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ARCHIVES

## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### "HIS ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON"

In the *Journal of Biblical Literature* (December, 1953) Dr. Dale Moody of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary defends the RSV translation of "His only Son" (instead of "His only-begotten Son" in the AV) in John 3:16 as the only correct one of the Greek word *monogenēs*. By this translation the scholars of the RSV, according to some critics, have sought "to set aside the virgin birth of Jesus" or also "to water down" the Bible doctrine of the deity of Christ. This change, however, was prompted not by theological interest, but by the plain demands of linguistic study. The adjective *monogenēs* is derived from *monon* (single) and *genos* (kind). Already Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (1886) says that the word means "single of its kind," "only," and that in the Johannine writings it denotes "the only Son of God." Ferdinand Kattenbusch in his article in *A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels* (1908) takes the position of J. H. Heinrich Schmidt, who points out that "the word *gignesthai* has in general usage entirely lost the early sexual sense of the root *gen* and that *monogenēs* is merely a fuller form of *monos*" (Vol. II, p. 281). Walter Bauer's *Dictionary of the New Testament* (1920, 1928, 1937, 1949—52), the fourth edition of which is being translated into English, supports the conclusions of Schmidt and Kattenbusch. Moulton and Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* (1930), add illustrations from the Papyri and other non-literary sources to support the conclusion that *monogenēs* means "one of a kind," "only," "unique," and not "only-begotten," which would be *monogennētos* (pp. 416 f.). The revised edition of Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (1940), defines *monogenēs* as meaning "the only member of a kin or kind," hence "only," "single," "unique," and the possibility of "only-begotten" is not even mentioned (Vol. II, p. 1144). The very thorough study of *monogenēs*, a doctoral dissertation by F. M. Warden, "*Monogenēs*" in the *Johannine Literature* (1938; deposited in the Library of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.), demonstrates beyond reasonable doubt that *monogenēs* means "uniqueness of being rather than any remarkableness of manner of coming into being or yet uniqueness resulting from any manner of coming into being" (pp. 35 f.).

To prove his contention, Dr. Moody supplies much and varied evidence, of which we can here quote only a very small part. Thus the

Old Latin MS, the *Codex Vercellensis* (a), supposedly written by Eusebius, bishop of Vercelli, in A.D. 365, translates *monogenēs* in John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18 with *unicus* (only) and not with *unigenitus* (only begotten). This translation was changed by Jerome, ca. A.D. 385, out of interest for ecclesiastical dogma. Linguistic study did not force the change, for he left *unicus* (only) as the translation of *monogenēs* in Luke 7:12; 8:42; 9:38, where no theological question was involved. Again, Epiphanius, bishop of Constantia (Salamis) in Cyprus, in A.D. 374, published a work, called *Ancoratus* (the Anchored One), at the close of which he gives two creeds as a summary of the orthodox teaching of the Trinity. In the second creed there occurs the significant phrase *gennēthenta ek theou patros monogenē* (the only-begotten Son of God the Father). There, in the accusative case, it takes both the word *gennēthenta* (begotten) and the word *monogenē* (only) to say "only-begotten," because *monogenēs* there, as in the New Testament, has to do with uniqueness rather than conception. The participle *gennētheis* means "begotten," but it does not appear with *monogenēs* in the New Testament. The real debate in the fourth century raged around the words *gennēthenta ou poiēthenta* (begotten, not made), and zeal for this orthodox formula led to confusion in Jerome's translation of the word *monogenēs*. From the Latin Vulgate translation the expression "only-begotten" got into the King James Version of 1611, the English Revised Version of 1881, and other translations until the error was removed in *The Twentieth Century New Testament* (1898). It is remarkable that William Tyndale in his *The Newe Testament* of 1534 translated the *monogenēs* in John 3:16 with "his only sonne." In passing it may be said that in Luke 7:12; 8:42; and 9:38 also the Authorized Version translates *monogenēs* with "only." In Nain Jesus raised the "only son of his mother." He raised the "one only daughter" of Jairus. After His transfiguration Christ healed a man's "only child" that was tormented by an unclean spirit. In closing, Dr. Moody writes: "Jesus is conceived by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18), but the New Testament never uses *gennaō* to designate the relationship between the Father and the Son at the *beginning of the life* of Jesus" (p.219).

