

Inaugural Address

RICHARD J. SCHULTZ

I Believe One Holy Christian  
Church: What Does It Mean Today

BISHOP BO GIERTZ

Man: 1971

JOHN F. JOHNSON

The Faculty's Commission To Its President

CLARENCE W. SPIEGEL

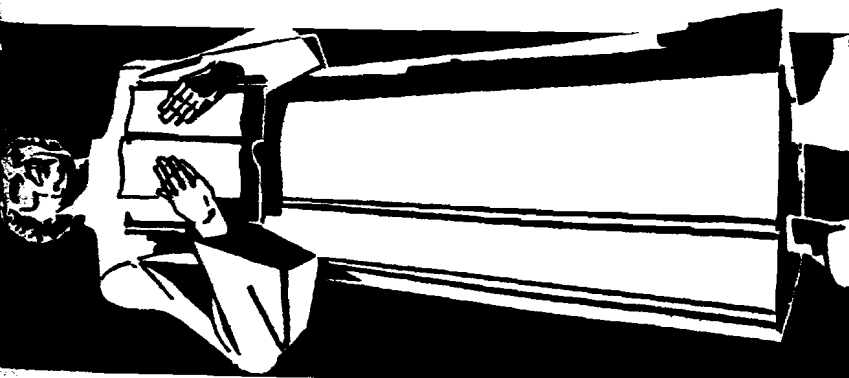
"Every Man In His Own Tongue"  
Or "The Use Of The Vernacular in  
Seminary Classroom And Pastor's Study"

RAYMOND F. SURBURG

The Revelation Of Christ  
And Scientific Research

SVERRE AALEN

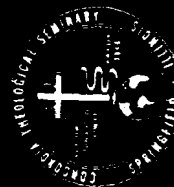
Theological Refractions  
Pilgrim's Regress  
Book Reviews



# the springfielder

VOL. XXXIV • NO. 3

DECEMBER, 1970



# Theological Refractions

## BIRTH CONTROL AND ABORTION

It is not an easy thing for a Christian man to live in a world of which he knows by revelation of the Word of God that it is Satan's realm of activity and power. He has besides that constant proof that the whole world is progressively demonized. Christian existence in this world is not made possible by closing eyes to the monstrous demoniac potential as it is increasingly realized in the abandonment of God's law and order. A Christian must face the facts of life in this world. He cannot escape and hide, he must be *in* the world but not *of* the world. Christian life and behavior has become such a problem in our day that we might begin to ask ourselves, is the Christian way of Life still possible? Or, is it any use as we seem to be sucked into the maelstrom of destruction to make such feeble efforts as we are able to make to escape the suction of popular immorality?

Man may have a simple way out of the dilemma. "If you can't beat them join them." Or man simply adopts a new standard of ethics by which sour becomes sweet and sweet sour. Anyone still concerned with questions of right and wrong will not want to admit he has given up deciding between the two. But if one still wants some standards of decency, he might be hard put to find out where to find such standards. Situation ethics say, be useful, be innocuous, have fun, but don't hurt anybody . . . Even such standards would be a great advantage over the reality of the demoniac behavior of man. But where in all the world are there people that will sincerely and simply follow even such advice.

In the play J.B. by MacLeish the author has caught the sense of the dialog between God and Satan perfectly. God asks: "Whence comest thou?" And the answer comes: "From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." The horror of such an answer is shown by a volley of Satanic laughter in which it ends. "The Earth is the Lord's" says the Psalm, "What a joke" says Satan. And yet we must know, that none of us, and certainly not the common man, has realized the depth of depravity and devilishness that makes up human existence. We see also this only "in part" and that because we have had the stench of pollution in our nostrils so long that we are accustomed to it. The noise of confusion has stunted our hearing and our eyes have been assaulted by so much of shamelessness, that we hardly know what "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life" means. It has come to such a pass that vital topics are not debatable anymore. As one brother confessed at a pastoral conference, we have learned to live comfortably with the idea of birth control, and he might have added that it won't be long till even Christians accept the idea of abortion as not only legal but under certain conditions even mandatory. But these are but a few of the symptoms of decay. Many other topics can be raised and are raised and discussed openly, with the result that the utilitarian and pragmatic

ethic can in the end swallow anything, especially if it's said to be useful and harmless like the "pill."

