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**BULLETIN** VOL 4 No. 1  
by TSF NEWS & REVIEWS  
Edited by Theological Students Fellowship  
3 Langdon, Madison, WI 53703

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**BULLETIN** (Formerly TSF News &

is published five times during

school year (October-May).

Subscription in TSF (\$10/yr; \$8-students)

both *Bulletin* and *THEMELIOS*

(theological journal of the

International Fellowship of Evangelical

Students). Separate subscription rates are:

*Bulletin*-\$6.50/yr; *Themelios*-\$4.50/yr.

These rates are available on request. Student

subscriptions are available on request. Student

subscriptions—10 or more copies delivered to

address at \$7. per person. All subscrip-

tions and correspondence (except as

indicated on special order forms) should be

sent to Theological Students Fellowship,

3 Langdon, Madison, WI 53703. TSF is a

member of Inter-Varsity Christian

Fellowship.

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ider, among other things, the Statement of Concerns. The LCWE passed the following motion:

The Theological Commission recommends to the WEF that an approach be made to the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization that the function of the Lausanne Theology and Education Group be united with the work of the WEF Theological Commission so as to have one international theological Commission in order to serve the concerns of both the LCWE and the WEF."

#### A REPORT FROM EUROPE ON THE THIRD BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF F.E.E.T.

by Donald Dean Smeeton

Theology cannot escape the paradoxical. In recent years, Germany has not been known for its evangelical theology, yet Wölmersen, West Germany was the site for the August 25-29 third biennial conference of the Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians. The Advisory Council of F.E.E.T. consists of: Peter Beyerhaus (Germany), though he attended only the first conference in 1976; Prof. Henri Blocher (France); Dr. Josip Lorak (Yugoslavia); Dr. Klass Runia (Holland); Rev. John Stott (Great Britain); Bishop Erling Itnes (Norway) and Mr. José Grau (Spain). The Executive Committee consists of: Mr. Martin Goldsmith (Great Britain), Prof. Howard Marshall (Great Britain), Mr. Siegfried Liebschner (Germany), Dr. Peter Kuzmič (Yugoslavia), Dr. Peter Jones (France), Dr. Agne Nordlander (Sweden), Dr. Klass Runia (Holland) and Rev. Neil Britton (Switzerland).

Although reflective theologians are not always on the best terms with aggressive evangelists, the meetings utilized the facilities of the Neues-Leben-Zentrum through the kindness of German's best known evangelist, Anton Schulte. The goal of F.E.E.T. is to promote evangelical theology in Europe in a spirit of loyalty to the Bible. This year's conference was attended by about 75 theologians and pastors from at least fifteen countries, including East Germany and Yugoslavia.

The theme of this year's meeting was another paradox: Christology. Or to use the official wording, "Who is Jesus? The Modern Challenges for Christology." With the popularity of a variety of theologies from below and new myths of God incarnate, the twentieth century recalls the Christological debate of the early church. Many contemporary thinkers are of the opinion that the classical answers are inadequate, but the F.E.E.T. participants did not come together simply to affirm the old answers.

The father of F.E.E.T., John R.W. Stott, led the daily Bible "readings" which were really expository messages in the best Anglican style. The chairman of the executive committee, Klaus Runia (Holland) provided the background of the present debate. *Tyndale Bulletin* editor, R.T. France examined "The Biblical Basis for the Confession of the Uniqueness of Christ." And Horst Georg Böhlmann of the University of Osnabrück (Germany) evaluated the appropriateness of Chalcedon for today. The general conclusion of these plenary sessions and the numerous workshops was that even though many of the questions raised by modern Christologies are legitimate, most of the answers fall short of the Biblical revelation. The themes that Jesus was "true God" and "true man" were affirmed in various ways so that the Gospel is that the Son of God "came down from heaven for us and our salvation" (Nicene Creed).

At its business session, the conference decided, among other things to seek ways to strengthen evangelical Christianity in Eastern and Southern Europe. It was agreed to establish a special fund to assist young evangelical doctoral students from these areas, and also to provide theologians in Eastern Europe with much needed theological books.

Europe faces very strong pressures of secularization. Some observers have even declared Europe to be post-Christian. Others say that the land of Barth, Brunner and Bultmann will never again be the land of the Bible, but then God is a God of the paradox.

Anyone wanting more information on F.E.E.T. may write to the secretary of the Executive Committee, Rev. Neil Britton, La Cure, CH-1166 Perroy, Switzerland.

#### INQUIRY (*Questions, proposals, discussions, research reports on theological and biblical issues.*)

#### A REPORT ON PAUL VITZ'S LECTURE "FROM A SECULAR TO A CHRISTIAN PSYCHOLOGY"

By Mark Lau Branson

Dr. Paul Vitz, professor of psychology at New York University, is the author of *Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self-Worship* (Eerdmans, 1977), reviewed in the January 1978 issue of *TSF News and Reviews*. In this lecture he (I) identifies major assumptions that are common to most psychological theories; and (II) suggests creative directions for a distinctively Christian psychology.

I. The underlying intellectual assumptions (seven of them) provide the basic world view, especially the understanding of human nature.

(1) Atheism (or agnosticism) is a normal presupposition of most modern theories. Genuine religious motivation is ignored or treated negatively. Some theories began with those who spoke out explicitly against Christianity (Fromm, Rogers, Skinner); others are simply "functionally agnostic" (Transactional Analysis). "The pattern of priests and ministers going into psychology and out of the faith is extremely common."

(2) Naturalism is a closely related assumption. The working of the mind is within a sphere of physical influences or purely reasoned, observed natural happenings. Even Maslow's "real experience," though often caricatured by Christians, is a natural event for Maslow. Any "supernatural" influence is explicitly ruled out.

