
A STUDY OF THE PLACE OF THE EUCHARIST
IN ECUMENICAL DISCUSSION.

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Chapter 1.Ecumenism and the Eucharist.

Christian disunity, as has been shown by Rouse and Neill,¹ has been a major problem in the Church from the time of its inception. In Apostolic times Paul had to face serious dissension at Corinth and elsewhere. The great councils of the 4th and 5th centuries were convened to settle doctrinal disputes. The schism between Eastern and Western Christianity, which finally became permanent at about the end of the 12th century, was the result of thoroughgoing doctrinal as well as cultural differences. At the Reformation, Christianity was again drastically divided and between the 16th and 19th centuries, divisions were greatly multiplied.

It should not be forgotten, however, that throughout the ages, men of irenic spirit tried to hold the Church together and even those who led branches of the Church into schism, knew that what they did was against the intention of our Lord. What they did was against their own wish and intention and very often, only in the face of what seemed to them intractable circumstances. There have always been those who have had a Catholic, oecumenical outlook, who have recognised the significance of our Lord's Prayer that His followers might be one.

Nevertheless it was only during the last century that deliberate efforts began to be made toward the healing of the breaches between the Churches, by those involved in missionary work. It was only in the 20th century that the "Ecumenical Movement" became embodied in an organisation, formed by the Churches themselves and not merely by the people in them, with the express and sole purpose of working for the visible catholicity of the Church.

At the end of the 18th century all of England, Europe, and America had been deeply affected by the Evangelical Awakening. Owing partly to that revival of spiritual values and partly to the rapid colonisation of the world by the European countries and the

1. "A History of the Ecumenical Movement." Geneva 1954.

consequent expansion in trade and world-wide communications, a swelling missionary zeal arose and issued in the establishment of hundreds of missionary societies which aimed at evangelising the "heathen". During the 19th century, missionaries in India, China, and Africa had to learn to co-operate with each other. Missionary co-operation resulted in numerous conferences, both of missionaries in the field and of the societies "at home", to discuss problems of comity, policy, and advertisement. At the conferences many Christians came to realize a genuine spiritual unity, and to experience the desire for a unified Church. Also, during the last half of the 19th century, the Student Christian Movement spread rapidly and became a source of ecumenical experience for many Christians. J.R.Mott and J.H.Oldham claim it to have been the most important contributory factor to the ecumenical movement.

No discussion of doctrine was allowed in the missionary conferences but at Edinburgh in 1910, the great World Missionary Conference, it was noted that Christian disunity was a real hindrance to missionary effort. Directly as a result of "Edinburgh 1910", Bishop Brent of America initiated proceedings which led to the first World Conference on "Faith and Order" at Lausanne in 1927. A similar World Conference on "Life and Work" had been convened at Stockholm in 1925, largely inspired by Nathan Soderblom. In 1948 the two "Movements" which ensued from those conferences joined forces in the World Council of Churches, which to-day operates through four divisions and three Commissions. The "Division of Studies" has various departments of which one is the "Faith and Order Department". One of the commissions is on "Faith and Order" and organises the decennial conferences, which once were convened under the auspices of the "Faith and Order Movement".

In examining the "Eucharist in Ecumenical Discussion" we shall have to concern ourselves with the "Faith and Order" phase of the Ecumenical Movement's many-sided activity. The discussions held at the conferences and the publications produced in preparation for and in consequence of those conferences will constitute our main source of material.

As mentioned already, the first Faith and Order Conference was held at Lausanne in 1927. This was followed by those at Edinburgh in 1937, Lund in 1952, and Montreal in 1963. Theological commissions drafted preparatory volumes for the last three conferences and these volumes contain valuable theological data about eucharistic doctrine as held by the different Churches. The Faith and Order Conferences and Commissions have shown certain aspects of the Lord's Supper to be particularly problematic. The purpose of this essay will be to appraise these difficulties and seek to formulate solutions. The difficulties include not only questions of doctrine but also questions such as the validity of orders, intercommunion, and ways of worship. It may also be noted at this point that no sacramental doctrine was ever officially laid down by the Church before the Reformation. There had of course been much discussion on the subject before that time, but it was in the confessional statements of the Reformers and in the Tridentine formulations that eucharistic doctrine was first officially formulated. This is significant because the statements made then continue to influence the modern discussion and also to prescribe to a great extent the standpoints taken up by modern Christians.

The Lausanne Conference, being the first of the series, in many ways set the stage for all future discussions. It did this by outlining the standpoints of the different groups of Churches and the main agreements and divergences. For example the Bishop of Ochrida stated clearly the Orthodox Church's belief in seven sacraments of equal value and validity, and its belief that in the eucharist:

".....at the moment of the priest's invocation, God the Holy Spirit descends onto the bread and wine..... and transubstantiates them into Christ's body and blood."(1)

He also insisted on the sacrifice of Christ at the eucharist in the sense that, at every celebration, He gives Himself to His people afresh as their spiritual food.

1. Faith and Order: Lausanne 1927. p.287.

Professor Bartlet, a Congregationalist, drew the distinction between "Catholic" and "Evangelical" types of theory.

"By Catholics I mean those who view 'the mind of Christ' primarily through the mean put on His teaching and that of the Apostolic writers by the ancient Church of the Greek and Latin Fathers; by Evangelicals, those who rely more on the direct study of the New Testament in its own light and usage."⁽¹⁾

Evangelicals therefore concluded that the major significance of the Lord's Supper is that it proclaims the redemptive death of our Lord. For them, the unity of the body in the shared loaf, Christ as the Bread of Life, Sacrifice, and the Real Presence, are later accretions which became associated with "the suggestive symbolism of this enacted parable"². Remaining speakers attempted to find areas of agreement and to expose areas of disagreement.

The ground found to be common to all the Churches, proved to be that of general sacramental doctrine and of certain attitudes which were adopted by all towards the sacraments.

Professor Lang (Reformed) pointed out that all held the sacraments in deep reverence, accepted that they were partly "mysterious" and believed them to be inseparable from the Church. Canon Quick suggested that all could agree that: a) in the sacraments "the principal inward reality is a divine act"³ and b) faith and penitence are necessary if the sacraments are to be fully efficacious, i.e., there can be no strict doctrine of "ex opere operato".

On the eucharist in particular, agreements were very vague. Pralat Schoell (Reformed) offered as common ground, belief in the eucharist as a) a feast of remembrance of Christ's sacrifice, b) involving a real union between ourselves and our Lord, and c) a feast in common fellowship. Dr. M. Hughes (Methodist) felt that it was highly significant that all believed in the real presence of Christ at the eucharist, even though they differed about the mode.

The report on the section on the sacraments was more concrete

1. Ibid. p. 292. "Catholic" exemplified by Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Anglo-Catholics; "Evangelical" by most Protestants.

2. Ibid. p. 297.

3. Ibid. p. 306.

though less ambitious:

"We agree that the sacraments are of divine appointment and that the Church ought thankfully to observe them as divine gifts.

We hold that in the sacraments there is an outward sign and an inward grace, and that the sacraments are a means of grace through which God works invisibly in us. We recognise also that in the gifts of His grace God is not limited by His own sacraments."

On the eucharist:

"We believe that in the Holy Communion our Lord is present, that we have fellowship with God our Father in Jesus Christ His Son, our Living Lord, who is our one Bread, given for the life of the world, sustaining the life of all His people, and that we are in fellowship with all others who are united to Him. We agree that the Sacrament of the Lords Supper is the Church's most sacred act of worship, in which the Lord's atoning death is commemorated and proclaimed, and that it is a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving and an act of solemn self-oblation."⁽¹⁾

These agreements however, were not intended to conceal the deep divergences which existed. Professor Bartlet's distinction between "Catholic" and "Evangelical" types of theology has been mentioned. For "Catholics" the sacraments come before the Word, and their interpretations of them are rooted in the "Hellenistic" rather than in the "Hebraistic" tradition. Professor Lang and Pralat Schoell followed this line of thought and showed that the different types of interpretation were connected with fundamentally different types of grace. For the "Catholics" grace in the sacraments could be different from grace in the proclaimed or written Word, which is impossible for the "Evangelical". Grace becomes for them quasi-substantial so that in the sacraments the divine nature is imparted to the recipients; for the Evangelical it remains always a relationship of love of which the sacraments is the guarantee. Furthermore, the first conception of grace leads necessarily to the conclusion that the elements are the vehicles of grace, and a close association of the ideas of sacrifice and the Real Presence with them. This in turn necessitates "valid" ordination of the celebrant. For "Evangelicals" the spiritual action of the sacrament is alone important; it fortifies faith and assures forgiveness and sanctification.

1. Ibid. p. 472f.

The truth of these conclusions was illustrated by Dr. Ashworth of the Baptist Communion, who emphasized the priority of the Word in his Church. The sacraments had to be administered in the Baptist Church but attendance at them was not obligatory, as salvation is through the Gospel and not through the sacraments. He could say that the Lord's Supper was maintained in its original form "to enable the disciples of the Lord to keep green the memory of His sacrifice and steep themselves in the spirit of it".¹

The report succinctly summed up the differences as follows:

"There are among us divergent views, especially as to: 1) the mode and manner of the presence of our Lord; 2) the conception of the commemoration of the sacrifice; 3) the relation of the elements to the grace conveyed; 4) the relation between the minister of the sacrament and the validity and efficacy of the rite." (2)

This clearly does not take account of the different views of the importance of the rite as a whole.

The Lausanne Conference has been treated in some detail because the grounds of agreement and disagreement have not changed much since then. Much work has been done, however, and the centre of gravity of the problem of the eucharist in the ecumenical movement has moved from specific doctrines to "intercommunion". This does not mean that the specific doctrinal differences no longer are important, merely that they constitute part of a larger problem.

Following the apparent importance of the nature of grace at Lausanne a theological commission was appointed to study "The Doctrine of Grace". It produced a rather controversial document, but contrary to expectations so great a degree of agreement was obtained at the World Conference in Edinburgh in 1937 that the subject has not been specifically treated since. The same commission next tackled the topic "The Ministry and the Sacraments", which was the title of one of the study groups at the conference. A study of the report of that section shows that they had by now been able to come to closer grips with the problems. There is now a certain agreement expressed on the

1. Ibid. p. 315

2. Ibid. p. 473

authority of the sacraments, though the Orthodox wished to stress their acceptance of tradition as "completing" Scripture.¹ A certain consensus was also obtained on the question of sacrifice, although this consensus centred upon the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ, which is not repeatable, and on the sacrifice of prayer made by the congregation at the eucharist. Thus the subtle doctrine, still held by the Orthodox, that the eucharist is the "extension of the only and once offered sacrifice of our Lord" was relegated to a footnote.²

It is, however, of interest that the question of validity of orders was given greater prominence at Edinburgh as, also, was that of intercommunion (in the report on "The Unity of the Church in Life and Worship"). The question of differences in worship was also recognised in this section's report and we shall see that this field of discussion became all-important, eventually embracing all discussions on intercommunion and eucharistic doctrine.

In preparation for the Lund Conference, commissions were appointed on "Intercommunion" and "Ways of worship".³ The fact that Christians could not share the fellowship of the Lord's Supper had come to be recognised as a focal point of the tragic disunity of the Christian Church, especially meriting study. Thus a new series of discussion points arose beside doctrinal differences: can intercommunion precede corporate union? should communion services be held at ecumenical gatherings? These of course vitally involve the earlier problems over doctrine, and validity of ministerial orders assumes a new importance. A certain overlapping of "Intercommunion" and "ways of Worship" was inevitable as worship must always relate to doctrine, and so in the report of the Ways of Worship commission the topics recommended for further study include "the real presence" of Christ in the eucharist and "the eucharistic sacrifice"⁴.

The commission based these recommendations on developments within the Liturgical Movement. This recent "movement" has become increasingly important for ecumenism, the eucharist accordingly

1. "Faith and Order: Edinburgh 1937" Ed. L.Hodgson p.240 footnote 1.

2. Ibid p. 245.

3. These produced volumes under the same titles.

4. "Ways of Worship" Ed. P.Edwall, E.Hayman, W.D. Maxwell.
Report II (4) , (5)

assuming a greater importance.

At the Lund Conference doctrinal problems were not taken much further. The intercommunion section's report contented itself with a brief outline of common ground which covered only a) memorial, b) the presence of Christ in the eucharist, c) eschatological fellowship in the eucharist.¹

After Lund the whole study was gathered under the title: "Worship and the Oneness of Christ's Church". At the Montreal Conference in 1963 the section of the same title was able to report: "We have also been aware of a growing consensus in regard to the two great acts of sacramental worship."² This acknowledges the great progress made in the study of sacramental doctrine since Lausanne 1927, but the degree of progress must not be dissociated from the still distant standpoints of "Catholics" and "Evangelicals", whether this be owing to prejudice or not. In recommendations to the Central Committee of the W.C.C. on communion services at ecumenical gatherings, the same section noted that the volume "Intercommunion" remained a standard reference work for doctrinal differences.