We ought to be grateful for any voice or vote that still shows a sign of honesty and a feeling of responsibility where ethics and morals are involved.

The following little books are only a few samples that commend themselves in view of the flood of print discussing favorably population control, abortion and other overt sins against life and the dignity of man.

*The Terrible Choice: The Abortion Dilemma*; a Bantam Book, 1968, the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation, 110 pages; 16 pages of the Lennart Nilsson's photographs. 95c.

*The Myth of Over-Population*; by Rousas J. Rushdoony, Craig Press, Nutley, New Jersey, 1969, 56 pages.

*Corpus Papers*; a series of informative studies in contemporary issues in Scripture, Doctrine, Morality, and Counseling. Corpus Books, Washington and Cleveland:

*What is Love?* by Jules Toner

*Sexual Anomalies and Counseling* by John R. Cavanagh

*Patterns in Moral Behavior* by Albert R. Jonsen

*Abortion, the Law and Defective Children* by Charles P. Kindregan

*Sexuality and Marriage in Recent Catholic Thought* by Peter J. Riga

The debate on abortion, seems to be concerned only with the problem of legality or illegality, but we can also hear enough voices against abortion as such. The act of abortion can be evaluated by any serious thinking people as an act against life. In a time where there is much talk about the dignity of man and the rights of minorities, especially of the silent minorities, a person would expect a condemnation of any act by which a human life is taken. Even where there is legal reason for putting a criminal to death a great hesitancy is shown as is evident from the more than 500 people sitting in death cells waiting for a court decision on capital punishment. One would suppose that people could easily see the analogy between abortion and murder. Many do see it. In Arthur Haille's novel *Airport* there is a discussion between two pilots on the question of abortion. Harris, the one against abortion reasons sensibly, not on a religious basis—he claims he is an agnostic—but on a simple understanding of the dignity of man. In the course of his arguments he is told by his fellow pilot: "The trend is to make abortion easier; eventually maybe wide open and legal." To which Harris answers: "If it happens we'll be a backward step nearer the Auschwitz ovens."

The book *The Terrible Choice: The Abortion Dilemma* is based on the proceedings of the International Conference on Abortion sponsored by the Harvard Divinity School and the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation. The foreword is by Pearl S. Buck, who had a severely retarded child and was asked: Could it have been possible for her to have had foreknowledge of her daughter's thwarted life, would she, Pearl S. Buck, have wanted abortion? She answers "now with the full knowledge of anguish and despair,

the answer is no, I would not." (page X) Chapter two of the book presents five case studies written as a drama and presented by actors in order to give the conference real starting points for a discussion. Each scene is commented on by participants in the conference, the comments are presented in an abbreviated form. Short chapters on the biological and statistical backgrounds are followed by the world famous photographs by Lennart Nilsson illustrating human fetal development from four weeks to six months. Subsequent chapters are on the perspectives of the social scientist, the physician, the ethicist and the lawyer. The book was edited and written with the help of Robert E. Cooke, M.D., Andre E. Hellegers, M.D., Robert G. Hoyt, Herbert W. Richardson, Ph.D.

The questions raised and the concern voiced are not based on theological considerations. Intelligent people speak on the matters of life and death in a way that could be an aid to Christians that ought not to consider the question of abortion as a dilemma. A Christian mother may have to make a decision by which she may risk her life by giving life to her child. But the life and death decisions of that sort are rare. On the other hand, all mothers risk a lot in childbearing. In realization of the greatest dignity of woman lies a blessing even to eternal life.

The book by Rushdoony *The Myth of Over-Population* is also not written from a theological point of view, although the Bible is used and quoted. To the reviewer this book has the merit of showing the other side of the population problem which seems to worry also the United States of America. We in our country have the problem of overweight and lack of parking space for cars rather than that of too much population. Yet nowhere has the pill and have other contraceptive measures and devices had a greater market.

