

# Table Talk

News and Views of the Student Body of The Lutheran  
Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

1966

Vol. II No. 25

Seminary Week

May 4, 1966

## "RESURRECTION" RESURRECTED

It is interesting to note that Mr. Pielke's article in "Table Talk" regarding the Hefner-Loose discussion on the Resurrection emphasized one primary point: Dr. Hefner and I presented similar, if not practically identical, positions. My impression is that precisely the opposite is true, as I shall attempt to demonstrate for the readers of "Table Talk." Unless I missed entirely the thrust of Dr. Hefner's paper and remarks, the differences between the two of us should have been obvious to attentive listeners. Briefly, Dr. Hefner appeared to be arguing that if Christian claims concerning the resurrection are not true, then the Christian faith is not true and is, therefore, an illusion. Indeed, he insisted that the resurrection is "the single event, without which the emergence of early Christianity is unintelligible." In addition, after outlining the admittedly complex argument of Pannenberg, Dr. Hefner resorted to a number of rhetorical questions designed to place the burden of proof on the opposition, e.g., "If the resurrection never happened, or if it were an illusion, why did not the Jewish foes of Christianity belabor this point in their polemic against Christians, in the life-and-death struggle in the first and second century?" Such a question is not only rhetorical but also an argument from silence, and both factors raise serious doubts about the validity of the questions. In any event, my concern is not to restate Dr. Hefner's position, but to show in what way or ways we differ. I assume that Dr. Hefner can and will clarify his own position for the Seminary community.

In contrast to Dr. Hefner's viewpoint, I thought I had made quite clear that the resurrection business is not a crucial  
(Cont'd next col.)

## A WORD OF WELCOME

Seminary Week 1966 is off to a flying start and Table Talk extends greetings to Gettysburg's alumni, friends and guests. Unless you're of very recent vintage--like last year's graduating class--Table Talk will be new to you. This is our second year of weekly (more or less) publication. Our purpose is to put the "news and views" of the seminary community into circulation via the printed word.

As you also may note, we're not perfect but we do get a certain job done, and we hope that Table Talk fulfills an important role in the life of Gettysburg Seminary. We do hold the distinction of having been responsible for the "1965 Student-Faculty Riot" of last Spring. (Don't ever use the phrase, "new breed" around here!)

We sincerely hope that you enjoy your Sojourn in Gettysburg during this year's Seminary Week (---would you believe two days?) The Seminary thanks you for coming, the faculty thanks you, the Alumni thank you, and the Motel Owners' Association thanks you!

F.K.

---

## "RESURRECTION" (Cont'd from col. 1)

topic, but that for the purpose of the scheduled discussion with Dr. Hefner there were two factors of interest to me: 1) the intellectual stimulation afforded by an investigation of the resurrection bit in order to have something to say when the discussion occurred; and 2) the only importance (and this is an historical judgment on my part) that I attach to the event to which the metaphorical language "resurrection from the dead" is ascribed is the value of the creative freedom that  
(Cont'd on page 2)

VIETNAM PUBLIC FORUM

For many months now, the American people have been debating our involvement in Vietnam. This debate has been valuable, because it has caused us to think critically about international issues, and it has increased the general level of awareness among our citizens. On this Saturday, May 7, at 11 a.m., in the Student Union Auditorium at Gettysburg College, we will have the opportunity to hear a point of view on Vietnam that is not generally heard in our area. Two outstanding speakers will share the platform Saturday morning, in the Vietnam Public Forum. Carl Oglesby, national president of Students for a Democratic Society, will be our chief speaker; he has been called "the most articulate spokesman for the New Left in America," and he represents 4,500 students on 100 college campuses in the U.S. With Oglesby will be James Higgins, assistant editor of the York Gazette and Daily whom Time magazine describes as the "crusading editor of one of the nation's most effective local newspapers."

The purpose of this Vietnam Public Forum is not to represent any particular political party or any specific cause or opinion. Rather, the Forum simply brings two outstanding speakers to Gettysburg, in the hope that Gettysburgians will react to them, argue, ask questions. This open discussion will be possible after the two speeches, in an open meeting which will be moderated by Professor Eric Gritsch on Saturday morning. Anyone who wishes still further exposure to the speakers can attend a special news conference with the speakers at 10:30 a.m. in the auditorium at the College.

The Vietnam Public Forum has wide sponsorship. The speakers have been brought here by the Gettysburg Coordinating Committee of Citizens Concerned about Vietnam. It is co-sponsored by the Seminary Student Association (whose support is greatly appreciated), the Central Pennsylvania Committee on Vietnam, the College Student Senate, and the College Chapel Council.  
(Cont'd next col.)

STAFF

Managing Editor: Fred Krautwurst  
Junior Editor: John Woods  
Senior Editor: J. Paul Balas  
Typist: Carol Avery  
Printer: Kirk Bish

VIETNAM (Cont'd)

Further information is available from Professors Gritsch, Hefner, and Wilken.