To study the eucharist in the context of the Ecumenical Movement thus conveniently places it where one may best appreciate the problems currently being faced in this act of sacramental worship. It would appear that the major points of dissension which arise are as follows:

1. Grace - its nature and communication;
2. The real presence of Christ in the eucharist - which involves the doctrine of transubstantiation;
3. The eucharist and sacrifice;
4. Intercommunion before corporate union;
5. The validity of the orders of the celebrant;
6. The eucharist and worship.

These topics will be discussed in the following chapters.

1. "The Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order" O.Tomkins. p.53

2. "Faith and Order Findings" P.S.Minear Report of Section IV.

SECTION I

GRACE, THE REAL PRESENCE AND SACRIFICE

This section will be concerned with the three doctrinal topics which make up the title. They have been grouped together for two reasons. First, they are closely related and therefore not easily amenable to separate treatment; and secondly they constitute the chief specifically doctrinal problems so far as ecumenism is concerned, and should therefore be separated from questions such as the validity of orders and intercommunion, even though they are not unconnected with these matters.

Chapter 2

The Eucharist as a Means of Grace

In his study of the eucharist¹ F.J. Leenhardt treats "The Grace of the Sacrament" last of all. He describes the discussion of real presence and sacrifice as similar to a long climb up the slopes of a mountain. When they have been clarified the summit of the mountain has been attained and the "interior reality" of the sacrament may be contemplated:

"The doctrine which we have sought to define should now allow us to discover what is, in the final analysis, the only thing which really interests us, namely the grace which Jesus has attached to the Paschal Sacrament, the interior reality of the Sacrament, that which He aims to produce in the believer." (2)

It is doubtful, however, that grace is any more the "interior reality" of the eucharist than either the real presence of Christ the Host or His sacrifice which the sacrament represents. It is also a moot point whether these two doctrines govern the doctrine of grace. I rather feel that the nature of grace should be clearly before us before the real presence or sacrifice can be discussed. It may also be reiterated that this question is no longer a crucial one in ecumenical discussions. Nevertheless attempted definition of the nature of grace has in the past caused deeprooted divergences in doctrine

1. "Essays in the Lord's Supper" O. Cullman & F.J. Leenhardt.

2. *Ibid.* p. 78

which have in turn given rise to differences in practice not easily eradicated.

We have to deal as usual with two overall classifications of opinion viz. the "Catholic" and the "Evangelical". These terms,¹ used by Professor Bartlet at Lausanne, are particularly useful as the lines of division are not confined to specific Churches but cut across denominational boundaries. There are those in most Churches who tend toward the "Catholic" viewpoint, and those who tend toward the "Evangelical" position.

There has always been a great deal of misunderstanding of the Catholic doctrine. The Catholics have been accused of being "mystical" and "magical", and of "materialism". Thus it has been said that they regard grace as quasi-substantial, something which can be procured by the correct performance of the eucharist. Leonard Hodgson has tried to expose such misunderstandings of the doctrine of "ex opere operato". Both Catholics and Protestants have been anxious to defend true doctrine, but have treated doctrines which should be "held in tension" as "dialectically opposed", as though one must be held and the other rejected. Both recognise that:

- "1. Man's salvation is God's gift freely given.....
2. Man's relation to God is a personal and ethical relation....
3. Being God's free gift, salvation is not in any sense earned by man or received as a reward of merit."(2)

Proposition 2. sums up the notion that men can never be automatically saved but always retain their freedom and responsibility and 3 stresses that, even so, God acts preveniently in every salvation. These two doctrines are fundamental to the Christian faith but are inevitably "dialectically opposed" - they must be accepted on faith until "we know as we are known". Unfortunately, however, if the first is overstressed, pelagianism (the doctrine that man can play a part in his own salvation) seems to follow, while if the second is overstressed one is led into absolute predestination for God is made to appear as one who bestows His favours descriminately and independently of the response of men.

1. First chapter p.3. (above)

2. "The Grace of God in Faith and Philosophy" p. 33.

In their defence of the first pole of this dilemma the Catholics, to avoid falling into pelagianism, developed the doctrine of Sacramental grace ex opere operato - God is the one who acts in Salvation. To avoid the danger of predestination they demanded "penitence and faith" on the part of man, though this degenerated into the dangerous doctrine of merit.

The Protestants, however, rejected the ex opere operato solution as "materialisation of grace" which by the 16th century was true, and insisted on justification by free grace through faith. To protect themselves from pelagianism they had to say that faith, too, is a gift of God; but this solution failed because its logical consequence is predestination. Calvin did not try to avoid this conclusion.

Hodgson then goes on to say that while the dilemma thus reached is never solvable in this life, it is not paradoxical or philosophically absurd. He attempts, however, to make a "contribution toward the solution"¹ by a theory of grace based to some extent on modern scientific and philosophical knowledge. The gist of this argument is as follows:² God's creation consists of modes of existence at differing levels of intelligibility. The highest mode and therefore the most intelligible, is that of personal relations. (Buber would say "I - Thou relationships") At this level of existence there can be "help" which does not destroy freedom. One man may influence another for the good, yet he may not do so against the man's will, but only with his trust. Neither does this mean that the man being helped loses his freedom - he in fact becomes more free. Thus we may derive a doctrine of grace which maintains that God saves us without destroying our freedom, although we have in no wise done anything towards that salvation ourselves. "Grace is the technical term for that divine help which enables a man to be and do what otherwise would be impossible for him."³

So far so good, but now Hodgson launches into the more doubtful part of this exposition. God is creator of the universe at all levels. He has made the physical and the personal, and we are made up of both:

1. Ibid. p. 166.

2. Ibid. p. 151,ff.

3. Ibid. p. 154.

being of the physical world, yet simultaneously at the 'front' of God's creative activity and thus also having personality. Most often the subpersonal in us has the upper hand and we strive continually and without success to be fully personal. But God alone can make us fully personal and that by an act of grace similar to His general creative activity. We come to the sacrament feeble and offering poor response to God, and so:

"my faith has to be shown in trusting God through Christ to give me all the subpersonal growth I need to constitute me a person and enable me to make the personal response of faith."(1)

This sentence is crucial and displays certain flaws in the theory.

Hodgson several times rejects any tendency to regard grace as "a something".

" 'God's grace' is God in action regarded under the aspect of Helper, as God's love is God in action regarded under the aspect of Lover. His grace can no more be 'reified' than His love."(2)

And again:

"We reject uncompromisingly any conception of grace, sacramental or otherwise, which would think of it a something given by God to be appropriated by us."(3)

Nevertheless it is hard to admit that he is not in fact doing so. He seems to distinguish between types of grace. On the one hand there is creative grace and on the other salvation grace. He claims that Catholic sacramentalism acknowledges this. First this seems dangerous in that it denies the singleness of God's grace and second it calls grace what we normally call God's power. Certainly God's creative activity must be gracious in the same sense as His saving activity is gracious, but in making the distinction between "activities" we dare not suggest that each is associated with a type of grace. Hodgson appears to have done this and the one "type of grace" is what we usually term God's power. We shall see that grace involves the exercise of God's power, but that this equation of grace with power is not permissible, and once made leads on inevitably to "materialism".

Furthermore in attempting to hold his two "dialectically opposed" doctrines, and desiring to include justification by faith without

1. & 2. Ibid. p. 154.

3. Ibid. p. 173.

falling into predestination, in the quotation given above Hodgson says that we must "show faith" that God will constitute us persons, thus enabling us to respond in faith. He has criticized the Protestant doctrine for standing for an ex opere operato view of faith,¹ i.e. that faith is given by God in much the same way as grace is given ex opere operato in the Catholic sacramental theory, but here he himself seems to be suggesting two kinds of faith - one responsive, the other ex opere operato.

It is true that Catholics have been much misunderstood on the subject of grace and that "ex opere operato" and "merit" doctrines appeared innocently in the discussion about predestination and free-will. Nevertheless, just as Hodgson has been led into implying that grace is a power, we find deeply entrenched in the Catholic tradition the idea that grace is a something infused into the human soul by God. For the early scholastics and St. Bernard grace was largely the favour of God freely bestowed in salvation, and certainly not counter to the consent of the human will. Grace is the outgoing operation of God's love.² Peter Lombard seemed to identify love and the Holy Spirit with grace. Hugh St Victor had insisted that a sacrament is "the visible form of the invisible grace conveyed" and not merely as Augustine had said, "a simple sign of a sacred thing",³ and Lombard accepting this, added that as "vehicles" of grace the sacraments "caused" sanctification. This conception of grace as a something became more pronounced in Albertus Magnus and his pupil, St. Thomas. For Albertus grace was that whereby God lifted man to perfect personality to enable him to have fellowship with God. It was a "mysterious spiritual something".⁴ In St. Thomas it becomes "a gift from God to man, a somewhat coming from His love; infused and stimulative of the faculties of the human spirit," and finally "The gift of grace is naught else than a kind of participation in the Divine Nature."⁵ The idea of "infusion" was at Trent finally recognised when that council accepted that, "the grace of justification" being "infused" into the soul - at baptism - the recipient was made righteous; he had not merely had righteousness imputed to him.

1. Ibid. p. 31.

2. See F. Gavin: "The Medieval and Modern Roman Conceptions of Grace" in "The Doctrine of Grace." Ed. W. Whitley pp. 136 - 142.

3. Ibid. p. 144.

4. Ibid. p. 146.

5. Ibid. p. 147.

With the establishment of the sacramental system, the Roman Catholic Church never lost the notion that in a sacrament something happens - in fact something passes between God and man. Even though it avoided any suggestion of predestination¹, by insisting on the need for faith and penitence, the sacrament became the means or channel of saving "grace". Consequently it was not difficult for "the Church" through its ministry to become the "dispenser"² of grace, and for "extra ecclesiam nulla salus" to become the claim of the Church, where "the Church" meant the Roman Church.

This objectification of grace was not altogether escaped by the Reformers. To-day we all accept in our theological vocabulary, such phrases as "healing streams of grace", "receiving grace", "grace flowing", "abundant grace", without question. They all belong to the idea of grace as a something, and, if they are used metaphorically, this should be made clear.

Luther, indeed, did regard grace as "a disposition, a merciful will, on God's part",³. The great emphasis of the Reformers, however, was on justification by faith - a faith as freely given as justification to those who turn to God in penitence. And Luther is consumed with the dynamic conception of God - it is God who acts in the redemption of man. "Grace is described as the epitome of the personal activity of God in revelation and salvation."⁴ Yet this concern that grace should be that in God which either itself acts, or makes God act, with favour, towards man, leads Luther to use the term in another peculiar sense: "the grace of God never thus co-exists in idleness, but is a living, moving, and active spirit"⁵. Calvin, while in general using grace in the same way as Luther, also connected it with Revelation. Choisy⁶ defines grace in Calvin as "the Sovereignty of God manifesting itself in the world." Thus grace becomes revelation, and as there is a general and a special revelation so there is a general and special grace. So it would seem that even

1. See p. 10 above.

2. Ibid. p. 175.

3. Ibid. p. 151.

4. H.Hermelink Ibid. p. 178.

5. Quoted by Hermelink. Ibid. p. 178.

6. See Choisy. Ibid. p. 228.

in the Reformers there is a deal of confusion in the use of this term, but the stress laid by Luther on personality and God's activity, though neither exclusive to him nor first propagated by him, has been taken up in this century.

The idea that grace belongs essentially to the realm of personal relationships and cannot exist apart from them is the first fundamental of any satisfactory explication of the meaning of the term. H.J. Wotherspoon has given an excellent exposition of the scriptural development of the term grace.¹ In the Old Testament the equivalents for it are "cheseth" and "chen". The first is most frequent and means kindness, mercy, pity, compassion; "chen" means favour undeservedly bestowed. In the New Testament Paul's usage becomes normative, being adopted by Peter and James and probably Luke and John. Paul takes the Greek word "charis" - used to translate "chen" in the LXX - and adapts it for his own theological purposes. This word in classical Greek referred to graciousness of character, of gesture or movement. It was therefore intended to be used in an aesthetic sense. But it came to be used, instead of for physical charm, for moral charm.

"Always there goes with the word the feeling of spontaneity of bestowal - the beauty is that of generosity - it is largesse without thought of deserving or of earning or of return." (2)

St. Paul uses the term in four theological senses:

"It is that in the Divine nature which leads God to bestow on man a salvation which originates in Himself and proceeds only by His operation; next it is the specific principle of Divine action accomplishing our rescue ...; then it is the salvation itself, the pardon, the release ...; and lastly it is the forth-flowering of power from God to give effect to His loving purpose in Christ, energising in the soul itself by the influx to it of the Holy Spirit, to transform the nature of the subject ..." (3)

This multiple usage of St. Paul is probably responsible for a great deal of our present confusion. Wotherspoon chooses the last sense as the important one - grace "as meaning ultimately the Divine force exerted by the Holy Spirit".⁴ He goes on to expound this important notion and decides that it is central to the doctrine of grace. By the

1. "The Religious Values in the Sacraments" chs. 2&3.

2. Ibid. p. 66.

3. Ibid. p. 66 .

4. Ibid. p. 67.

Spirit Christ somehow penetrates the human spirit to effect the change we call salvation.

