

of another seminary of the same denomination to which I belonged and arranged to have him preach two Sundays and I would preach two Sundays. I would preach on the resurrection of Christ and what it means to us, or the necessity of salvation through the shed blood of Christ.. Then he would preach on the Glory of the Commonplace or on How Jacob Believed in a Tribal God. Once he crossed over the Jordan into another area he was in the area of Chemosh instead of Jahweh and so things were entirely different. While I preached I saw this poor fellow sitting in the front row with his face just writing in agony, and I suppose I looked just about the same way when he preached. But the people liked us both. People are tremendously influenced without realizing it how they are influenced. I'm afraid that the most I could do there was well counterbalanced by what he was doing.

One morning in his prayer before the sermon, he addressed Christ and in his prayer to Christ he used terminology it seemed to me could only be applied to God and it did not seem to me to fit with his general attitude. So the next time we were together chatting I said to him, It sounded to me in your prayer this morning as if you expressed belief in the deity of Christ. Did I misunderstand you? Oh, he said, I have no difficulty with the deity of Christ. Well, I knew so many things he did have difficulty with that I could not quite understand that. So I said, What do you mean by deity? We were alone, and there was no examining committee of presbytery or anything like that near and he spoke quite frankly. So he said, God is a symbol for ethical values, just like Uncle Same is a symbol for the United States. I said, How can you pray to God then? Oh, he said, you can address a stick or a stone. You can talk to the ocean." Here we was addressing a symbol for ethical values, and I was praying to the God who created the universe. That's the situation we've had in so many of our denominations in recent years.

Now those who believe in God only as a symbol for ethical values or something like that ~~xx~~ have gotten control of most of our large denominations and the others either have to keep quiet or be pushed out and start from scratch again. If it's God's will we certainly must start from scratch and if our Lord carries I'm sure we can build up groups that believed just as our ancestors believed. But in the meantime there are great numbers of people who just do not have a chance to hear the gospel. What they do hear is offset by all this atmosphere around them. I believe it is vital we have a vital grasp on this that when we say the Bible is God's Word we are not talking about some abstract generalization but we mean just about the same thing as I would say when I get a letter from my wife and I say, This is a letter from my wife; this is what she has said. The Bible is what God has said; it is God's revelation.

Well, many people nowadays give the impression at least that this idea of revelation is an old out-of-date-mideaval notion. We don't want revelation. We want what we can see, what we can touch, what we can handle. We're interested in science; we're not interested in revelation. I believe it is good we enable our people to understand that in using this word revelation we're not using some sort of strange esoteric word that refers to some lofty concept that does not have much connection with human life.