The author shows that over-population is an imbalance between the number of people living and their food supply. The world has had this situation in much of its history. He shows from examples in history that the key to the problem of famine, etc., has always been that people were not able to produce enough food. The American Indians starved although their total population may not have been more than that of a good-sized American city. Repeatedly there was famine in Europe. Rushdoony lists about 14 famines in England in the 13th century. The Plymouth colony in New England was endangered by a restrictive form of farming imposed on them from London. Not nature is the cause of famine but man himself. He quotes Walford, cited in Prentice, *Hunger and History* (page 4) on factors that contribute to famine:

1. The prevention of cultivation or the wilful destruction of crops;
2. Defective agriculture caused by communistic control of land;
3. Governmental interference by regulation or taxation;
4. Currency restrictions, including the debasing of coin.

The author is well aware of the "scare headlines" that are projected into the world in order to enlist people in a program on international birth control. He can quote projected statistics based on a lot of gues-

work and a number of doubtful basic assumptions (page 18ff). The author quotes statistics proving a rapid decline of the birth rate at certain times under conditions that may reoccur at any time.

The Christian answer to the so-called problem of over-population can never suggest measures dictated by pragmatic or utilitarian logic. The Christian sees himself responsible to God and His orders. God's benediction of fertility is a responsibility for all things placed under his feet. Man is to have dominion over everything in responsibility to God. Man as the ever-living creature, who was created redeemable and was redeemed when he fell, is to use all his God given powers to the glory of God. Among the blessings not separable from the concept of life is the order of marriage.

The created order of marriage is the sacred source of life, not just in the biological sense, but as a gift of God for eternity. Eternally chosen by God and potentially an heir of everlasting life, every human being is so to speak anchored in eternity. For that reason, man, to whom even after the fall creatures are given as available in responsibility to God evidently cannot treat human life as available to him or expendable as it pleases him. Albert Schweitzer's concept of "Ehrfurcht vor dem Leben" (respect for life) was not a conviction mainly founded in a theological view of redemption but a very logical attitude of the scientist that knows of the majesty and mystery of life in general and particularly of human life. To many scientists, life begins with conception. That is one of the reasons for the photos of human fetuses presented in the book on abortion. For a Christian the concept of eternal election and the providence of God, who tells Jeremiah that He knew him before he was in the womb, contribute still greater insight into LIFE, promised to all the children of God . . .

The series of monographs published by the *Corpus Books* takes a more theological look at problems in ethics. There are many good points presented. The Catholic writers have a better foothold in such matters than many Protestant theologians. Yet our impression has always been that since they feel that *sola Scriptura* is not enough, they rest in part also on the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas. Not that the result necessarily leads to a doubtful deduction but one gets the feeling that Holy Scripture is often quoted when convenient in support of the philosophy. We do not intend to discuss the pamphlets listed but recommend them for study. They are useful and present sides to the ethical questions that are overlooked today in our "got to get on a band-wagon world."

M. J. Naumann

---

### "THE SON OF MAN"—A EUPHEMISM?

Under this title, J. Massingberd Ford of the University of Notre Dame published an article in the *Journal of Biblical Literature* (LXXXVII, 3, 257-266) suggesting that the title "Son of Man" is Jesus' own substitute phrase for the title "Son of God." There are two principles in Judaism

that would allow for such an interpretation. First, there are euphemisms where unpleasant things are referred to by other terms. Dying is called sleeping. A cemetery is called a "house of life." Second, there is the natural tendency and later legal prohibition to use the Name of God.

The major considerations for Ford's position come from the Gospels themselves. Greek thought knows of the phrases "son of God" and "son of man" but with Jesus the phrase is "the Son of *the* Man", a natural substitution for "the Son of *the* God." Ford contends that Jesus wanted to avoid the charge of blasphemy and thus made the substitution "the Son of the *Man*" for "the Son of the *God*." In the Gospels, the phrase "the Son of the God" is used by Satan, the devils, the centurion at the cross (who would not have the scruples that a Jew would have about the divine Name), and the mockers at the cross, who, as Ford contends, cannot be definitely determined as Jews or Gentiles.