"Such penetration of Spirit is conceivable only for Spirit; the possibility of it lies at the root of the idea of grace. The idea of grace in the soul is always the idea of the Holy Spirit (and therefore of Christ) operative there." (1)

Like Hodgson, Wotherspoon rejects therefore the idea that grace can ever be "a substantial ens separable from its source". "It is known to us only as a presence, as the operation in us of a presence, and as the result of that operation." ². Like Luther he is concerned with the effects of God's grace upon us. Later he refers to grace as "empowering", and he quotes Professor W.P.Paterson and Bishop Temple as holding that regeneration involves an infusion of power and that the spirit empowers. But then he takes the step of agreeing with Paget - "grace is an energy" ; Bright - "grace is a force in the spiritual order" ; Mozley - "grace is a power". ³.

While one must agree that God's gracious activity in salvation definitely includes the sending of the Holy Spirit and the empowering of man "to will and to do" , to suggest that grace is either the Holy Spirit or power is to come very close to the idea that it is "a something". With Leenhardt we must say;

"Too often emphasis has been laid on such formulae as these: the sacrament contains grace; it transmits it; the sacrament is the vehicle of grace, its 'channel'." (4)

But it seems that Wotherspoon's doctrine can easily accommodate such expressions and should accordingly be suspect. It is certain that neither Wotherspoon nor anyone else really intends to suggest that grace is "a something separable from its source", yet to use such language is to give that appearance.

We are concerned here with grace and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The "Catholic" type of sacramental theology emphasises that in the sacrament something happens, and the suggestion is that it is a process of transference of grace interpreted as power to save, forgive etc. "Protestant" theology wishes to emphasise that salvation is free

1. Ibid. p. 74.

2. Ibid. p. 75.

4. "Essays in the Lord's Supper" O.Cullmann & F.J.Leenhardt. p. 79.

3. Ibid. p. 81.

and unmerited and involves our "rightwising" in the sense of our being made right in our personal relationship with God. Now it is here that Wotherspoon's stress on the activity of the Spirit is very valuable. We dare not, as the Eastern Orthodox Churches have always insisted, omit to recognise that God graciously sends His Spirit in the sacrament. We shall see that this is the root idea of the "real presence". Something does happen - God by His Spirit empowers or lifts a man from the depths of sin. But to say that grace is what is imparted is to confuse categories and lose sight of the personal aspect of the action. St. Paul himself, according to Wotherspoon, seems to have confused grace and the Spirit, but Paul was notoriously inconsistent in his terminology and we need not follow him in this failing. D.M. Baillie¹ has shown by a particularly valuable illustration how we might interpret the gracious sacramental activity of God in personal terms. A new nursemaid wins the trust of her charge by coaxing, kindness, and graciousness. She does not "make" the child trust her, or give him the faith he soon has in her, yet in some sense, in the interaction of personalities, she has by her grace enabled him to have that faith. So too in the sacrament, the Father graciously offers Himself to us. If we respond to His grace we are empowered, yet we do not lose any freedom in the response. It is still our faith by which we respond and yet it is possible only because of His "prevenient" grace. Within such a framework we may even find that it is possible to speak of the grace of God being 'imparted' to one entering into a relationship with Him. In this sense grace remains essentially a personal quality, yet may, as such a person recognises that God's grace within the relationship involves His condescending favour, and as he sees its beauty, wonder and desirability, evoke from him a similar grace, which is capable of being turned towards others. This will bring to the sacrament an ethical connection which many have wished to stress. This formulation could perhaps be accused of being Pelagian or of being suggestive of an "exemplary" theory of the atonement, but this can be countered by pointing out that it is God who comes to men offering salvation, and it is He who engenders in us the ability to act in faith

1. "The Theology of the Sacraments".

as in Baillie's illustration.

Thus the category of personal relationships seems to carry us beyond the dispute about materialisation and predestination. This does not mean that grace becomes "a personal relationship" which is another distortion not unknown to-day. Rather grace is of the nature of the relationship. Finally we should not lose sight of the emphasis which we saw in Luther and Wotherspoon - that God in His grace is active. Part of the meaning of "God is gracious" is "God acts first (preveniently) in the salvation of men." It is not merely an aesthetic estimate of God's character, but connotes all the rich knowledge we have of God through Christ - of His love, favour and searching after men.

The purpose of this chapter has been to outline briefly the kind of theology of grace which is likely to be most useful in the interpretation of the sacraments of Holy Communion. With these ideas as a background we may now proceed to the discussion of specific issues in eucharistic theology.

Chapter 3

The Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist

We come now to what is probably the most complex of the problems associated with the eucharist. In the Lund Conference report the significant statement is made:

"There are those among us who deeply regret that the discussion of the eucharist has concentrated on this sacrificial aspect. In their opinion the main issue is the real bodily presence of the crucified and risen Lord and our receiving of His body and blood." (1)

It was chiefly Lutherans who insisted on this note, but it appears to have been an important opinion for there are grave difficulties which persist in regard to the real presence. The opinion is further ratified by the statement appearing in the report that: "a measure of understanding, which none of us could have anticipated, on the problem of the sacrificial element in the Holy Communion (has been reached)".²

The real presence raises not only the dusty conflict over transubstantiation, but also related problems such as devotions before the reserved elements, and in fact the very nature of the gift we receive in the sacrament, which involves in turn the nature of sacrifice. It has already been stated that grace, real presence, and sacrifice are closely related. Aulen (a Lutheran) devotes a long passage to demonstrate from the New Testament that the "presence of the living Lord is inseparably connected with the sacrifice of Christ"³, and we shall find that this is indeed so, but in the sense that one cannot separate the presence of the Risen Christ from the present efficacy of His once-for-all sacrifice. Thus it would seem permissible if indeed not necessary for the sake of clarity to distinguish between these two aspects of the eucharist.

There is an extraordinary amount of confusion and misunderstanding on the question of the real presence. To a large degree, the confusion originates in the strained and peculiar use to which language has been put in this discussion. It often appears that, in the attempt to reconcile views or doctrines which are apparently contradictory, language is distorted and abused until little meaning can be derived from the

1. "The Third World Conference on Faith and Order" Ed. O.S. Tomkins p.43

2. Ibid. p. 42

3. "Eucharist and Sacrifice" pp. 155-165.

so-called theological pronouncements which result. That this is not an unfair judgement is shown by the fact that theologians so often close their remarks on the subject by insisting that we are dealing here with "mystery". The doctrines are held to be "mystical", concerned with things which cannot be expressed in common language.

Now without wishing to be unduly sceptical, and while recognising that in the Christian faith the realm of certitude often fades into that of mystery, it seems that at this point of the real presence of Christ in the celebration of the eucharist, we must be extremely careful before announcing that we have reached the boundary between knowledge and "mystery". In particular such words as "symbol" and "sacramental", "body and blood" and "substance" require clear definition. There is often a fear of being classified as a "symbolist" or "virtualist", a fear rooted in old prejudices and which is entirely unnecessary and unnatural. At the same time the term "sacramentalist" or "sacramentarian" (which originally meant the same as "virtualist") is equally feared by others. Fortunately, probably under the influence of analytic philosophy and the emphasis on semantic study now popular, it would seem that today there is a tendency to look behind terms to what is meant. Very often, however, this is a disconcerting process and therefore mistrusted by those who, while holding onto traditional terms, also perpetuate untenable and outmoded doctrines. The object here will be to show that behind the obscure terminology there is often a basic but unperceived agreement close enough to allow their co-existence in one Church.

A broad division into two groups of opinions is recognisable. On the one side, there are those who hold that the presence is connected in some special way with the elements, affirming that consecration "really changes them"; on the other hand, there are those who deny this and affirm only a "special presence in the hearts and souls of faithful worshippers".¹ The first group includes those who hold transubstantiation or consubstantiation, the second those who hold "receptionism" or,

1. O.C.Quick "The Christian Sacraments". p. 205.

simply, that the eucharist is a "simple" sign or symbol. In terms classically associated with the Reformation the first group believes in the "real presence", the second does not.

"But," as Quick puts it, "in view of the ambiguity of this unfortunate term, it is important to observe that neither do those who affirm the doctrine doubt the necessity for spiritual faith as a condition of receiving the benefit of the sacrament, nor do those who deny the doctrine question the full objective reality of Christ's presence in a spiritual mode. There is as little ground for an accusation of magic in the one case, as there is for an accusation of 'subjectivism' in the other." (1)

Transubstantiation affirms that upon consecration a change is wrought in the elements which is such that the bread and wine become "in substance" the Body and Blood of Christ. Consubstantiation affirms that the one "substance" is added to the other. According to receptionism there is no change in the elements, and virtualism, mediating, posits change in that the elements are consecrated to new purpose: "as used in the sacrament they have the 'virtue' of Christ's Body and Blood".²

It is immediately apparent that the words 'substance' and 'body' 'blood' are being used in an unusual way. The problem is further intensified when it is stated specifically that these terms are not being used metaphorically but represent objective realities. It is comparatively simple to follow what theologians mean when they maintain that the sacrament is a bare symbol - representing certain truths - so in what follows we shall examine first the origin of the idea of the real presence in the sense of some "objective" presence.

It is convenient first to follow Gore's argument in which he provides much evidence from patristic and medieval sources.³ He points out that we are concerned with two fundamentally different conceptions of the sacrament, which align themselves with the two groups distinguished above. According to the first something happens and we receive something in the sacrament, which is not necessarily totally or consciously apprehended by the worshipper. According to the second view, what happens can only occur if the worshipper 'has faith', in what appears to be a limiting sense. Gore makes out the case that the first - the "instrument-

1. Ibid.p.205.

2. Ibid.p.206.

3. "The Body of Christ" C.Gore.

alist" view has always been central to the Christian faith. Those who hold this theory believe that the sacrament is causal in nature - it is not merely symbolical of what may happen - in fact we cannot know all that we receive in the sacrament. The efficacy of its action only fails when we deliberately flout its influence upon us. This is not of course to say that penitence and faith are not required - on the contrary they are necessary if the sacrament is to be fully "efficacious".

What then is it that we receive when we celebrate the eucharist? Gore states that the fundamental idea has always been that "the flesh and blood of Christ .. mean a gift ...a heavenly food given by God to man."¹ The main Biblical reference relevant to this view is John 6, where Jesus insists that He is the "Bread of Life" and that they "must eat His flesh and drink His blood" if they wish to have eternal life.² Gore then points out that in John 6:60-64, Jesus guards against any gross interpretation of His words by saying, "the Spirit alone gives life, the flesh is of no avail".³ Gore then makes what appears to be the fundamental step of the whole argument for objectivism in the eucharist, when he states of Christ:

"But none the less, He plainly means them to understand that, in some sense, His manhood is to be imparted to those who believe in Him, and fed upon as a principle of new and eternal life."(4)

To further emphasise this he quotes Westcott in a footnote:

"The phrase 'to eat the flesh of Christ' expresses therefore, as perhaps no other language could express, the great truth that Christians are made partakers of the human nature of their Lord which is united in one to the divine nature, that He imparts to us now, and that we can receive into our own manhood, something of His manhood, which may be the seed, so to speak, of the glorified bodies in which we shall hereafter behold Him."(5)

The gift then is of "the whole of Christ". Gore suggests further that we may think of Christ's flesh as "the spiritual principle or essence of His manhood, as distinguished from its material constituents" and of His blood as "according to the Old Testament idea, 'the life thereof' ".⁶ Be that as it may, "in some sense it is the manhood

1. Ibid. p. 23

2. John 6:35,53&54.

3. John 6:63.

4. Ibid. p. 24 (words underlined italicised by Gore)

5. Ibid. p. 24.

6. Ibid. p. 25

which must be meant by the flesh and blood".¹. As he puts it later:

"The gift of the eucharist is precisely that gift of the flesh, or body, and blood of Christ - the Spiritual principle and life of Christ's manhood, inseparable from His whole living self..."(2)

This he claims is what has never been disputed. The controversial matter has always been the relation of this gift to the elements. He then proceeds to show that Hooker, Waterland, the Reformers, the Eastern and Western Fathers are in substantial agreement, although various other Fathers - Origen, Clement of Alexandria, Irenaeus, et al, did not concur in this. The importance of this discussion about the gift is that if we indeed receive in the sacrament Christ's "very body and blood", then we cannot dispute His presence there. Nevertheless we have not gone far if we do not understand the meanings of "body" and "blood" in this context. If they mean the "spiritual principle of His manhood", in what sense is this "objective"? What, indeed, does this mean when all metaphorical interpretations are specifically 'out of court'? The problem becomes acute when we ask the question about the relation of the gift to the elements in the eucharist. Here it is highly significant to ask "What is the nature of the body and the blood which we receive?" because very clearly we eat bread and drink wine at the celebration. The insistence is that we receive Christ in toto, and by this is meant "in the body and blood which He has always possessed, the very body and blood in which Christ lived and died and rose and ascended", only now it is "bestowed on us in a spiritual and heavenly manner".³. But how does this body and blood relate to the elements? The solution, of course, is one of those 'mysteries' of which we have already spoken:

"by the consecration of the portions of bread and wine which have been solemnly set apart or offered, the spiritual gift of Christ's body and blood is, in some way, attached to these elements ... before they are eaten and drunken, and independently of such eating and drinking". (4)

Again, on consecration the elements "become sacramentally identified with the body and blood of Christ".⁵.