Such as are more deeply interested in the subject may read the entire article, which supplies more proof for the correctness of the translation of *monogenēs* with "only" than can be considered here. The expression "only-begotten" has become a part of the Christian creeds. The *Logos* is both God's *only* Son and God's *only-begotten* Son. The fact of the *generation* of the Son by the Father is anchored

in the very concept of His Sonship, just as the fact of the Holy Spirit's *spiration* by the Father and the Son is anchored in the concept of *Pneuma*, or Spirit. The RSV has faulty translations, which should be corrected, but when it renders the *monogenēs* of John 3:16 with "only," it manifestly expresses the very thought which the term here and in other Scripture passages means to convey.

J. T. MUELLER

#### CONFESSION OF A SCIENTIST

"I no longer believe that the approach of size-up-and-solve will produce a formula explaining all natural phenomena. . . . As many scientists are beginning to recognize, the more knowledge we accumulate, the clearer it becomes that science is unlikely ever to lead us to an orderly arrangement of nature's ways. . . . The relationship between man and the universe has come to interest me more than the one between nucleons and mesons."

These are confessions of the distinguished physicist Dr. William G. Pollard, the executive director of the Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies, in Oak Ridge, Tenn., who, at the age of forty-one, was recently ordained a deacon of the Episcopal Church in Oak Ridge, after two and a half years' intensive study of theology. Dr. Pollard now holds down two jobs. During the week he supervises the affairs of the Oak Ridge Institute, a scientific alliance of thirty-two Southern universities that operates on an annual budget of about two million dollars; and on Sundays, wearing his vestments, Dr. Pollard is busy at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Oak Ridge, where he assists at Holy Communion. Further details regarding the activities of this remarkable scientist-theologian are told in the *New Yorker* (February 6).

Modern science, in particular nuclear physics, has done much to unlock some of the secrets of reality, and, without a doubt, further intensive scientific researches will uncover even more of the nature of the universe. But modern science has also discovered that the deeper it penetrates into the mysteries of nature, the more mysterious reality becomes, the more complex nature is, the more incommensurable the universe appears to be, and the more limited and finite man really is. There still are scientists, of course, who share the notion that, given enough time and financial support, they will be able to fix with finality the laws governing all operations in the universe and for whom the universe is hardly more than an intricate mechanism which can be disassembled like an automobile motor. But their number is decreasing. Commenting on a statement of a leading educator that a complete science of psychology would make it possible for us to become masters

of our soul as we are now masters of heat and light, Dr. Pollard, in the article referred to, concluded his remarks by saying: "That's about as likely as a carbon atom explaining the solar system."

Christians are grateful to God for the accomplishments of modern science. Grateful because science has achieved much in its effort to make nature subservient to man. Grateful also because science crushes the pretensions of man who believes that he will ultimately know all there is to be known of the universe, and because it thus makes man aware of his puny finiteness and fallen creatureliness. But grateful, above all, because science compels the Christian to marvel all the more at the mercy of the transcendent and immanent God, who revealed to man His true identity by becoming incarnate and by redeeming sinful, finite man. Such a contemplation of the results of modern science does not lead to skepticism and agnosticism. It rather makes more meaningful and relevant for the Christian the familiar lines:

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!  
 O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy Health and Salvation! . . .  
 Ponder anew what the Almighty can do,  
 Who with His love doth befriend thee.

P. M. B.

#### KERYGMA AND MYTHOS: THE THEOLOGY OF RUDOLF BULTMANN

Under this heading Dr. Paul Leo, professor of New Testament, Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, has published in the *Lutheran Quarterly* (November, 1953) an excellent criticism of Bultmann's method of demythologizing the New Testament. It is exhaustive, yet simple and oriented to the understanding of the average reader. Dr. Leo first shows the background of Bultmann's theological thought, next describes his "program," and then offers an evangelical "evaluation" of his method. Though the subject has already been discussed in this periodical, a few striking statements quoted from the article may not be superfluous. He writes:

"As far as the life of Christ is concerned, it simply takes the heart out of the New Testament message if we regard not the resurrection, but the faith of the disciples in the resurrection as the basic fact which constitutes the church (?). We fully agree with Barth that the truth that the Word became flesh in Jesus Christ, and not the *kerygma* of this truth, must be accepted as the center of the Biblical message. We cannot give up the conviction that a real *Heilsgeschichte* is the heart of the Bible. . . . At this point Bultmann seems to us to continue to be a liberal, to approach the Bible with the preconceived ideas about

what he has a right to teach and what not, with prejudices derived from modern concepts of thinking. We should rather listen to what the Bible really says. . . .