In addition to the above, there is also the case of the Petrine confession and the question of Caiaphas at the trial. The Petrine confession is a special case since Peter is given permission to use the divine Name. Jesus even says it was instigated by the Father. In the case of the Petrine confession, Jesus asks who the Son of Man is. The Caiaphas question dealt with legal procedure when in the case of blasphemy the High Priest was permitted to use the divine Name. In the case of the trial before Caiaphas, Jesus answers the question of His identity as the Son of God affirmatively and in the remainder of the answer refers to Himself as the Son of Man. A brief perusal of the Synoptic Gospels shows that the Son of Man is used as a divine and not a human name. The Synoptics indicate that the Son of Man is Lord of the sabbath. He forgives sins. He raises the dead. He appears as judge. He comes in the glory of the Father. All of these duties or tasks can only be done by Yahweh.

Ford contends that as Gospel went into the Hellenistic communities the phrase Son of God was resubstituted as there would here be no appreciation for the Jewish scruples about the divine Name. Perhaps a better theory is that since the phrase "Son of Man" was used by the Son of God in the state of His own self-imposed humility and degradation, there was a natural hesitancy on the part of the Christian community to use a name which had now become sacred. Prayers are never addressed to the Son of Man, and it is not used in preaching or in the mouth of any of the disciples or apostles. Outside of the Gospels, it is used only by Stephen.

Another theologian, Francis Pieper, includes the discussion on 'The Son of Man' in the section "The True Humanity of Christ" (*Christian Dogmatics*, II, 71). He speaks about the phrase as "the singular, wonderful Man in whom the Son of God appeared in flesh." Pieper distinguishes between the two phrases, when in all probability they should be equated. "The Son of Man" should be included in the discussion of Jesus' deity, not His humanity.

Many opinions have been offered about the meaning of this enigmatic phrase. Some like Willi Marxsen, and he is hardly alone, hold that Jesus

was looking for some apocalyptic figure to come streaming out of heaven to save Him and that the later church made the identification with Jesus. A comparison of the texts will indicate that the Gospel writers see the phrase as a substitute for the word "I" in the mouth of Jesus. Another factor, it is only used by Jesus in His state of humiliation, i.e., before His death and never after His resurrection. This gives us a key to a definition. Using Ford's study, "the Son of Man" can be defined as the self-designation of the Son of God as He, in the state of degradation, contemplates the glory and honor which are by nature His own.

D. P. S.

---

## NO ORAL TRADITION—NO WORDS OF JESUS

One of the most important aspects of New Testament studies, if not the most important, is to determine what words ascribed to Jesus in our Gospels were really spoken by Jesus and which were later attributed to Him by the later church. To put it another way, what words did the early church put into the mouth of Jesus? Harald Riesenfeld (*The Gospel Tradition and Its Beginnings; A Study in the Limits of 'Formgeschichte'*, 1957) and Birger Gerhardsson (*Memory and Manuscript; Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity*, 1961) both claim that the words of Jesus ascribed to Him in Gospels are actually His as He had His disciples commit them to memory, a custom not uncommon in rabbinical type teaching. Percival Gardner-Smith (*Saint John and the Synoptic Gospels*, 1938) and C. H. Dodd (*Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, 1963) have a similar theory in regard to the Gospel of John asserting that it too contains authentic words of Jesus.

Howard M. Teeple ("The Oral Tradition That Never Existed," *Journal of Biblical Literature* LXXXIX, 1, 56-68) holds a totally contrary view and offers the opinion that none of the words in the Gospel can be traced back to Jesus at all. "According to the theory of an authentic oral tradition, the flow of tradition was from the earthly Jesus to his disciples to the apostles in the church. Actually, the flow was in the opposite direction: from the apostles in the church to the earthly Jesus." (p. 67) Teeple's theory is that everything found in the Gospels was given by the "Spirit of God" who was later identified as the "Spirit of Jesus" and that none of the words can be traced to this historical Jesus. (Teeple's reference to the "Spirit" should not be confused with what Christianity usually identified as the Holy Spirit). Can such a theory really stand the heat of some very difficult questions? Why should first century persons living in Palestine be so dead set in propagandizing about a certain "Jesus" if He really did not say all those astounding things that were later attributed to Him? Why should all those different communities have the same purpose in claiming that Jesus had said certain things? Who was Jesus or what did He do that anyone should be concerned about Him? Of course, Teeple cannot answer these questions since his theory rules out any possibility of knowing anything about what Jesus said. All we are left with are com-

munities producing religious materials in the name of a religious leader we know nothing about. If this is the case, then why should we be concerned at all with the literature of these Christian communities? What makes them so special?