1. Ibid. p. 25.

2. Ibid. p. 49.

3. Ibid. p. 61.

4. Ibid. p. 72 (emphasis mine).

5. Ibid. p. 73.

"It expresses the belief that prior to reception and independently of the faith of the individual, the body and blood of Christ are made present 'under the forms of ' bread and wine, or in some real though undefined way identified with them.'"(1)

Gore insists that this "doctrine of the objective real presence" has always been the central doctrine of the Church, and proceeds to demonstrate by referring to the Fathers and some liturgies.

"Certainly Cyril of Jerusalem, Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril of Alexandria, Chrysostom, Hilary, Ambrose, Augustine, Leo, believed that present in the eucharist, in some not easily definable relation to the bread and wine, was the body and blood of the glorified Christ, indiscernible from the whole self."(2)

Quite clearly an impasse has been reached. While on the one hand it is insisted that the gift - Christ Himself in His totality (whatever that may mean) - is objectively present, on the other hand it is not possible to describe the nature of the "objective presence". It is associated with the elements, yet not localised in them. It is spiritual says Gore, and yet it is "profoundly real".³ "He condescends to use material means, the sacramental elements, yet He is never subject to them."⁴ But "spiritual" now becomes a sort of omnium gatherum term which accommodates a variety of conceptions. There can be a "spiritual body" such as we find in Paul,⁵ and yet a "spiritual presence" can mean a presence "to certain persons for certain purposes",⁶ which appears to deny objectivity. It is still almost impossible to understand what is going on: has this talk any 'cash value'?

The important point to gather from all this is that there is a deeprooted conviction that in the eucharist Christ is presented "objectively" in all His humanity as taken up into glory at the Ascension to those who will receive. This 'really' happens. Unfortunately this view cannot be explained if symbolic or metaphorical language is not permitted. It is a view which must be stated dogmatically but, having done this, such speculations as Gore presents about the spiritual nature of the presence are indeed, as he admits himself, dim and hazy.⁷ The insistence

1. Ibid. p. 74.

2. Ibid. p. 110.

3. Ibid, p. 124.

4. Ibid. p. 131.

5. I Corinthians 15

6. Gore Op. Cit. p. 134.

7. Ibid. p. 153-154.

on an "objective" presence has similarly become a necessary part of any tenable doctrine of the eucharist for the vast majority of theologians, even though it appears to be impossible precisely to explain what is meant by the term. We turn to some other theologians now to see that many are in similar straits. Wotherspoon¹ for example, says:

"Agreement may be assumed that in the sacrament Christ Himself is the Giver; that the Holy Spirit is the medium of His action; that the gift is of His body and blood for our spiritual nourishment."⁽¹⁾

Then again, in explanation he continues:

"No part of the historic church is sacramentarian² in its authorised teaching: everywhere it is held by Geneva and Scotland, by Anglican and by Lutheran formulas, as emphatically by antiquity, by the Orthodox and the East generally and by Romanism - that the Body and Blood are given, and that their reception is intimately identified with reception of the elements, and that their reception is objective and actual. Controversy enters only with efforts to explain and to philosophise, which are not normally the occupation of the mind in the act of communicating."⁽³⁾

It is hardly enough to fall back on belief and faith at such a point, without "philosophising". The difficulty is that men are not and never have been satisfied to do this without trying also to understand what they do. Is it possible to derive full benefit from the sacrament if in fact we are "doing it blind"? This is to raise the further question whether the effect of the sacrament is limited by the intellectual capacity of the worshipper. No-one would wish to suggest that - it could degenerate into a type of gnosticism - yet can the theologian simply relax and say, "We must do what we have been commanded to do, and simply have faith that "something" is accomplished within us?"

The Orthodox Churches of the east have always insisted on mystery in most doctrines. The real presence is no exception. The Orthodox believe in an objective change in the elements, yet not in the precise "transubstantiationist" sense that the Romans do. They claim that an objective change takes place, but this miracle is, they hold, beyond human understanding and if man attempts to formulate it, he risks "sacrificing himself to his own thought and illusion".⁴ The "metabole" is closely connected to the gathered Church within which alone the change can take place, by the action of the Holy Spirit, at the Epiclesis.

1. Ibid. p. 274.

2. Sacramentarian means here: the denying of the Real Presence by the assertion that the eucharist is bare symbol.

3. Ibid. p. 276. 4. N.A.Nisiotis "Worship, Eucharist and Intercommunion." *Studia Liturgica* Vol. II No.3. p.207

Mystery here becomes so final that faith becomes all-important:

"The answer to the 'how' and 'what' of the miracle is given only by the miracle itself. 'This is my body, this is my blood' is the maximum expression that faith alone can comprehend. The Orthodox 'change' is not an effort to explain a miracle but, following the central idea of the offering of the bloodless sacrifice in the form of thanksgiving, reminds us that this 'change' takes place by the descent of the Holy Spirit as Paraclete who effects it!" (1)

So once again we must have faith that we receive the "very body and blood of Christ" in some mysterious way. Metaphor and symbol are still denied as they imply that there is no reality in the act.

The determination to have an objective presence - which is not to be explained as merely symbolised to the imagination - is everywhere apparent. The elements do not simply signify the presence of Christ, but carry it and 'cause' it.

According to Aulen, Luther did not in fact hold the doctrine which has been called consubstantiation. That doctrine is concerned with speculations about how Christ was present in the bread and wine - which were foreign to Luther. In fact he broke from the Medieval "substance"-accidents philosophy" by developing his doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ. Thus:

"It is the glorified Christ, the one 'everywhere present', who according to his word has connected his presence with the bread and wine, and who thereby actualises his sacrifice and makes it present."(2)

Aulen is concerned to show that the real presence is in Luther equivalent to the presence of His sacrifice, but the significant point here is that the "connection" of the presence to the elements is again extremely vague. This is clarified somewhat where Aulen says:

"It is essential for him (Luther) that the gift is given in a tangible and visible manner, so that it becomes clear that it is really a gift and not only thoughts which we may have during the celebration. If we despise the fact that the gift comes to us in this internal form, it indicates that we have a conception of anamnesis as a mere recollection of the absent Lord and His redemptive act in the past."(3)

There is nevertheless something of the "objectivist" dilemma here. The first sentence comes very close to admitting of the symbolical point of view, yet the second insists that the "external form" is absolutely

1. N.A.Nissiotis. Ibid. p. 212.

2. G.Aulen Op.cit. p. 91.

3. Aulen. Ibid. p. 93.

necessary if we are not to fall into "mere recollection". Why must any worship without symbols deny a real presence?

O.C.Quick¹ outlines what is probably as nearly satisfactory a theory as can be expressed. Yet here too there is the definite and explicit requirement of objectivity. In criticizing receptionism he says, that on this theory the eucharist becomes a dramatic parable, relying on its expressiveness for its significance. There is no "causal connection between the outward and inward series of events", the two being related only by meaning. There must in sacrament, however, be an "instrumentality" which is a "spatio-temporal" relation.² He sums up the position succinctly when he says:

"From the beginning a sacrament is in principle something more than a sign of any kind, more even than an effectual sign, if by that term we denote something which can only be effectual as a sign, or which is wholly dependent upon its significance for its effect."³

It would seem that by definition the sacrament contains and gives something objective, related to the elements and independent of the expressiveness of the symbolism in which it is received, something which cannot be explained as metaphorical or symbolical representation of truth. It is by definition "mysterious".

We must now look briefly at transubstantiation, which as Wotherspoon makes clear, was an attempt to explain the real presence,⁴ and is, as it were, the epitome of everything held by "objectivists". This is not to say that all such hold transubstantiation; on the contrary many objectivists regard transubstantiation as a rather crude extreme view. This doctrine holds that the substance of the elements is converted into the substance of the body and blood of Christ. It has, however, to be explained that, in its most subtle form under the scholastics, the doctrine was based on an Aristotelean metaphysic of substance and accidents. According to this metaphysic the "accidents" of an object are what we by our physical senses experience when we perceive it. The substance lies "behind" them and is not necessarily localised in the object. Thus by using "substance" in this way it was possible to conceive of the substance changing while the

1. Op.Cit.pp.223-8

2. Ibid.p.213.

3. Ibid.p.219.

4. Op.Cit.p.281.

accidents remained the same, and so of the eucharistic elements as having the substance of Christ's body and blood - not necessarily localised. The failings of the theory are clearly that one cannot confirm it - from reason or from scripture, and also that one can ask the unanswerable question: are substance and accidents indeed separable even if they are distinguishable?

In addition, according to Quick, up until the 18th century men accepted the idea of a heaven where Christ existed in some sense spatially so that Christ's simultaneous dual existence - there and in the elements - constituted a problem which Transubstantiation relieved. Unfortunately neither modern physics nor modern metaphysics (if such exists) allow of this sort of theory. We are by no means clear on what substance is.

Transubstantiation was, as already stated, an attempt to rationalise the mystery of the eucharistic elements' "conversion" to the real Body and Blood of Christ, and this remains the main point of issue. Objectivism must still be defended. It is, indeed, rather strange that in spite of the declared mysteriousness, the attempt at rational explanation is still continually being made!

To-day "transubstantiation" has taken on a new lease of life under an entirely new interpretation of "substance". This view is said to derive from the 'modern' conception of matter and is to be found explicitly described by C.J. Leenhardt¹ and O.C.Quick² and hinted at by Gore³ and Wotherspoon.⁴ New interpretations are also to be found in such Roman Catholic Theologians as Masure.

Leenhardt expounds the view very clearly and we will for convenience follow his description. It is based on the claim that to-day we are rediscovering an ancient difference in usage of "substance" which is exemplified by the difference between Greek and Hebrew language. "Language to the Greek expresses the object, the exterior world... it is logical language." ⁵

1. Op.Cit.pp.44ff.

2. Op.Cit.pp.223ff.

3. Op. Cit.

4. Op. Cit. pp.283f.

5. Ibid. p44.

But: "The language of the Hebrew does not express the object, but the subject, his hold over things,.. the domination which he exercises over them by imposing himself upon them.....He who speaks is not passive over against things but active. His language does not say what things are, but what the subject makes of them!" (1)

So he maintains that, part of the meaning of the term "substance" as applied to any object is that of purpose. The substance of things becomes "what they are in the hands of God, ordaining according to His will the being of the things related to the end which God assigns them ..."².

It is not difficult to see how this theory conveniently helps out the dying doctrine of Transubstantiation. The above quotation makes it clear that God is the one who so to say "speaks substance" into things, and so He by similar authority can transubstantiate anything if He wishes. Jesus then, when He said "This is My body" used His divine authority to provide a new destiny to the bread - He accomplished its 'transubstantiation'. No physical transmutation is here intended, in fact it is specifically denied - it does not even enter into the discussion. The bread, then is more than the sign of Christ's presence, it becomes the "organ of His presence". An ordinary sign "is incongruous with what it signifies....., it is not identical, nor coexistent with that which it signifies."³. But not so the eucharistic bread. It is "His organ, His instrument, for him who receives it from His hands in faith. For Him the reality of this bread and the reality of His presence are not incongruous. It is the bread which realises for the believer the corporal presence of Jesus Christ."⁴ To give one last quotation:

"This bread is truly the body of Christ in the celebration of the rite, because it is as such that Christ presents it at that moment... It is because Christ makes of it the instrument of His dialogue with the believer that the bread is His body.....From the point of view of a reflection which sees the substance, not in what things are but in what God does with them, the bread becomes the body of Christ when God accomplishes for the believer the mysterious presence of his Son."⁵

1. Ibid. p.44.

2. Ibid. p.49

3. Ibid. p.52

4. Ibid. p.52

5. Ibid. p.53

There are many obvious difficulties about such a view— especially it can be accused of being too closely related to metaphor and symbolism. Quick has criticised the similar argument which is postulated by W. Spens in which, as Quick says, he describes the reality of physical objects as "constituted by their value and meaning for minds,"¹ and says that Consecration "really changes the substance of the elements, inasmuch as from consecration new opportunities of spiritual experience are found in them."² Spens himself apparently claims that the theory requires "no more than an extension of the principle of efficacious symbolism,"² in its application to the eucharist, Quick finds that any theory dependent upon symbolism, be it "conventional" or "expressive" cannot describe the sacrament truly, because there is an ultimate dependence on men's minds.