"Our disagreement with Bultmann is rooted in a radical difference of approach. We think it is wrong to let preconceived principles take us captive in our approach to the New Testament. We must rather listen to the New Testament with the expectation of the unexpected. We must be ready to hear things which go beyond our intellectual capacities, because — whatever Bultmann might say — this also belongs to the *skandalon* of the Bible that it does not fit into our intellectual presuppositions. There are questions which we simply cannot answer, mysteries which must remain unsolved. Is that dishonesty or cowardice? We think it is rather humility and an honest response to the fact that God's thoughts surpass our thoughts."

The question: "Is that dishonesty or cowardice?" is put with reference to Bultmann's suggestion that the mythological elements in the New Testament make the Gospel incomprehensible to the modern mind, and his contention that the pastor owes to himself and his congregation absolute honesty in frankly admitting such mythological elements. Dr. Leo's final sentence is a fitting refutation of Bultmann's liberal premises.

J. T. MUELLER

#### FAITH IN THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL

*Informationsblatt fuer die Gemeinden in den Niederdeutschen Lutherischen Landeskirchen* (November 25, 1953) offers an article on "The True Church and Ecclesiastical Tradition" (*Wahre Kirche und kirchliche Tradition*), which its author, Dr. Vilmos Vajta, wrote with reference to the 800th jubilee of the establishment of the archiepiscopal see in Trondheim, Norway, A.D. 1153. In this article occurs a paragraph which, we believe, is of great significance for our age. Dr. Vajta writes:

"It is always a temptation for the Church to mistrust the convicting power of the Gospel. The proclamation of the Church certainly can be attacked, but it cannot be overcome by false teaching. The prevailing controversy concerning what is pure and what is false doctrine is by no means a sign of weakness, but rather a reminder that the Church is living in a time of trial (*Anfechtung*) and testing (*Prüfung*). In this struggle there is always born anew the belief that the pure Gospel of Christ bears in itself victorious power, that heresy is already condemned, and that the verdict pronounced upon false doctrine will be revealed on Judgment Day. Until then the purity of doctrine is

not preserved by the Church withdrawing itself into an isolated citadel, but by trusting in the victorious Christ and boldly hurling itself into the battle of this world."

The words are directed primarily against Romanism, but they are true of every false "ism" that threatens the Christian faith.

J. T. MUELLER

BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

*Anderson, Ind.*—A million copies of a book of Bible stories published 30 years ago have been sold by the Gospel Trumpet Co.

The millionth copy of Elsie Egermeier's *Bible Story Book* was presented to Dr. Steele C. Smith, manager of the publishing house, who placed it in the permanent archives of the Church of God at the denomination's national headquarters here. The Gospel Trumpet Co. is the official publication board of the Church.

Miss Egermeier, an editorial employee of the Gospel Trumpet Co. when she wrote the *Bible Story Book* in 1923, now lives in retirement at Oklahoma City, Okla.

*New York.*—The film "Martin Luther" has been barred from public showing in the Province of Quebec, Canada, by the Board of Censors there.

This was revealed here by Henry Endress, executive secretary of Lutheran Church Productions, sponsor of the film. He said his agency would appeal to the board to reverse its decision.

According to Mr. Endress, Alexis Gagnon, chairman of the Quebec Province censorship board, said that a license application for showing the film was rejected in the interests of "social peace." This comment, Mr. Endress said, had been made to the Rev. Fred Neudoerffer, president of the Montreal Ministerial Association, and representatives of the firm handling distribution of the picture in Canada.

"We believe that no board of censors has the right to censor history," he said. "It has no right to keep from thousands of people an inspiring and most timely film about religious freedom."