Teeple's theory that the "Spirit of Jesus" and not the historical Jesus is responsible for the words attributed to Him is virtually an oracle type of verbal inspiration, which is more extreme than any taught by Lutheran Orthodoxy. Consider it! Teeple's theory suggests that without any historical instigation, these scattered Christian communities began producing the Biblical literature. Amazing!

D. P. S.

---

### CONFESSIOAL "REAWAKENING" IN GERMANY

The Missouri Synod was a product of the great confessional awakening that broke out all over Europe in the first half of the 19th century. The Rationalism of the 18th century Enlightenment had taken away real miracles out of the Bible, "moralized" the Gospel and quite effectively emptied the churches. When the 19th century dawned in Germany, Christianity (as we understand it in the traditional sense, virgin birth, Christ's atonement to the Father for sins, resurrection, etc.) had long since sunk beneath the horizon so that not even its glow was visible to the eye of faith. Almost miraculously as a phoenix coming out of the ashes in a real miracle of resurrection, a movement arose which stressed Bible studies along with an interest in the Confessions, the writings of Luther, and the works of the enlarged dusty tomes of the dogmaticians. The renaissance or repristination movement was responsible for multiple births. Some soon aborted, as too much Rationalistic poison went through the umbilical cord. Others died in childhood. They were born from a "confessional" mother but died on the falsely sweet milk of the breasts of Enlightenment. The most "successful product" of the movement was the Missouri Synod. Its survival is remarkable, since it is now more than 150 years since Claus Harms issued his own 95 theses against Rationalism in 1817.

The German Church in the last half of the 20th century has almost gone full cycle to where it was exactly 200 years ago when the flower of Rationalism was already going to seed. No one can predict whether today's revival or awakening will be as successful as the one 150 years ago, but the players for the drama are on the stage and the parts of the machinery are ready for assembly. The German theological faculties with only a few rare exceptions see no room in their theology for what is called miraculous or supernatural. Following Bultmann's lead they are off again like their 18th and 19th century progenitors on the search for the "historical Jesus." They are more or less positive that there was a Jesus but we know nothing about Him, about His words, or about what He thought of Himself. But there must be a Jesus! We must obey Jesus! (This is an absurdity! Why should I obey Jesus when I am not sure who He



was, or what He said, or what He even thought about Himself and His mission.)

The awakening in the 19th century took place within the academic life of the universities and the spiritual life of the established churches. Certain free churches, now in fellowship with the Missouri Synod, came into being, but a major part of the action took place within the ecclesiastical establishment. The universities of Erlangen, Rostock, and Leipzig were all centers of confessional study and research.

The "reawakening" of the 20th century is following a different pattern. While there are confessional professors who are part of the new movement, it would be a mistake to think that any of the university theological faculties are confessionally committed in even the remotest sense of the term. The established churches are on the verge of disinheritance by the government and the state, not because of confessional protest, but rather because of the people's secularism and the state's disinterest and disenchantment. The confessional "reawakening" is not a united movement at the present time and a pattern of the future is still not totally discernible. But shadows of a future pattern can be faintly seen. The "far right" position is still held by the German Lutheran Free Churches. In the middle right is the *Kirchliche Sammlungen*, the Church Gatherings, who retain membership in the European established churches but whose theology resembles that of the free churches. Here are such men as Professors Rengstorf and Heubach. In the middle left is the *Kein Anders Evangelium*. It is conservative in its approach to the Bible but somewhat pietistic in its approach to doctrine. Denominational differences are not a major factor in this movement. Members of this group are still part of the established churches. Here are such men as Professors Küneth, Kuhnert, Michel, Rohrbach, and Beyerhaus. Their theological activity will probably center around their newly established seminary at Basel. On the left flank of this conservative movement are those within the established churches who have not associated with any of these groups. They are confessional in their theology, but have no intention of taking action outside of the established churches. Professors Brunner and Schlink belong in this category. At this time there is no assurance that this "reawakening" will reach anything even near universal success. There is nevertheless a confessional ground swell that could envelop the established churches in an earthquake destroying movement.