He adapts the idea, however, and uses it as follows. Like Aulen he insists that the real presence may not be separated from the Eucharistic offering. Fundamentally then, the Eucharist is "the self-offering of Christ as externalised in human ritual, so that human lives may be incorporated into its living reality through communion with Him who offers and is offered."³ The Church externalises Christ's heavenly and eternal action as it offers the bread and wine in memorial, and consecrates them as the Body and Blood of Christ. As the people communicate a similar self offering is "brought forth from them". At every point in the external, ritualised Eucharist "the whole Christ is present in that through which He acts; and that through which He acts is at every point His Body as the instrument and expression of His will."⁴ The fundamental thought of this doctrine of the Real Presence is:

"that the presence is to be sought in the elements not as physical objects, but as they are within the process of a certain action which takes them up into itself, uses them as its instruments, and expresses itself in them. It may be true to say that the presence resides in what is done with the elements rather than in the elements themselves, if it be remembered that in the process of that action the elements are no more than mere instruments of a loving spirit beyond them and become actually the expression of the Life of that spirit itself." Again;

"The presence is to be truly identified with the localised bread and wine in so far as these constitute the matter wherein through the Eucharistic action Christ externalises His offerings of Himself to the Father and imparts its loving power to our souls." (5)

1. Op.Cit. p.214

2. Op.Cit. p.214

3. Ibid. p.223

4. Ibid. p.224

5. Ibid. p.225

Of change in the elements Quick allows that the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ where body and blood denote: "not material things as such but outward things as they are in relation to spiritual activity which operates and expresses itself through them."¹ Thus the change in the elements "is sufficiently represented as a change of use and meaning."² Quick has thus used the idea of substance later postulated by Leenhardt, viz., that it consists in purpose, value, and so on.

Unfortunately Quick's ingenious construction must be criticised as before. In searching for the objectivism he feels is so necessary in true sacramentalism, Quick has in fact used terms metaphorically while denying that he is doing so. He had simply to state dogmatically, as he admits afterwards,³ that the Eucharist is the "externalisation" of Christ's eternal action, in which the elements become Body and Blood in virtue of the use to which they are consecrated.

In what I have been saying, I have been trying to show that the search for objectivication which seems to be necessary for many so that the communicant is not left at the mercy of his own "fitful and insecure consciousness of spiritual things",⁴ is a vain one, whenever it takes the form of associating the Presence with the elements. It is never clear how they can become 'really' the 'very' Body and Blood of Christ in any other sense than a symbolic one. The term sacramental, it is claimed, always means more than mere symbol - even if the symbol is "expressive". It involves efficacy as well as expressive signification. Now it seems that this is simply to state that a sacrament is a "special" symbol, where "special" means efficacious. Such talk is simply circular. The relation of efficacy to the symbolism remains unexplained. Surely the only source of the efficacy of the eucharist lies in its dominical ordination, and that ordination suggests no change in the elements other than their consecration to a symbolic use.

1. Ibid. p. 226

2. Ibid. p. 227

3. Ibid. p. 228

4. Ibid. p. 226

Surely as much faith is required to believe that the elements change, as to believe that even as Christ promised, He is present among those gathered in His name? When we perform the symbolical actions of the eucharist and so represent Christ's passion and sacrifice for us, does it make a great deal of difference whether we believe that Christ's presence and gift is objectively connected with the elements, or simply that by performing the actions of eating and drinking, are representing outwardly what we "faithfully" know does happen inwardly, viz., atonement through His sacrifice once offered? Is it really meaningful to speak of "the body of Christ's humanity" in any other than a symbolical sense? ; or again to say that "we receive in the sacrament more than we know and irrespective of our feelings" ? What more can we receive than justification? If the implication is that we receive Christ-like graciousness - sanctification - (this could be what is meant by "the body of His humanity"), one would expect to find that those who shared in the sacrament displayed Christ-like virtues. It can be objected that we cannot tell what those people would be like if they had not participated in the sacrament, yet this makes of the suggestion that we receive "something more than we know" dogmatic guesswork.

This fear of symbolism seems to be based on doubtful assumptions. The first of these is that as soon as we deny the objective presence, faith has to do all the work and this is not satisfactory. The second is that "mere" symbolism necessarily means more recollection of past events, no longer possessing power to change us. The first assumption I have already denied. Even the objectivists recognise that faith is commonly required from the worshipper if the sacrament is to be efficacious. Neither to the objectivist nor to the symbolist, need this mean that faith "conjures up" the realities of Christ's gift, Christ has promised his presence and we know by faith that He is there as always. As to the second assumption it is surely true that to have a symbolist view of the sacrament in no way entails the belief that the present reality of what it sets forth does not exist. The Quaker who practises only "sacramental silence" fervently believes in Christ's present power to heal and save. No theory of the objectivity of the presence of Christ or His sacrifice in the sacrament can mean that it is other than spiritual.

This all raises the question, what then is the purpose of the Eucharist if it is simply an "acted parable"?

It is noteworthy here that most exegetes recognise that Christ often spoke metaphorically. -- the Hebrews often did so. When Christ therefore said, "This is my body" He no more intended to change the bread in any other than a metaphorical sense, than He meant to say that He was a vine or a door. To speak of the eucharistic elements' change as one of destiny is undeniably to speak metaphorically. When the change is made of the use of the bread and wine that change is to a symbolical use. To suggest that this means a change in its substance is to use "substance" metaphorically. We have to bear in mind too, that Christ often spoke in parables. He knew the weaknesses of men and that they needed a "vehicle" for truth. So at the last supper, in the sacrificial setting of the Passover, He gave that symbol, and what an expressive symbol it is. We "eat" and "drink" the body and life of Jesus the man who was the Christ -- we join ourselves with Him and receive to ourselves what He was. But most important we humbly receive what He gave for us -- His whole self, His sacrifice which is still efficacious for our salvation. All this is represented in the action of the Eucharist, which we know represents truly all that can be ours if we have faith. We have also to remember that we are not disembodied spirits and therefore that our environment affects our frame of mind through the senses. Therefore the Eucharist is not made redundant by the symbolist view in as much as that view means that the rite simply represents to us what we already know. It can be "instrumental" in so far as by "making an assault" on all our senses, it makes us acutely aware of and holds vividly before us, the truths of the faith.

Donald Baillie describes a similar view, and as when he discusses grace, uses personal relationship as the clue to intelligibility. He points out that whenever we talk of God's presence we mean it in a non-spatial sense, for God is non-spatial. When we talk of His omnipresence we mean it in the sense that He is everywhere available for spiritual personal relationship and this is in all ways "real".

He quotes Gabriel Marcel's analysis of "with", where he shows that this term means personal presence. One does not speak of a chair being with a table, but next to it or beside it. This of course is certainly not the sense in which "objectivists" wish to hold the real presence of Christ in the sacrament. Thus the dramatic symbolism of the Eucharist, says Baillie, awakens our faith to an awareness of His personal presence. Once again this does not mean:

"That somehow we conjure up the divine presence by believing in it, or that we produce the faith out of our own resources and that in response to our faith God gives His presence. Nay, God is prevenient, and faith depends on His actions; He calls it forth and that is His way of coming to dwell in a man or company of men." (1)

The true mystery then, is that Christ is indeed still present as He promised, and offers us still His great salvation. We do not need to posit any mysterious connection of that presence with the elements we partake, the relation is^a symbolical one. The apparent tension between objective and spiritual presence, which one feels in such analyses as those of Gore and Quick is thus also resolved. From the point of view then of reconciling the conflicting views of theologians, we may say that the dispute over the real presence is one which is unfounded. We all believe that Christ is present, we all believe that the gift offered to us is real and objective, although in a spiritual mode, we all believe that we must have faith and humility before Christ can do His work within us, we all believe that justification is never merited by us and that no performance of ritual can in itself effect anything in or for us, or limits Christ's work. Quick has said² that it is inaccurate to draw distinct boundaries between "pure objectivists" and "pure receptionists", yet as long as so great an issue is made of demanding that the real presence is objective, or denying it, that we cannot as fellow-Christians partake of the elements at the same table, there seems to be a strange lack of tolerance among the "people of God" - especially as they so

1. Ibid. p. 101.

2. See quote p. 2.

often admit the "mystery" of the presence. As someone else has said, whatever the nature of the presence, we all acknowledge it; can we then in that very presence of Christ deny fellowship with those who conceive it differently to ourselves? This is especially true when we recall that the Church never laid down any dogma on the doctrine until the Sixteenth Century.

This is about as far as the Faith and Order discussions have progressed. There are however, so many devotional practises associated with the Real Presence (in its technical sense), such as Devotions before the reserved elements, which are deeply rooted in many Christian lives, that much prayer and tolerance will be needed if we are ever to come together in one Church. At Montreal 1963 all that could be agreed upon was:

"that the Lord's Supper, a gift of God to His church, is a sacrament of the presence of the crucified and glorified Christ until He come, and a means whereby the sacrifice of the cross which we proclaim, is operative within the Church." (1)

We have seen that this should be enough to bring us together in penitence. We have also seen in this chapter that the sacrifice of Christ cannot be separated from His presence, and we now proceed to examine the difficulties arising in that connection.

1. Report of Section 4 of the 4th World Conference on Faith and Order, "Faith and Order Findings" Ed. P.S. MINER,.

Chapter 4

The Eucharistic Sacrifice

Ever since the Reformation the relation of sacrifice to the eucharist has been a source of division. In fact at the Reformation one of the chief complaints of the Reformers was the common acceptance of the "sacrifice of the Mass". After the Reformation the division on the subject became even greater as the Tridentine definitions ratified the sacrificial nature of the eucharist, while the Protestant Churches tended to ignore all connection between sacrifice and the sacrament. Today, as the result of extensive researches into the nature of sacrifice itself, and into the Biblical background of the eucharist, it is generally recognised that there is a very definite relation between sacrifice and the eucharist. Dispute arises, however, as soon as the attempt is made to describe what the "eucharistic sacrifice" consists in.

There appear to be two main divisions of opinion. First there are those who hold that the eucharist is itself a sacrifice. Secondly there are those who hold that it is not itself a sacrifice but "represents" the sacrifice of Christ. It would seem only too easy to oversimplify here, and it must be remembered that various ideas such as "the sacrifice of thanksgiving" which we ourselves make, and the "heavenly eucharist" described in Rev. 4-7 are employed by both groups and that they are interpreted in different ways within the groups.

As the first group tend to hold the 'maximum' and the second a 'minimum' view, dependent on the denial of the extreme claims made by the first group, we shall first examine those 'maximum' views and then the criticisms directed at them.

Amongst those who wish to hold that the eucharist is a sacrifice are found chiefly Anglo-Catholic, Roman Catholic, and Greek Orthodox churchmen. Unfortunately it would seem to be true that very often the desire to maintain traditional usages has been the motivating factor in the defence of this position, rather than the genuine search after the truth. There is an 'instinct' that there must be some truth in the traditional Catholic doctrine. Be that as it may, it is of interest that theologians of the above three Churches or

groups are today writing very similar things about the nature of the eucharistic sacrifice.

Central to this view is the claim that "we offer Christ" or at least "offer His sacrifice" in the eucharist. This claim is usually made with the specific adjunct that there is no intention whatever to suggest that Christ is re-crucified, re-immolated or re-sacrificed in any way. That the medieval doctrine of a new death of Christ in each eucharist is an abomination is, indeed, agreed everywhere. Rather, the line of argument usually followed is that there is here an "extension" of Christ's sacrifice on Calvary, and this in turn is closely linked with Christ's continued offering of Himself to the Father in the heavenly realm. But we must allow the theory's advocates to speak for themselves.

O.C.Quick has based his view on a conception of "representative" sacrifice. "Vicarious sacrifice" he maintains is a dangerous concept and one which leads to the idea that Christ died in our stead and took upon Himself our punishment and penalty. "The victim is offered so that man need not offer himself."¹ Hodges has similarly and rightly rejected such substitutionary theories of the atonement² and we may accept the distinction made by Quick. True sacrifice is, on his view, that in which man offers himself as a free oblation to God. In primitive times this was accomplished by identification of the sacrificer with the victim which then "represented" him. Such a representative sacrifice is, however, never completely perfect - no offering of something apart from ourselves can be. Yet Christ offers Himself as a representative sacrifice for all mankind, and it becomes a perfect sacrifice for us because as we offer Him He draws us into His own self-offering.

Thus in the eucharist we offer Christ representatively and the sacrifice becomes ours and perfect, because it is joined to His. Quick has to make one reservation:

"Christian may rightly offer Christ as an oblation apart from themselves, only in so far as they honestly intend

1. "The Christian Sacraments" p.203.

2. "The Pattern of the Atonement" ch.3.

that through their action the Christ, Whom they offer, may draw them into His own self-offering"(I)

There is a difficulty here which Quick feels, as he soon goes on to the relation of the death of Christ to the eucharist: What happens to the eucharistic sacrifice if the "honest intention" is lacking? Sacrifice, says Quick, necessarily involves an immolation where the term means "a destruction or change in the outward thing offered in sacrifice".² The difficulty is to define that objective immolation in the eucharist, without implying that Christ's death on the cross is repeated. Quick concludes that it must be a representation of His death. He refers to "expressive" symbolism and claims that "symbolisation of a past fact, if it be truly expressive, must always in some sense bridge the gulf of time, make the past present, and actually convey the reality of that which it commemorates".³ But this does not seem to evade the problem that Christ's sacrifice made on Calvary, while undoubtedly still valid and effective, seems to be found merely represented in the eucharist, which does not make of the eucharist itself a sacrifice of Christ. Is it possible to say then, that when we "honestly intend" it there is in the eucharist an immolation of Christ or at least a real presence of His one immolation? This would seem to destroy any claim that the eucharist is a sacrifice.