(3) Reductionism is prevalent, e.g., "love is reduced to sex and sex is reduced to physiology." Spiritual life is reduced (by Freud) to sublimated sex. All "higher" things are viewed only as results of "lower" natural phenomena. (A Christian would see sex in context of love, love as sacred, marriage as a sacrament.)

(4) Individualism (with the "isolated, autonomous, self-preoccupied individual") becomes the building block of psychological health. Values of family and community loose out. Self-will and self-advancement are primary. "It is most revealing that there is not one major psychological theory of personality which does not assume the isolated individual as the central unit and primary concern of its theory." There are no significant theories of human interdependence and certainly none valuing

obedience to God. (Vitz's main examples were Dyer's *Your Erroneous Zones* and Transcendental Analysis.) "The curious thing about the selfish goal of autonomy is that it is almost unanimously made throughout popular psychology and yet I have not found one writer who has attempted to defend the goal as morally worthwhile or even to demonstrate that this 'autonomy' is possible." Vitz continues, "Today's individualistic psychology repetitively implies that the enemy is the past erected by natural groupings, but not the past and present, dominated by modernist isolated egos separated from all that is natural, with each ego being told that it is free." Vitz sees modern consumerism and propaganda as the winners with self "separated" from other influences.

- (5) Relativism is norm in values. Secularists are absolutist only in regard to holding this position of relativism. Values clarification theory, when devoid of moral norms, falls in here.
- (6) Subjectivism holds spiritual truth as non-objective, non-rational, while the physical sciences are most prized. Closely related is a value on a human's immediate feelings and their expression. Reality beyond the physical world and valuing of self-control and obedience to God do not belong.
- (7) Gnosticism, or "knowledgism," holds that "salvation" comes from knowledge. Self-knowledge and self-realization are the highest aims. Moral issues are swallowed up in self-activation devoid of spiritual or community values.

II (1) The existence of God is the first assumption of a Christian psychology, specifically the Trinitarian God. Religious life is surely relevant and interpretable. The human's relationship to God is a topic of discussion. This does not limit psychology, but rather makes it deeper, better, truer.

(2) A morality and value system would be affirmed. Secular psychology has a value system, yet it is not expounded or explicit. Vitz borrows from Professor Allen Bergin to clarify:

Table 1

Theistic vs. Clinical and Humanistic Values  
(after Bergin)

| Theistic  |
|---|
| 1. God is supreme. Humility, acceptance of (divine) authority and obedience (to the will of God) are virtues.   |
| 2. Personal identity is eternal and derived from the divine. Relationship with God defines self-worth.  |
| 3. Self control, in terms of absolute values. Strict morality. Universal ethics.  |
| 4. Love of God and of others, affection and self-transcendence primary. Service and self-sacrifice central to personal growth.  |
| 5. Committed marriage, fidelity and loyalty. Emphasis on procreation and family life as integrative factors.  |
| 6. Personal responsibility for own harmful actions and changes in them. Accept guilt, suffering and contrition as keys to change. Restitution for harmful effects.                    |
| 7. Forgiveness of others who cause distress (including parents) completes the therapeutic restoration of self.  |
| 8. Knowledge by faith and self-effort. Meaning and purpose derived from spiritual insight. Intellectual knowledge inseparable from the emotional and spiritual. Ecology of knowledge. |

Clinical and Humanistic

1. Man is supreme. The self is aggrandized. Autonomy and rejection of external authority & virtues.
2. Identity is ephemeral and mortal. Relationships with self and others define self-worth.
3. Self expression, in terms of relative value. Flexible morality. Situation ethics.
4. Personal needs and self-actualization primary. Self-satisfaction central to personal growth.
5. Open marriage or no marriage. Emphasis on self-gratification or recreational sex without long-term responsibilities.
6. Others responsible for our problems and changes. Minimize guilt and relieve suffering before experiencing its meaning. Apology for harmful effects.
7. Acceptance and expression of accusatory feelings is sufficient.
8. Knowledge by self-effort alone. Meaning & purpose derived from reason and intellect. Intellectual knowledge for itself. Isolation of the mind from the rest of life.

- (3) New concepts and practices are introduced into counselling. Prayer and fasting are valuable. The invoking of the Holy Spirit and the gifts of healing are significant. Forgiveness, unmentioned by secular theories, is crucial. Responsibility for one's actions can help one toward healing.
- (4) A Christ-centered psychology sees Jesus & incarnate God and the perfect expression of humanity.

Vitz along with others is stepping out on a valuable, crucial pilgrimage. A broader theory of anthropology, with help from missiologists, should be integrated into this ongoing work. The power of "charismatic" experiences (as well as damage from misuse of particular practices) must be explored. Finally, a deeper understanding of the incarnation (paralleling Jesus) with the marginalized world will help us find new sources of God's grace and mercy.

[Note: As part of the Colloquy on Christianity Confronts Modernity sponsored by Pastoral Rene The Word of God Community and The Christian Student Center, this lecture was given in Ann Arbor, October, 1980.]

ACADEME (Reports from seminary classrooms, special events and TS chapters.)

A SAMPLE CONSTITUTION OF THE EVANGELICAL STUDENTS UNION

A newly affiliated chapter of the Evangelical Students Union at the American Baptist Seminary of the West has drawn up a constitution which we present here as an example of constitution for chapters. This new chapter is a direct affiliate of the Theological Students Fellowship (a division of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship)

The constitution follows:

In addition to the aims and doctrinal basis of the Theological Students Fellowship (TSF) propose the Evangelical Students Union (ESU) of the