The established churches which have been enjoying state collected revenues are preparing for the "evil day" by acquiring income producing investments and land. The university theological faculties could remain virtually untouched. The schools where practically all of the radical theology is spawned and carefully nurtured are supported entirely by the state and are in no way open to ecclesiastical censure nor are they dependent on ecclesiastical support. A totally secular German state would probably not support theological education at the university level; but since the German culture is "religious", this cannot be predicted with any certainty. A great obstacle to the "reawakening" would be elim-

inated, if their theological faculties became "free" and congregationally supported as they are in the United States. In the theological faculties of the state universities of Europe, academic freedom takes precedence, of course, over any confessional or theological concerns of the pastors and congregations. As was stated above, the future cannot be predicted, but in any event the remaining three decades of the century will see rumblings that will begin to shake the theological establishments. Rationalism of the 18th century reaped the harvest of empty church pews in the 19th century. The kerygmatic liberal theology of Bultmann and his disciples might reap the empty harvest of a dismembered church. Only God's grace will allow for a reassembling of the bones and sinews in a truly Biblical and confessional church.

D. P. S.

## PILGRIM'S REGRESS

### STATISTICAL YEARBOOK, 1969

There are a number of things in nature that continue to convince me concerning divine providence. As usual the seventeen year locusts appeared on schedule. But much more exciting was that on June 1, not a day earlier or a day later, the *Statistical Yearbook* arrived. No ordinary reading can ever stand in the way of these interestingly arranged numbers. Some people say numbers don't have any meaning. Numbers have meaning on pay checks. Anyone who fiddles around with the *Wall Street Journal* knows there's a difference between 950 and 650 on the Dow Jones Averages. Of course the *Statistical Yearbook* consists of more than mere numbers. Pardon the personal reference, but I was quite pleased to see that I was not included in the "1969 Necrology" (pp. 42-44). Neither was I transferred in or out of my district. This kind of information always lays the basis for another year of confident work in the vineyard. Of great interest was checking out all those congregations which I was *privileged* to serve. In some cases my successors were only reaping the seed which I had so successfully sown (no feigned false modesty!) and in other cases they were walking on the seeds.

Overall statistics are always more interesting. The Missouri Synod had an overall growth of about 5,000 members. This means that it took about 575 of us to bring in one new member. Exciting? Of course not! In 1954 it took 400 of us to do the same amount of work. But with inflation, it takes 175 more Christians to do in 1969 what we did with 400. Anyway, I distrust those figures. Those 5,000 members were probably just some "gravy" from the baptismal rolls. Probably the real credit belongs to the stork. (Has anyone thought what a population recession will do to the Missouri Synod's *Statistical Yearbook*?)

I was not totally depressed by the 1969 figures. If the Missouri Synod increased by about 5,000 members, the Roman Catholic Church decreased by 1,149. This means that it took 48,000 Catholics to lose one member.

An enviable record! If the trend would keep up there would be no Catholics in America in the year 48,170 A.D. (Think of the mission opportunities that would be opened to the Synod!) 1969 was the year in which the Pope said "No" to artificial birth control. The Catholic Church in America obviously didn't get the message. There have been no traffic jams outside of confessional booths.

As I closed the orange colored book of truth, I could not help wondering about the sad state of the churches. There has been some talk about having "quality Christians" instead of "quantity Christians." That's just whistling in the dark. The sad truth is that it is taking more and more of us to do less and less. Eight years ago, I heard a very prominent Missouri Synod leader speak of all the future "glories" of the Synod. My only suggestion now is that the synodical IBM machine must have been out on the town the night before they programmed the data into it.

Reading the *Statistical Yearbook* was only bringing on a case of melancholy. Perhaps there would still be a few things that I could do. Maybe next year's Vacation Bible School can be just a little better organized. Maybe I could make a personal pledge to make twenty calls a week on the homes of people I don't even know. Just for a start anyway. Surely there must be one or two people in the congregation who would like to make a few calls. My only hope now is the 1970 *Statistical Yearbook*. Maybe by God's grace it will have the good news that it took only 500 of us Missouri Synod Lutherans to find one lost sheep. I was still grateful that we were not a corporation. We would have been dissolved long ago, just for plain ordinary backwardness, inefficiency, and lack of aggression.