It is significant that Quick, usually so perspicuous, becomes singularly obscure in this section of his book, his argument often becoming difficult to follow and even incoherent.

We next examine the celebrated paper written by Bishop Hicks of Lincoln for the Edinburgh Faith and Order Conference of 1937.⁴ There is much in common here with the ideas expressed by Quick. According to Hicks the background of sacrificial practice which must have governed Christ's and the New Testament usage of sacrificial terms, has just recently become familiar to us as it has not been since before the Constantinian Age. We know now that proper and

1. Quick Op. Cit. p.199.

2. Ibid. p. 200.

3. Ibid. p. 202.

4. Reproduced in "Faith and Order:Edinburgh 1937" p. 325.

complete sacrifice consisted of a number of phases 1) The worshipper "draws near" and identifies himself with the victim by placing his hands upon its head. 2) He kills it, and gives it to the priest who takes its blood, now that of the worshipper and that means his life, into the presence of God, and makes the atonement by pouring it out. 3) Finally the body of the victim is burned so that it ascends - rises in smoke to God; and then the remains are eaten in a communal meal in which "God and man, and man and man"¹ become one.

The sacrifice of Christ is precisely on this pattern:

"So our Lord, our Victim, the Lamb of God, comes with us as we draw near. He makes Himself one with us in the Incarnation. We sinners kill our Victim, we crucify Him the best of us hardly knowing what we do... He our High Priest, takes his Blood, which is His Life - our blood, by the power of the Incarnation, and our membership of his Body, and therefore our Life - through the veil, His broken flesh, into the very presence of God. He atones for us. His Manhood, in which our separate manhoods are by degrees joined, is offered to God in eternal service, and as God accepts the offering by the fire of the Spirit, He transforms it. It was the Body of His humiliation, carnal and material, as ours are, mainly, still. It becomes, by His₂ Resurrection and Ascension, wholly spiritual and heavenly."²

The motive of Christ's glorified and eternal life remains what it always has been - that of true sacrifice. Christ is still man and obedient to God the Father and this is His offering - eternal obedience.

It is now that the link has to be made with the eucharist as we celebrate it, and it is precisely that link which requires obscure language and an apparent jump in the argument. Following on the above description Hicks simply says that "we obey in Him" and "As we offer Him we offer ourselves"³. And through this offering we are able to enter into fellowship with God - in the Communion. Finally he rejects any possibility of a repetition of Christ's death or of a materialistic presence. The action of the eucharist is spiritual and in it we are lifted to the Worship of Heaven - the scene of Rev. 4-7.

The sense in which we can speak of the eucharist as a sacrifice is therefore vague in this paper, but the main idea seems to be that Christ's sacrifice, not consisting merely in His Death, continues in Heaven. Thus although there can be no inference of a re-immolation of Christ, because sacrifice consists in more than the death of the victim, we may still join ourselves to and offer His sacrifice.

1. Ibid. p. 327

2. Ibid. p. 327

3. Ibid. p. 327

This is brought out better in A.G. Hebert's essay in "Intercommunion".¹ Hebert identifies his view with that of Hicks and also with that of the Roman Catholic Measure to whom we shall turn later. He adds to what Hicks has said, that Christ's sacrifice is in accordance with the Old Testament prophetic view of sacrifice. There the favour of Yahweh cannot be won by the sacrifices of the unrepentent. The relationship between God and men must be personal; it involves loyalty and obedience and love. The offering of a victim apart from man himself is totally inadequate; God requires the sacrifice of "a broken and a contrite heart". In the Servant poem of **II** Isaiah is the unrealised hope for one who will be pure enough to be a sin-offering; Christ fulfils that hope and the sacrifice of the Old Testament. This is all equal to the New Testament conception of sacrifice but the New Testament introduces a completely new notion; the worshippers instead of being spectators only able to make representative sacrifices because of their sin, are offered too, "as a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice", in union with Christ.

Quoting Heb 10¹⁹⁻²², "Having therefore, brethren, freedom of access to enter into the Holy Place by the Sacrifice of Jesus.. let us draw near", Hebert says that this is an invitation to liturgical action. It is an invitation:

"to join in the sacrificial worship with the ascended Christ. Not to immolate Christ over again.. nor to offer some sacrifice additional to His sacrifice, for that would be to bring back the Levitical multiplication of sacrifices; but to join as participants in the One Sacrifice which the Lord makes at the heavenly altar." (2)

He goes on to show that the eucharistic rite follows the pattern of a sacrificial action. The sacrifice of Christ is one, and because people at all times and places participate in it, it unites them in one family. The sacrificial form is apparent in the liturgy of the sacrament, which consists of Offertory, Consecration, and Communion. Herein we see the offering of self in the gifts laid upon the altar; the offering of the sacrifice of Christ as, in the consecration, the elements become His Body and all are lifted to the Heavenly Altar; the transformation of the lives of the worshippers in the Communion. This is the "eucharistic sacrifice".

1. Op. Cit. pp.235-236

2. Ibid. p. 24d.

But when he comes to describe in what sense we offer Christ and are offered, Hebert is in difficulties. The first stage of the argument is that the eucharistic sacrifice is congruous with Justification by faith - we are justified by the sacrifice of Christ, apprehended by faith - there can be no meritorious act on our part. Next he says, the eucharistic sacrifice is like salvation basically "simple":

"In concrete language it comes to this: There is someone for whom I ought to pray.. But on what grounds can I expect that God will receive my prayer?... if I prayed better than I do, could I expect that God would receive my prayer on the grounds of its devoutness, earnestness, and sincerity? But no; I take it to the altar, and offer it at the Eucharist. There I hold up before God Christ's own sacrifice, Christ's love for that person, Christ's death for his salvation." (1)

This all means that I don't merely bring to God my knowledge of Christ's love, but that love itself. There can therefore be no merit for me since I am pleading Christ's sacrificial love. But this introduces a paradox. To uphold Justification by Faith seems to necessitate "offering" Christ! There is a distinction here which must be kept in mind. At the offertory we offer ourselves, at the consecration we plead, present, offer Christ's sacrifice. Hebert rejects the idea that the only offering we can make is that of praise and thanksgiving. He argues that we can offer only our insufficiency and need. To be saved we have to offer Christ's sacrifice. So it is maintained that we are saved by God alone and justification by faith is upheld.

When we examine this presentation of Hebert's, we find exactly the same weaknesses as in Hicks. There is no really convincing reason why the eucharist itself should be regarded as a sacrifice. In the end we find Hebert simply making affirmations, and his "simple" description requires paradoxes :

"We perform an action; it is a sacrificial action, and the sacrifice that we offer is Christ's own sacrifice; yet in the reality signified by the sign, it is He who here offers His own sacrifice. The Sacrament is not a human commemoration of His passion.....; it is of the nature of a sacrament that the thing signified is present in the sign, and in the Eucharist the action that we perform is the offering of Christ's sacrifice." 2.

There are at least two strong criticisms which must be levelled at this eucharistic doctrine:

1. In what sense is the eucharistic sacrifice Christ's sacrifice? It

1. Ibid p. 249

2. Ibid p. 250

would be unfair to accuse Hebert of suggesting that God is still unreconciled and that further atoning sacrifice is necessary - he explicitly rejects this. The explanation is derived from Hebrews 4-7. Christ continues to offer His sacrifice at the Heavenly altar and the eucharist is joined to that action and so becomes itself Christ's sacrifice. This interpretation depends on the above description of sacrifice which denies that sacrifice is limited to the death of the victim. This is probably correct, but can it be true that sacrifice extends into Christ's glorified existence? Surely we must say that any continuing sacrifice is of a different kind to the atoning sacrifice completed on Calvary. Aulen¹ takes up this argument as follows: He quotes Hicks, Hebert, Dix, and the Roman Catholic, Pascher, as saying, in similar words "the sacrifice of Christ is a continuous sacrifice. He is still obedient as he sits on the right hand of God."² and then, Biblically, rejects the idea.

First of all the Resurrection and Ascension are related to Christ's glorification - the prize of his victory won in His sacrifice which reached its climax on the Cross. "The Ascension is the coronation of Christ". How then can the Resurrection and Ascension belong to sacrifice? Secondly, the ascension means the return of Christ to God as the High Priest of men, but not in the sense of his continued offering of himself. From the very book Hebrews on which the above theologians base their theory, Aulen shows that Christ's sacrifice was completed on Calvary. Christ did not need to offer repeated sacrifices, like the priests of the old covenant, for he "did this once for all when he offered up himself"³. Aulen interprets Heb 8³ which says that the function of a High Priest is to "offer gifts and sacrifices, hence it is necessary for this priest to have something to offer", as meaning that by right of his sacrifice once offered, and His exaltation, Christ "offers" to God our praises and prayers on our behalf. But in thus calling Christ's intercession for us and "offering", we must note the two distinct meanings of "sacrifice" being employed. There is a continuous sacrifice and a completed, single "atoning sacrifice".

1. "Eucharist and Sacrifice" pp.146-154

2. Ibid. p. 149

3. Heb. 7:27

"The intercessory sacrifice rests on the foundation of the sacrifice of reconciliation."¹ What we may say then is that Christ took his sacrifice up into heaven at the exaltation and that it continues to be valid and relevant, but we may not speak of a continuing atoning sacrifice.

It thus emerges that Hicks and Hebert have emphasised an aspect of the ancient sacrificial ritual different to that emphasized by Aulén. Hicks found that death was an early part of the sacrifice, and that the later parts such as the offering of life, the atonement, and communion were most significant. In this way it appeared that we may still participate in Christ's sacrifice - the "death part" having been completed. But for Aulén the sacrifice itself entails less. It begins in the incarnation and reaches its climax on the Cross. What follows in the form of benefits is not strictly part of the sacrifice.

Aulén seems to have the better part of this argument. In the ancient sacrificial ritual surely the sacrifice itself was not identical with the communion made possible by the sacrifice? So surely Christ's sacrifice is complete, although it is eternally valid and we may continue in communion with God because of it?

The "eucharistic sacrifice" then can be no more than a representation or anamnesis - in the full sense of that term - of Christ's once-for-all sacrifice. Is it then not efficaciously atoning?, would be the query of these Anglicans.

A question best answers this: "is it necessary that it be efficacious in atonement if reconciliation is long ago achieved? " what we are concerned to do in the eucharist is to set forth and proclaim that oblation "once offered".

2) We may, now, further question the notion that in the sacrament we "offer Christ" or "offer His sacrifice". It is one of Hebert's paradox's that although Christ offers Himself, we also offer Him or His sacrifice. Here we are following again Aulén's argument.² The position held by Hebert is that Christ's sacrifice cannot be identified with his death. It includes Incarnation, death, Resurrection, and Ascension and is continued at the heavenly altar. Because it continues in heaven it continues also at earthly altars. But a leap has been made -

1. Aulén Op.Cit. p. 153

2. Ibid pp 186-199

it is now the church which offers Christ or His sacrifice, and this idea has been introduced by virtue of a vague identification of the Church with Christ. The final point of the argument is that "the act of the Church is Christ's own act, the Church's offering is Christ's own offering, an offering of Christ or His sacrifice".¹ Aulén has here touched upon the weakness of the position. There can never really be any identification of the Church with Christ, and the Church is never in a position to offer either Christ or His sacrifice.

It is possible however to make an even more penetrating criticism of the idea that we "offer Christ", by asking what the religious significance of such a claim might be? Hebert as we saw above attempted to explain that we offered Christ in that we could pray confidently on the basis of His sacrifice. But as Aulén shows, all that this really does, is to describe vividly how we pray "in the name of Jesus". "What happens is that we take refuge in, hold fast to, include ourselves and participate in the sacrifice of Christ".² This can never mean that we "offer His sacrifice". Aulén claims that we must say that His sacrifice is present in the eucharist but we can say no more. In the sacrament we rely on the sacrifice of Christ which he presents and makes relevant to us. It is not really a question of offering Christ or His sacrifice at all - that would be to equate "plead", "present", with "sacrifice". If the distinction between "offering Christ" and "offering Christ's sacrifice", is insisted upon, it must be asked: "In what sense would the act of offering Christ's sacrifice" itself be a sacrifice? To this the answer must be "In no sense at all", so that this term also does not seem to meet the requirements of theologians like Hicks and Hebert.

Finally, Aulén says that there is no N.T. warrant for the term. There:

"The sacrifice of Christ is entirely and solely his sacrifice - and God's. This is the one essential point: God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. Through this sacrifice perfected once for all he abolished all man-made sacrifices. A formula such as this that we "offer Christ" turns the biblical kerygma upside down" ³.

We must now look briefly at the two modern Roman Catholic theologians Masure⁴ and one M.E. Boismard.⁵ Here as one might expect, one finds a concentration on transubstantiation.

1. Ibid p. 186

2. Ibid p. 37

3. Ibid p. 199

4. In "The Christian Sacrifice"

5. "The Eucharist According to St Paul" in "The Eucharist in the N.T." Ed. J. Delorme.

