduring blessing of the Council will be experienced, not in any undertaking in which the Council itself may engage, but in the spirit which the Churches that have been represented on it display towards each other in the work they are accomplishing for God."

It was not to be simply what they did together or how much they did together that was to give visible evidence

of their being the Church of Christ but it was to be supremely a matter of how they did it. Not quantity of action but quality of spirit: therein lay the deciding factor.

During 1895 Murray was invited to address conferences and conventions at Exeter Hall, Guildford, Mildmay and Keswick in England, at Northfield and Chicago in America and at numerous places in Holland and Scotland. His main theme in these meetings, and which characterized his message in the remaining years of his life, was the feeble and sickly state of the Church.²¹

Characteristic of these meetings was the tremendous cross-section of clergy and lay-folk who attended. Denominational affiliations were completely ignored as thousands of people gathered to hear the preaching of the Word. At the Mildmay Conference, in addition to preaching, Murray also administered the Lord's Supper to a gathering of fourteen hundred communicants. For Murray, therefore, this was no longer simply a gathering of Christians, this was the Church - the one Body of Christ meeting together in worship under the Word and around the common Table to be fed by its Lord.

On December 5th, 1895, Murray addressed the Meetings for United Prayer in Exeter Hall on the subject "That They All May Be One." In his address he made five points which tie up his understanding of the Church as both one and holy. His words strike home with shattering simplicity and might just as well have been prefaced with the prophetic, "Thus saith the Lord."

Firstly, "the oneness among God's people is to be a reflection of the life of God in heaven." In the Church there is to be that same love one to another as is shown between the Father and the Son. "That is His love, and that is to be my love to you and your love to me. It is to be nothing less, for that is holiness, that is perfection, that is happiness, and God wants you holy and perfect and happy like Himself." The important question for every child of God was not whether they had attained this perfect love but whether their aim and deepest heart-cry has been, "O God, help me to love as Thou lovest, and as Jesus loves."

Secondly "that oneness is to be the manifestation of the mightypower of God... God's Holy Spirit can so fill the heart and life, that love shall be to us as natural as the love of a mother towards her child."

Thirdly, "love comes in answer to prayer... when we pray far more for an outpouring of love in our hearts and the hearts of God's children around us, a change in the Church will come."

Fourthly, "the manifestation of this oneness upon earth is to be a proof to the world that God sent Christ, and that God has loved us... Love. That is what Christ said. Not preaching, but love. Preaching is needed, - praise God for what it does! - but love will do more. And the love with which God and Christ love us will be within us a power that will pour itself out, in the first place, for the brethren; and thereby the world will be convinced."

Finally, "what is needed if in answer to prayer this love of God is to come and take possession of our souls (is that) the heart must be utterly and absolutely given up to God to love... May God give us the spirit of humiliation, to confess how little we have of the Divine love."

In concluding, Murray had this to say:

"If you want love for yourselves, or love which is going to plead for the body of Christ, then you must do two things. Go and confess to God your lack of love, and then say: Lord God, I want to have that love, that from this day I may daily pray for Thy body, for all believers. God will give it; the great intercession of Christ secures it." ²²

The Church of Jesus Christ is thus to be characterized by holiness and this holiness must reveal itself in Christians demonstrating the love of God for the world and especially for all who claim the name of Christ. This holy love is to have primacy over every social, political or commercial practice or belief an unawakened community considers most advantageous.²³ Thus Murray argued against the contentions of the young dominee turned political editor, Dr. D.F. Malan,²⁴ thus he spoke at the dedication ceremony of the Vroue Monument in Bloemfontein,²⁵ thus he called on the Church of Christ throughout the world to extend to "the Presbyterian Boers of the Transvaal... a cordial welcome to their place in the Church Catholic, and... a large share of sympathy and prayer." ²⁶ Thus he submitted in love

to the decision of a 'kerkeraad' in the south-west Cape to discontinue English services ²⁷ and thus he was able to draft a letter to German Christians during the First World War:

"...my object in writing these lines is to send you my brotherly greetings in Christ Jesus. The members of the body of Jesus Christ, whether in Germany or England, are bound together in the love of God, in the mighty love of Calvary, in the love of the eternal Spirit. For a moment national or personal differences may stir up unholy feelings, but the moment we return again into the secret of God's presence and hide ourselves under the shadow of His wings, we are brought back to the place where we are really one, and where our love and prayer pours itself forth on behalf of all who are one in Christ Jesus. ²⁸

Accept the assurance of my continual daily prayer that God may help me and you, dear Brethren, and all who are apparently utterly separated from each other by the war, ever to take refuge in the High-priestly prayer of our beloved Saviour, and in the power of His grace to pray, in the fullness of faith and love, with our Lord Jesus: 'Father, that they may all be one, as Thou Father, art in Me and I in Thee - I in them and Thou in Me - that they may be one even as We are one, that they may be perfect in one.'