*Berlin.*—The Old Prussian Union Church will henceforth be known as the Evangelical Union Church, it was decreed here by the Church's Synod.

A Synod spokesman said the change was decided upon because "the old name's strongly time-bound character no longer reflects the Church's essence and is not properly understood outside Germany."

Some observers suggested, however, that a principal reason for the change was to eliminate a source of conflict with the Communist gov-

ernment of East Germany, where many of the Church's congregations are located.

The East German regime has for some time been demanding removal of the word "Prussian" from the Church's name on the ground that, with Prussia no longer in existence, the term is a "reactionary anachronism." It is believed that the regime's refusal to grant the Church official recognition is largely due to this dispute over the name.

Last year the Soviet Zone government cut subsidies to those Evangelical churches in East Germany which are members of the Old Prussian Union Church, charging that they had been diverting part of their subsidies to an "illegal organization"—the Old Prussian Union Church.

The Union Church is a group of six "United" Churches which are members of the Evangelical Church in Germany. It includes the regional *Landeskirchen* of Berlin-Brandenburg, Saxony, Pomerania, Silesia, Rhineland, and Westphalia. These Land Churches are called "United" Churches because they include both Lutheran and Reformed parishes.

The Old Prussian Union Church was formed in 1817 by an administrative merger of the *Landeskirchen* under Prussian control. In 1947 the Union had more than 14,000,000 members, about 90 per cent Lutheran and 10 per cent Reformed.

In another action taken during its meeting here, the Union Church Synod voted to initiate negotiations with officials of the Evangelical Church in Poland regarding the spiritual care of German Protestants living in areas east of the Oder-Neisse line now under Polish administration. It also decided to "intensify" exchange visits between clergymen and laymen of its member churches in East Germany and West Germany.

*Rome.*—The canonization cause of Pope Pius IX, the Pontiff who proclaimed the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1854, may be introduced in the Sacred Congregation of Rites during the coming year, it was learned here.

Reports of miracles attributed to Pius IX are now being investigated, Vatican officials said.

One such report said that a lady dressed in black asked to see Pius IX, who was kneeling in prayer when she was announced to him. Without raising his head the Pope said, "I don't talk with the dead." His valet re-announced the woman, thinking the Pontiff had not heard, but received the same answer.

When the valet returned to the outer room he found the woman



dead. It later was discovered that the visitor was not a woman but an armed man sent to assassinate the Pontiff, the report said.

*St. Louis, Mo.*—The only relationship that can possibly exist between the Roman Catholic Church and "McCarthyism" is that both are fighting Communism, Dr. Clement S. Mihanovich said here.

Dr. Mihanovich, director of the department of sociology at St. Louis University, made this declaration before Washington University's Newman Club.

*Athens.*—The Greek Evangelical Church has decided not to send any delegates to the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Evanston, Ill., next August, it was announced here by Dr. George A. Hadjiantoniou, Moderator.

The action was taken, he said, because the Greek Evangelical Church "finds itself in a state of persecution instigated by one of the member Churches of the World Council." This was an apparent reference to the Orthodox Church in Greece, which also is a member of the World Council.

*Berlin.*—All Evangelical pastors in the West Berlin church district of Schoeneberg have dissociated themselves from Pastor Martin Niemöller's announced decision to speak at a political meeting there sponsored by groups opposed to the rearmament of West Germany.

"Since Pastor Niemöller's previous political speeches have caused anger," the pastors said in an adopted resolution, "we wish to stress again that his political utterances must be regarded merely as the opinion of an individual citizen and not that of the Church."

*Chevy Chase, Md.*—A new quarterly magazine, *The Pope Speaks*, will be launched here in the spring by a priest-laymen group. Its purpose is to make available, in handy form, the full texts of Papal discourses and writings.

Each issue will contain speeches and documents by the Pope released during the preceding three-month period. In addition, *The Pope Speaks* will carry a "Guide to Papal Documents and Commentaries," a detailed index, and "Notes and Memoranda" on projects in the field of Papal subjects. Selections will be included from the writings of former Popes.

*Washington, D. C.*—American Churches set an all-time building record in 1953, the Departments of Commerce and Labor reported here.