It is by transubstantiation that the Church is able to make of the eucharist a sacrifice:

"In the sacrifice of the Mass the Church takes bread and wine and first seems to use them as the sign or symbol of her adoration. But.... these have no power to please God. But when God changes them into the Body and Blood of the sole Victim acceptable to Him, then, by an inconceivably triumphant transformation our Sacrifice receives the perfect proof of the divine appeasement. For the Church, by means of this transubstantiation, is put in possession of the one efficacious victim, as the victim of her sacrifice..... " (1)

Only one point need be made here. If it is God who by transubstantiation makes the eucharist a sacrifice, then it is not our sacrifice at all, and seeing that there is no need of a repetition of Christ's sacrifice, we must conclude that the eucharist can be properly described only as an anamnesis of Christ's sacrifice.

^{2.} Boismard uses arguments very similar to those of Hicks and Hebert. Christ's death is indeed sacrificial - the blood of Christ ratifies the new covenant. The sacrificial character of the eucharist, he says, is presupposed by Paul's argument in 1 Cor 10 14-21, where he forbids Christians to partake of meat sacrificed on pagan altars. This is because of the communion with the deity which is associated with such eating. Thus:

"The table of the Lord is nothing else than the altar on which a victim.. is sacrificed.. So all St. Paul's reasoning supposes that for him, the consecrated bread and wine are the body and blood of Christ immolated in sacrifice to God".

He denies of course that this means that Christ is re-immolated. Rather it means that the sacrifice of the Cross "perpetuates itself" so that each believer can "communicate in the body and blood of Christ immolated once and for all..... "

Clearly, inspite of the increase in understanding on the subject of sacrifice at the eucharist claimed in the Lund report, there remains a thorough going difference in conception which is not going to be easily overcome.

1. Masure. Op. Cit. p. 14.

2. Op. Cit. pp. 134.f

It is always a relatively simple matter to point out loopholes in arguments, and much more difficult to be positive. What is obvious is that there is in fact a definite association of sacrifice with the eucharistic cult which should be recognised everywhere. It would seem, on the basis of the foregoing arguments that the attempt to make of the rite a sacrifice, in which we offer Christ, is a futile one, and that the essence of the association must be one of anamnesis. Clearly what has to be avoided is an interpretation which makes of the eucharist a simple commemoration of Calvary. There is more to it than this. The eternal validity of Christ's sacrifice is represented at the eucharist and its benefits are really available for us, now, to appropriate. Aulén expounds such a view claiming that it is Lutheran. The real presence of Christ, he maintains, is inseparable from the real presence of His Sacrifice. The one means the other. This view is most acceptable and accords with what was said in the last section on the real presence.

One cannot speak of the sacrifice of Christ without introducing the atonement. However we conceive of the atonement's efficacy as "for all men", we cannot deny that somehow the sacrifice of Christ makes personal atonement possible for anyone. It is that atonement which is shown forth in the eucharist in terms of sacrifice, and there made available to faith. Nevertheless the type of atonement theory held seems to lead to certain attitudes towards sacrifice at the eucharist. For those who hold a substitutionary view of atonement, in which Christ suffered on our behalf, thus relieving us of the burden of suffering, there is the danger that the sacrifice of Calvary is so final that it has little present relevance. Sacrifice means suffering unto death and this has been done. The eucharist is then a memorial of it as a past event, and its action centres on the communion, in which the benefits of the sacrifice are received. A moral or exemplary theory, on the other hand, would lead to the idea that the eucharistic sacrifice consists in the responsive sacrifice of will, service, praise or oblation. Thus Christ's sacrifice is minimised or neglected.

We cannot do better than return to Hebert's outline of the prophetic ideal of sacrifice. Its main purpose is atonement. It is concerned with man's personal relation to God - with loyalty, love, obedience. We have to offer ourselves - the sacrifice of

"a broken and a contrite heart". We can suitably introduce at this point A. Hodges idea of the atonement. Christ's atonement is "for us" in two senses. First, in that he overcomes sin - through obedience to the Father - as we could never do. He, by his victory over sin, initiates our atonement. Secondly, in the sense that He, because of his Resurrection and Ascension, is available for us to make our own, so, as we partake of Him and become "in Christ", we are enabled to be reconciled with God.

With these factors in mind the eucharist becomes a real representation of Christ's sacrifice. But it is so for faith alone. It signifies personal reconciliation with God made possible solely in virtue of Christ's sacrifice. It issues in our own responsive sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise, and in our oblation before God. In the Communion is symbolised our atonement with God - the meal of fellowship.

When we look at an interpretation such as this and compare the views we have been examining, it becomes apparent that the differences, while important, do not seem to demand that those holding the various theories may not join together in common services. If one feels that the sacrifice of Christ is continually offered, so making of the rite a sacrifice, and another that it is so present and real and relevant that it is at least central to the rite, even though this does not constitute the rite in itself a sacrifice, is this cause enough for division?

There are many aspects of the problem which have not been and cannot be adequately dealt with here, for example, the relation of sacrifice to the atonement has been summarily described and the idea of anamnesis has only been mentioned. The aim has been to describe the main division on the question. This main division will be seen to be important as we proceed to examine the question of validity of Orders of Ministers, for the view that the eucharist is a sacrifice is closely related to certain views of the Priesthood. It is here that the doctrinal problems, in themselves probably surmountable, bear directly on a most crucial problem.

SECTION 11INTERCOMMUNION, VALIDITY AND WORSHIP.CHAPTER 5INTERCOMMUNION AND DOCTRINE

During the 19th Century services of Holy Communion were already being held at Missionary Conferences. At these services members of different communions communicated together and were thrilled by the experience. In this century it has become more difficult to hold such services. Ecumenical gatherings have increased in number and have become more representative of Churches - less a gathering of individuals - so that many questions have arisen in connection with Intercommunion, which are of sufficient importance to disallow "Conference eucharists". Nevertheless at many gatherings the problem has been partly overcome by the holding of "open Communion" services in "host-Churches" to which the conference delegates have all been invited. Such services were held at the Amsterdam Assembly of the W.C.C. in 1948 and at the Faith and Order Conference at Lund in 1952. That there are difficulties, however, is shown by the fact that many were prevented either by conscience or the regulations of their Churches from participating in those services. There are numerous grounds upon which certain of the Churches and some individuals feel quite unable to share eucharistic worship with members of Churches holding different doctrines of the eucharist. It thus emerges that there is a distinct divergence of opinion as to whether intercommunion is permissible before total union has been achieved. Before entering upon the discussion of these two groups of opinion we must briefly examine the terminology used in this connection, which can be very confusing in its variety.

This terminology has been conveniently defined in the report of the Lund Conference.

1. Full Communion: Members of separate Churches may freely participate in, and the ministers officiate at, each others sacraments.

(As in confessional 'families')

2. Intercelebration and Intercommunions: Where members of Churches of different confessional families are permitted, by arrangement, to communicate, and the ministers to officiate, at each others altars.
3. Intercommunion: Members are allowed to communicate at the altars of both churches. This usually, but not necessarily, involves intercelebration.
4. Open Communion : Where any Christian qualified to communicate in his own Church may communicate
5. Mutual Open Communion : Where the above arrangement exists between specific Churches, without the necessity of intercelebration.
6. Limited Open Communion : Where open communion applies in emergencies or special circumstances.
7. Closed Communion : Where only the members of a Church are permitted to communicate at its celebrations.

Clearly the aim of the Ecumenical Movement must be the full communion of all the Churches in the One Great Church, so that any of the above arrangements are of necessity only temporary expedients. The profusion of terms outlined above is an indication of the views of the various groups regarding what is generally termed "Intercommunion", in the loose sense of any participation of members of different communions in a single celebration of the eucharist. Unless otherwise indicated this is the sense in which the term will be used below.

Clearly the problem arises because there are numbers of Churches within the One Church of Christ. For some Churches such as the Eastern Orthodox which make exclusive claims and do not recognise the diversity of Churches, the problems of intercommunion do not arise. But for those who do, the extent to which their members may communicate at each others altars is indeed a complete problem, and this problem has been accentuated in recent times by the many ecumenical meetings where the fellowship has had to be broken at the point at which it should have been deepest, namely, at the Lords Table.

The first question which arises is therefore, "Can any sharing of the Lord's Table precede full organic union?" As one expects, there are those who answer negatively and those who answer in the affirmative. The first group comprises such Churches as the Eastern Orthodox, the Roman Catholics, the Anglo Catholic faction in the Church of England

and some Lutherans. Usually they will allow certain clearly defined exceptions, but they consider that any wide-spread practice of Intercommunion in any form implies a disregard for the truth and disrespect toward the sacrament. The practice, on this view, covers over lightly the very serious divisions which exist. This view is rooted in the conviction that the sacrament is essentially an act of the Church and as it stresses the corporate nature and unity of the Church, the conclusion follows that it is anomalous for separated bodies to participate in a joint celebration. Only when schism is quite healed is it possible for all to share the "sacrament of unity". The sacrament becomes the seal of unity in doctrine and order. For most Anglicans the question of orders is important and for many Lutherans, who have traditionally stressed agreement in doctrine, unity at that point is essential.

Difficulties arise for this view in that it is hard to define exactly the degree of corporate union or doctrine required to justify intercommunion. It can be pointed out that the Anglican Church comprises numerous autonomous bodies which are in full communion with each other. In addition the Anglican Communion has entered into intercommunion agreements with such denominationally distinct Churches as the Old Catholic Churches, the Polish National Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden. Furthermore within the Anglican Communion is to be found a wide divergence of interpretation of the eucharist so that agreement in doctrine does not seem to be as important to them as such questions as the validity of the orders of the ministry.

Those who oppose the "Catholic" view- most Reformed Churches, Congregationalists, Baptists, Methodists, some Lutherans and Evangelical Anglicans - consider that shared communion services can be instrumental in the attainment of unity. Such services are seen as an expression of that spiritual unity in Christ which is already expressed in the mutual recognition of the Churches as being within the Church of Christ, which is implied by their membership in the W.C.C. Many, especially Lutherans, regard the Lord's Supper as a means of forgiveness and therefore consider that we should meet at the Lord's Table to seek forgiveness for the sin of our division.

There is then on this side, a general willingness to acknowledge that there is a fundamental agreement wide enough to allow of intercommunion in the sense of open communion. But it must be asked of this group too, where they would draw the line, for clearly there must be some limits to such "open communion".

We must examine now the chief grounds on which intercommunion before reunion has been rejected, namely those of differences in sacramental doctrine, validity of ministerial orders and forms of worship. In the remainder of this chapter doctrinal barriers will be discussed.

The question arises here whether it is possible for Churches which interpret the eucharist quite differently to agree to practice intercommunion. It is held by those who claim that it is not possible, that such common participation could only be artificial and not a real koinonia. It would be irreverent and a dishonest compromise.

Probably the most important doctrinal differences occur in the questions of the real presence and sacrifice. These have already been dealt with in the foregoing chapters and the view expounded there was that differences at these points need not prevent intercommunion. Lutherans in particular, however, have always regarded doctrinal unity as extremely important and this is apparant in the discussions between the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, which have been in progress for some years. Strict Lutherans feel that they cannot communicate where some do not believe that Christ is present "in, with and under" the elements. Reformed Churches feel that their belief that the body and blood of Christ are 'truly' present in the sacrament is common ground and sufficient for intercommunion. On the basis of what was said in Chapter 3 it may be said at this point that inasmuch as the real presence is acknowledged generally to be essentially spiritual and in that sense real, we may not reject intercommunion because of differences in conception which are, after all is said, mere human reflections.

A similar conclusion is reached on the other central problem - that of the eucharistic sacrifice. Anglo Catholics and Orthodox Churchmen, while acknowledging that the eucharist is for Protestants a potent means of grace, nevertheless feel that it means something very different

to them in that it is not itself a sacrifice. But this difference cannot be overstressed for both groups regard the sacrament as a memorial of Christ's one sacrifice, both recognise in it the **element** of self-oblation and both believe that the benefits of Christ's atoning and eternally valid sacrifice are available for us at the eucharist, by His presence there. It seems then unnecessary to make a view which is in fact not very clear in its meaning, viz. that the sacrament is a sacrifice of Christ, the ground for rejecting intercommunion.

Differences on sacramental doctrine itself then do not seem to provide grounds against intercommunion. Furthermore, questions arising from the nature of Baptism and its efficacy, seem to count against "fencing of Tables" on grounds other than that those excluded are unbaptised or have deliberately rejected their Baptism. It is clear that no Church today is complete in itself and entitled to make exclusive claims (the Roman Church would of course disagree here). Therefore those baptised in any one of them are as much Christians as those Baptised in any other. T.F. Torrance in his article in "Intercommunion"¹ argues that in the New Testament the language of Baptism is interchangeable with that of the eucharist. This is because both are concerned with the same thing - our incorporation into Christ. The difference is that "whereas Baptism is all inclusive and final, the eucharist is the continual renewal of that incorporation in time."² On a later page he says; "through continual communion in the body and blood of the Saviour, the Church finds that Baptism is given its complement and recurring confirmation."³ But if this is so it is clear that for any who hold a high doctrine of Baptism, to hold Baptism apart from the eucharist is a tragic inconsistency. It "amounts either to a denial of the transcendent reality of holy Baptism or to attempted schism within the Body of Christ."⁴ This seems to be a penetrating argument and one which is difficult to deny.

