

THE ELEVENTH CHELTENHAM CONFERENCE.

JUNE 24, 25, AND 26, 1926.

THE Eleventh Conference of Evangelical Churchmen, clerical and lay, held at Cheltenham, under the presidency of the Rector, considered the general subject of "The Church and the Future."

The following Findings were agreed upon at the final Session of the Conference. They are to be taken, as in previous years, as expressing the general sense of the Conference, and not as representing in detail the views of individual members.

1. The Conference recognizes that the present age demands—especially in view of the outlook and aspirations of the young—the most strenuous efforts on the part of all Christian people to think out and apply the best and most effective methods of securing a true and full presentation of the Message of Christ.

2. To secure this end the Conference urges all Christian people to be prepared, even at the cost of the surrender of many long-standing prejudices, to adopt such a broad and charitable outlook as will render possible a reorganization of existing Church order and the removal of barriers which are not according to the mind of Christ. It believes that a far greater measure of Unity than at present exists can be obtained without the sacrifice of Truth.

3. The Conference affirms the duty of maintaining that Christianity is primarily a religion of redemption, with the Atonement as its centre. Individual salvation is the first and indispensable aim of all Christian work. The conquering power of Christ over sin in His people must be exhibited more fully than in the past. Civic responsibility, social evils and economic problems must be more fully recognized as being the intimate concern of all Christian people.

4. The Conference, while recognizing to the full the value of the Parochial system for pastoral work, commends the fuller development of special methods, and the setting apart of men and women with the appropriate gifts, for dealing with particular sections and interests of the Community, at present out of the reach of ordinary parochial organizations.

5. The Commission of Christ for the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments is not limited to any particular form of ordination. The spiritual reality of the Ministry is attested by the blessing which attends its work.

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6. The Conference welcomes such developments of worship as are calculated to express effectively the Christian faith, and to satisfy human needs and aspirations in the approach to God ; but the false perspective, contrary to the teaching of the New Testament, in which the Holy Communion is frequently placed, tends to promote the growth of practices, ceremonies and devotions associated with the sacred elements, which are bound, not only to present an erroneous conception of God and His grace, but also to place serious obstacles in the way of commending Christianity to the oncoming generation.

7. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ Himself in remembrance of His death and passion, to proclaim His death until He come, to bring His followers into fuller communion with Him and with one another, and to nourish their spiritual life. The Reservation of the consecrated Bread and Wine is unnecessary for the communion of the sick, is confessedly desired for the purpose of "devotions," implying a false idea of the nature of Christ's presence as focussed in the material elements, and gives rise to many superstitions.

8. The unparalleled need and unique opportunities of the "World Call" demand more self-denying consecration of life and treasure for evangelistic work at home and mission work abroad, and for the pastoral care of our own people in the British Dominions beyond the seas.

9. Since the maintenance of a well-equipped and spiritual Ministry is essential to the work of the Church, the Conference repeats its appeal to all Evangelicals to pray earnestly that God will call men to the sacred Ministry, diligently to seek out youths and men who may have a vocation, and to make adequate financial provision for their training. The Conference welcomes recent united movements towards that end.

10. The Conference is convinced that every possible effort should be made to promote regular private and family reading and study of the Holy Scriptures, as the basis of all moral and spiritual growth and the best corrective of error.