In this love,

Ever yours most faithfully,

Andrew Murray." ²⁹

Thus Murray sought to call the Church away from its identification with the ways of the world - its divisiveness, its discrimination, its ungodliness, its lack of concern for those without Christ, its prayerlessness - to the place where it belonged in its utter dependence on the grace of God, the love of Jesus Christ and the blessing and power of the indwelling Holy Spirit: in the world, yet not of it.

How are we finally to know who are truly God's elect, who are the true members of the Church of Christ? Murray replies, with the support of the writer to the Hebrews:

"There is no mark by which man can decide. The only sure sign that the perseverance of the saints will be ours is - perseverance in sainthood, in sanctification and obedience. We are His house, we are become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast, firm unto the end."³⁰

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18. Ibid., p. 298.
19. Ibid., pp. 301-2
20. Ibid., p. 302. At the Synod of 1903 Murray, together with Ds. J.R. Albertyn, tabled a motion that the Synod establish a Committee to investigate on what basis a union of the Cape with the Transgariep Churches could be established. Over above a federal union, which left each church its autonomy and material possessions, Murray expressed himself in favour of complete organic union. The Synod of 1911, voted in favour of a federal union.

21. The State of the Church : A Plea for more Prayer was the title of his book, published in 1911, after he had received the report of the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910. This same message is the theme of the book and urged him to call the Church to "seven times more prayer."
22. Murray, A., Eagle Wings, Selected extracts from "That They All Shall Be One. "
23. Cook, C.W., Enthusiasm Re-visited, p. 13.
24. Malan wrote: "If the dissensions which divide our people are not healed, I cannot see how our Church can in the long run remain united. There is a tendency in members of the same Church to unite, not merely in confession and belief, but also in political views." Du Plessis, L.A.M., p.431.
25. "We are assembled here to celebrate the festival of love - suffering, intercessory, benedictory, all-conquering love. The monument which is to be unveiled today is the monument of love... Let us go to the monument... with the words, I yield myself to God, in the desire to seek not mine own. Let us go under the banner of God's love - suffering, praying, blessing, overcoming." Ibid.
26. Ibid., p. 418.
27. Having done, as he said, all in his power and without avail, to maintain the rights of the English-speaking community to services in their own language they should now spend the time given to this trouble in prayer to God to send His Spirit of love and unity upon His children. While Murray's sentiments are noble, his submission on this important issue is questionable. If the Dutch had 'rights' to services in their language, so did the English, in spite of their fewer numbers.
28. These words bring to mind those of Michael Cassidy at the historic S.A. Congress on Mission and Evangelism in Durban, 1973. He said to the mixed gathering of blacks, browns and whites: "If at any stage in the Congress we should lose one another, let us find each other again at the foot of the Cross."
29. Du Plessis, L.A.M., p. 503.
30. Murray, A., The Holiest of All, p. 209.

CONCLUSION

Throughout his life Andrew Murray remained a man of the Church. His devoted study of Scripture increasingly revealed to him the great discrepancy not only between what he saw in his own life and what he believed God demanded of him, but also between what he saw in the Church and the ideal as presented in the Word of God. His life's work was to point every believer and thus the Church to that holiness which God demanded.

To a society which prided itself on being God's elect, while not evidencing that election by holy behaviour, Murray held up the mirror of the Gospel to show what true holiness meant. To a society which believed that the Gospel and thus the Church was its possession, Murray stressed the importance of mission - to heathen blacks, heathen browns, heathen English and also heathen Dutch.

Murray's ecclesiology was a biblically-based one in a period where communities were beginning to be formed by anything but biblical notions and principles and by people who were trying to pack more into the notion of a people of God than Scripture in fact gave warrant for. His insistence remained to the end, that God's holy people included more than some were prepared to admit and less than others were prepared to include.

Complete humility and submission before God, continual abiding in Christ through the power of His indwelling Spirit was the only way for the Church to produce the fruits of the Spirit which God requires - for the Church to be His holy people.

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