We find, however, that the other grounds for rejecting intercommunion tend to assume a greater significance; we must therefore proceed to examine them.

1. "Eschatology and the Eucharist" pp. 303-349
 2. Ibid. p. 305
 3. Ibid. p. 316
 4. Ibid. p. 339

CHAPTER 6.

THE VALIDITY OF THE EUCHARIST.

The relation of the validity of the orders of the minister celebrating, to the validity of a sacrament is probably the most difficult problem which arises for intercommunion. In fact one is here immediately led into the discussion of the nature of the Church and the relation to it of the ministry.

In brief the problem is that certain Churches claim that their ministries are "valid" and therefore that their sacraments are "valid", whilst those of certain other churches are not. The claim is made by those for whom "Apostolic Succession" is of great consequence, namely 1. Anglo-Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Old Catholics, and Roman Catholics. Other Churches, notably the Church of Sweden, as well as Lutherans, can make excellent claims to being within the Apostolic Succession but do not attach much importance to the matter.

We have to examine the meaning of "valid" as it has been used above. O.C. Quick has made certain distinctions which it is necessary to bear in mind. 2.

(a) When a particular celebration of the sacrament is said to be invalid it is not necessarily considered unefficacious as a means of grace to those who participate in it.

(b) Validity may be distinguished from "regularity" or "canonicity".

A sacrament may be performed within the bounds of scriptural requirements yet not fulfil the requirements of Church regulations. This distinction is often blurred. Thus a regulation of the Orthodox and other Catholic communions is that the validity of any celebration of the eucharist depends upon the validity of the minister's ordination. The validity of the sacrament of Holy Orders becomes, therefore, a condition of the validity of the other sacraments, which means that validity has come to be equated with canonicity.

1. The Roman Catholics of course do not enter the arguments but would in fact claim that validity is dependent upon ordination within the Apostolic Succession.

2. (a) Appendix 1 of "Faith and Order: Edinburgh 1937" p. 324

(b) "The Christian Sacraments" pp. 123-159

These distinctions make possible a clearer formulation of the problem, which may be stated as follows: There are two separate questions to be discerned : 1. Does the validity of a sacrament involve the validity of the ordination of the celebrant?
2. If so what is meant by "valid orders" ?

In answering the first question it is necessary to clarify Quick's distinction between validity and efficacy as the first stage of defining the validity of a sacrament. He outlines what he calls the Catholic conception of sacraments. A sacrament is that which conveys God's goodness or grace through some physical means. Thus if we perceive it right, a beautiful sunset or landscape, an act of heroism or love, can be sacramental. These may be called "natural" sacraments. On the other hand certain specific actions and objects may be divinely appointed sacramental, as for example the water of Baptism and the Bread and Wine of the eucharist. These, then, become "ritual" sacraments and are guaranteed by their appointment as means of grace. Of "natural" sacraments it is nonsensical to speak of their validity, but not so "ritual" sacraments. Both, however, may be equally efficacious. Thus the concept of validity involves the idea of "appointedness", and "validity" in this sense is qualified by: 1. The acknowledgement that a "valid" sacrament does not automatically confer grace - faith is necessary;
2. the recognition that "invalid" sacraments can be effective means of grace.

Quick continues by discussing the nature of the Church in the light of this notion of validity. The church is sacramental in the ritual sense and must bear certain outward marks. While Rome claims to be the one valid Church, however, it allows the possibility of schism. This it can do only by adopting a certain theory regarding the sacraments.

According to Cyprian the sacraments were valid only when performed by a validly (apparently in sense of canonical) ordained priest within the Church; the authorisation of the Church was necessary. This made schism impossible. Augustine however separated validity of the sacraments from authorisation by the Church, by holding that even outside the Church a validly ordained priest could perform valid sacraments. This view can be maintained only if it can be said that the unity of the Church depends on the universal recognition of valid orders and not that the validity of orders depends upon their universal recognition by the

one Church. Quick criticises the view by pointing out that the sacrament of Holy Orders must include an element of authorisation by the Church, or at least, by God through the Church. This leads Quick to suggest that so long as there is schism all orders are partly impaired and mutual recognition of each others is necessary when Churches come together.

But in all this, he appears to have begged the first question posed above, by simply assuming that a valid sacrament requires to be celebrated by a valid (in the sense of canonical) minister, which enables him to proceed directly to a discussion of the validity of orders.

We must therefore return to the first question and also refer further to the second distinction drawn above - that between validity and canonicity. It is not **at** all clear from scripture, which is of course the only source in such a matter, that Christ intended that the sacrament should **be** performed by a particular person i.e. that he appointed that as part of the sacrament. Furthermore, we may add that because the essence of the sacrament (of the eucharist) is that it represents Christ's sacrifice and presence, being in fact concerned with the personal relationship between the worshipper and Christ, and because He is the Host at His Table, the one performing the function of minister is relatively unimportant. Dr. Torrance has expressed this well:

"the Church through its ministry can no more exercise its authority over the Eucharist than Joseph could exercise his authority over the Virgin Birth. As Joseph could only stand aside at the miracle of the Incarnation, so the ministry of the Church can only stand aside even in the Eucharist where it is ordained to serve. The Church can never manage the Eucharist or exercise any lordship over it. At the Last Supper Jesus took pains to make that clear, enacting a vivid parable before the disciples in washing their feet, that they might learn to forswear all lordship".¹

It would seem that the validity of the sacrament, then, does not depend upon the validity of the minister - in fact cannot. But what is meant by "validity of the sacrament" here? It must mean more than efficacy if the distinction between validity and efficacy is to hold. The term validity must mean "in accordance with its appointment," but the difficulty arises that it is a matter of interpretation what counts as "in accordance" with the will of Christ. It is clear that anyone properly intending to perform the sacrament does so in the light of what he feels is the right interpretation, but as there can be no guarantee about that/
rightness.

1. Op.Cit.,p.338

there can be no guarantee of validity. Then too the sacrament can clearly be performed only within the Church, but the Church itself cannot be exactly defined. One has to conclude that any sacraments performed by a group claiming allegiance to the One Church of Christ, and which display the unarguable aspects of their appointment, in the eucharist: the breaking and eating of bread and the pouring and drinking of wine, placed in the context of the Last Supper, must be recognised as at least a partly valid sacrament - as valid probably, as any other. The question of degrees of validity inevitably arises when such a view is stated, and seems undeniable. This need not give undue concern for it is impossible to establish what true validity would require. To this can be added that as long as the sacraments so celebrated are efficacious as means of grace (where degrees of efficacy do not arise, for efficacy is dependent on faith's acceptance of the gift) validity fades in importance.

If then validity is not equivalent to canonicity the question of the validity of orders does not arise. But the question does arise: "What is the significance of canonicity"? It is here that the problem of the unity of the Church is most acute. When Churches such as those of the Catholic group say that the sacraments of other Churches are not valid they are really questioning their canonicity. It is at this point that the Apostolic Succession becomes important. The usual claims associated with this concept are that the ministry is of the esse, as against the bene esse, of the Church and that the Episcopacy as it appears in the Catholic Churches is the one "valid" (appointed) ministry. Only sacraments performed by Churches related directly to that line of Bishops are canonical.

Now it is evident that the question of a sacrament's canonicity is not insignificant. Christ did will that His Church be one in Him, so that standards of unity are necessary. But the exclusive claims made on behalf of the Apostolic Succession are intolerable to many Christians who would claim a "valid" (appointed) succession of doctrine and practice through such bodies as Presbyteries, which can make good claim to represent a part of the true Church. They would lay stress on the authorisation of the ministry by Christ through His Body the Church.

Most Protestant Churches also stress that a 'canonical' sacrament must be performed by a duly ordained minister.

There appears to be a deadlock, then, at this point, the crucial point being whether or not those ministries within the Apostolic Succession are alone canonical. All that need be said here is that this is an important problem for the Faith and Order Movement as it strives for the visible unity of the Church, but it should not be seen as a question of the "validity" of sacraments. Thus too, as regards intercommunion, the problem of canonicity does not seem to create an insurmountable barrier to the sharing of the Lords Supper.

CHAPTER 7.

EUCCHARIST AND WORSHIP.

It is necessary to say something about worship as it affects intercommunion. There are a number of important questions which arise in this connection. The subject of worship has become increasingly important in recent years, as a result of the so-called Liturgical Movement which is being felt by all branches of the Church. It is easy to regard the question of worship as a merely practical issue involving the personal prejudices and preferences of the different groups. But the problem is much deeper rooted than that.

Over the centuries two types of Christian worship have emerged. On the one hand Catholic worship tends to be Godward, and on the other Protestant/Evangelical Worship tends to be manward. These are generalisations and as such suspect, but they do point to a partial truth. While Catholic type worship has always been centred on the eucharistic action, Evangelical worship has centred on the **hearing** of the preached word.

There is a rediscovery today, however, of the truth that the **essence** of worship is a Godward action of praise and adoration by men. In Christian worship there must be added to this the definite element of reception - of the gift of Christ's redemption. It thus emerges that the eucharist which is verbum visibile, in every way must be the centre of Christian worship, where the eucharistic service of worship does not omit an emphasis on the preached word.

With this brief outline in mind, what of intercommunion? It is immediately apparant, speaking practically, that there are grave difficulties. In some Churches worship does approximate to that outlined above. In others, however, the eucharist is a special service celebrated infrequently, and apart from the service of the Word. The fact is well known that people grow accustomed to certain forms and therefore find difficulty in worshipping in "foreign" ways, But it is to be hoped that the influence of the liturgical Movement will in due course be felt in most Churches, thus widening the area of recognition that

Christian worship must be Godward and Manward - centered on the eucharist.

The problem, though, is not merely one of worship in general. If worship is to be eucharist - centred then the doctrinal issues discussed above further complicate the matter. The liturgical forms variously used differ widely not only in outward appearance, but also in the theology which necessarily lies behind them. In some the idea that a sacrifice is taking place is made clear, in others the emphasis is on the anamnesis of the sacrifice and the Communion. In yet others the emphasis is only on communion with virtual disregard of sacrifice. Similar statements can be made concerning the real presence. The difficulty is further accentuated by the fact that the doctrines of some churches are embedded in set liturgies the alteration of which would require complicated constitutional or canonical processes. Thus the Eastern Orthodox liturgy is in a sense regarded as being the sum of Christian existence. The whole life of the Eastern Orthodox Churchman revolves around the liturgical worship which works itself out in daily, weekly and annual cycles, to which daily living is closely related.

The complexity of the situation is therefore enormous, yet it is not as intractable as first appears if the doctrinal conclusions reached above are allowed to carry due weight. Unfortunately the sphere of worship is that which necessarily involves the people and not simply theologians. It would be impossible in most churches for academic decisions to be put into practice by uncomplicated legislation. Furthermore the task of educating people in tolerance of other rites, as well as in the fundamentals of Christian worship and its liturgical expression, is laborious and slow. Nevertheless the situation need not be regarded as hopeless. Having suggested that neither doctrinal nor constitutional (validity) barriers are really significant enough to preclude the practice of intercommunion, this becomes the obvious means of education. It is only as Christians share each other's worship that they can come to understand the differences that separate them. It is only ⁱⁿ ^{way} ~~this~~ that they can come to recognise that those who worship differently are brothers in Christ, and so learn tolerance.

It would be futile to suggest that a single form of worship could ever be the goal of Christian unity, we are not all identical in temperament or for that matter in our intellectual or spiritual needs.

There will always be different approaches to worship so far as ceremonial and ritual are concerned. What must be certain, however, is that worship in a Christian Church is truly Christian-centred on the eucharistic action.

Obviously much more could be said about worship, but the intention here has been to draw those conclusions which seem to follow from the earlier doctrinal discussion.

If the Churches are ever to be drawn together into one fellowship - one visible Body of Christ, there must evidently be a great deal of study and research into doctrinal truth. It is here that the Ecumenical Movement has been the stimulus of nearly all the doctrinal research of this century. No work on doctrine can be produced today without reference to the theology of unity.

The doctrine of the eucharist is one field of theology which has far reaching significance. It is at the heart of Christian existence, being both the expression in worship of that existence, while also being instrumental in its creation - it is one instrument of redemption the verbum visibile. Undoubtedly the doctrine of the Church takes pride of place in terms of importance for ecumenism, but eucharistic doctrine constitutes a not unappreciable segment of Church doctrine. If the time should come when agreement is reached on eucharistic doctrine it is certain that agreement on the nature of the Church will come soon after if not simultaneously. The most puzzling problem at present concerning both appears to be that of the ministry. Yet even here, as has been argued, it is research into the meaning of the eucharist which should lead the way out of the present maze. Only continued study combined with sincerity and tolerance, and driven by Christ's will that "that they may be one" can lead to success.

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