A total of \$474,000,000 worth of new construction was started by religious groups during the year. This was an increase of \$75,000,000 over the \$399,000,000 spent in 1952.

Parochial schools and private colleges also broke records for con-

struction during the year. The total value of new buildings and additions erected was \$425,000,000, compared with \$351,000,000 in 1952.

Private hospitals, orphanages, homes for the aged, and other institutions launched \$316,000,000 worth of new buildings last year as against \$394,000,000 in 1952 and \$419,000,000 in 1951. Since hospitals were not affected by the construction controls put into force in 1950 after the outbreak of the Korean war, no backlog developed in that field, as it did in the case of churches and schools.

*Cleveland.*—A joint meeting of representative committees of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church to take further steps toward a proposed merger of the two denominations has been scheduled here for February 9.

This meeting will be preliminary to a joint session in Chicago on February 19 of the General Council of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the executive committee of the Congregational Christian Churches—the administrative bodies of both denominations.

Approval for the joint sessions was given in separate but simultaneous meetings of the administrative committee of the Evangelical and Reformed Church here, and the advisory committee of the Congregational Christian Churches' General Council in New York.

The two meetings were called after a decision of the New York State Court of Appeals upholding the proposed merger, which would create a United Church of Christ with over 2,000,000 members.

*Vicksburg, Miss.*—The second international development project sponsored by industrialist R. G. Letourneau was launched when "Letourneau's Ark," a converted 2,000-ton war-surplus Navy landing ship, left here for a Peruvian town on the headwaters of the Amazon.

The town, Pucalpa, is to be the base for clearing 1,000,000 acres of jungle and swampland, which Mr. Letourneau plans to open to cultivation by building a superhighway from it across the Andes to a Peruvian Pacific coast port.

The project is similar to one that Mr. Letourneau, manufacturer of earth-moving equipment and one of the country's leading evangelistic laymen, instituted in Liberia last year. His company has factories here and in Peoria, Ill., and Longview, Tex.

*Hartford, Conn.*—Mayor Dominick J. De Lucco of Hartford proclaimed December 8, opening day of the Marian Year, a "day of rejoicing and celebration."

Mayor De Lucco said he was issuing the proclamation "in the spirit of Christmastide and in the ensuing celebrations to commemorate the birth of the Christ Child."

"Without Mary there would be no Christ," he said.

"This celebration is very dear to many of our citizens," the mayor said. "Therefore, I am very happy to set aside this day as one of exultation mingled with prayer."

"I am most pleased to set aside any day, irrespective of creed, nationality or religion," he added, "to issue a call to my fellow citizens to insure, through Almighty God, a peace that is everlasting and eternal."

*New York.*—Reorganization of American college curricula to give religion equal emphasis with science was urged here by President Oliver C. Carmichael of the University of Alabama, former president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

The recommendation was made by Dr. Carmichael in his final report to the Foundation, whose presidency he resigned last August 31 to assume the university post.

"American higher education," he said, "fails, in the main, to provide for systematic consideration of the basic concepts, which are commonly called religion, that underlie man's quest for orientation and adjustment to the universe."

Pointing out that the major recent trend in education has been back to the liberal arts and away from technical or vocational skills, Dr. Carmichael stressed that expanded liberal arts programs, based upon a "fact-idea-concept" approach, "must include emphasis on religion."

*New York.*—Scriptures valued at \$65,000 were destroyed when the Bible House at Pusan, Korea, was burned out by a fire that swept the city recently, it was reported here by the American Bible Society.

According to a cable received from Tokyo, 30,000 Bibles, 53,000 Testaments and 600,000 Gospel Portions were lost in the conflagration, the worst in Korea's history.

In response to an urgent appeal for help, Dr. Gilbert Darlington, ABS treasurer, said that \$5,000 had been deposited to the credit of the Korean Bible Society for emergency use. An order also was placed immediately for a large shipment of paper to Korea in order that the printing of Scriptures there may be continued.

*New York.*—A World Good Will Book will be compiled next year to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the beginning of Bible Society work. The first Bible Society was established in London on March 7, 1804.

Details of the project were announced here by Dr. Robert T. Taylor, a general secretary of the American Bible Society, at the 35th annual meeting of its Advisory Council.

L. W. SPITZ