--Philip Hefner

ADDENDUM TO "THEY'RE HEPE AGAIN"

Yes they are here again and you can spot every one of them as they creep into the square looking upward, left and right, frantically trying to find the traffic lights.

I thought I had heard all the questions tourists traditionally ask and most of the good quasi-traditional answers.. However, I was recently informed by a park ranger we all know that even they invent beautiful answers at times. Standing in the parking lot by Devil's Den late in the evening, the puzzled women asked "How did the Confederates get these rocks here." To which our park ranger replied, "They were flown in by buzzard!"

Jim Ericker

"RESURRECTION"

has on occasion in the history of the Christian community been actualized in human affairs. In other words, if the metaphorical language "resurrection from the dead" can cause human beings to live liberated, creative lives, then I can recognize the importance and significance of that language and its concomitant ideas.

On the other hand, whether the Christian claim that Jesus was "resurrected" (Cont'd on page 3)

"RESURRECTION"

from the dead" is true or false doesn't concern me in the least, particularly since I have no way of knowing, apart from accepting the apostolic witness, whether or not he was resurrected from the dead--whatever that metaphorical language might mean. Dr. Hefner, however, views this matter in a radically different way: "One cannot honestly base his life, as the Christian does, on an event that really never happened, or one that we suspect never happened." Unlike Dr. Hefner, as a Christian I simply do not base my life on the metaphorical language "resurrection from the dead" or on any alleged event authoritatively attached thereto. Moreover, since I see very little evidence of human lives having been or even now being transformed by the resurrection bit, I'm even more reluctant to attach any importance to the metaphorical language under discussion.

Still another point in need of clarification is the following statement made by Mr. Pielke: "Both men acknowledged that the resurrection was, indeed, an historical 'event.'" His statement is, I assume, correct with regard to Dr. Hefner's position, but it is incorrect with regard to the paper I presented. As I see the matter, the only valid historical knowledge available to us is that an event occurred which marked the coming into existence of the Christian community in Jerusalem. What that event was is known to us through the metaphorical language used by the New Testament writers to describe their understanding of what they experienced, and it is common knowledge that their accounts differ. It is one thing to say that the resurrection of Jesus was the cause of the effect, i.e., the Christian community, which can be known historically. While it is true that form criticism has identified strands among the variety of accounts that appear in the New Testament, the reasons given for determining that some accounts are more reliable for historical knowledge than others should (Cont'd next col.)

"RESURRECTION"

be viewed critically. Similarly, the arguments presented by so-called historical scholarship should also be viewed critically, and I, for one, am pleased to note that Pannenberg takes great pains to state his presuppositions clearly, thus indicating that he may very well be a much more careful scholar than many of his disciples.

To clarify my critical approach to historical scholarship, in my paper I had pointed out that "historical reasoning can make a meager case for the historicity of the resurrection only by requiring us to grant the validity of anthropological presuppositions." In this connection, I have great respect for Pannenberg because from the very outset he states candidly that "only if one takes this general presupposition as a starting point is it at all significant to put the question of the resurrection of Jesus as a historical question." And what is that general presupposition? "We do not know what is awaiting us beyond death in another dimension of reality. In spite of this, however, we have to form an idea of it in order to become aware of our destiny. . . . It is necessary for a clear self-understanding of our human existence to form such an idea. This connection is proof from the truth of the expectation of the resurrection of the dead." ("Dialog", Vol. 4 (Spring, 1965), p. 131.) According to Pannenberg, then, the historical question of the resurrection cannot be raised significantly until and unless we grant his anthropological presupposition. Unfortunately, even if we do grant this presupposition, it only proves the anthropological truth of the expectation of the resurrection of the dead; it does not prove that Jesus or anyone else actually rose from the dead. As Pannenberg clearly shows, his anthropological presupposition enables him to apply the principle of analogy in his historical reconstruction of the "resurrection event," and, as we all know, analogies may afford us the comfort of probability but never the equanimity (Cont'd on page 4)

"RESURRECTION" (Cont'd from page 3)

of certainty.

Finally, Mr. Pielke gently chides me for separating faith and hope as well as for preferring to ignore the subject of the symbol, immortality. Presumably, he cannot understand how the faith that "Yahweh provides" can be separated from hope because, as he put it, "to trust in Yahweh is the supreme source of hope." But hope for what? Here Mr. Pielke seems to think that immortality, destiny, and hope are the terms I should associate with faith. Hence, he again infers that Dr. Hefner, who did talk about destiny and hope, and I have a similar position. In contrast to Hefner and Pannenberg who (Cont'd next col.)

do have a great deal to say about hope and destiny, I do not think it is necessary for a clear understanding of our human existence to form an idea of what, if anything, is awaiting us beyond death. And from the theological vantage point of trust and confidence that "Yahweh provides" I couldn't care less about the destiny of man, including the destiny of Jesus. Perhaps that is precisely why Mr. Pielke cannot understand my refusal to associate, still less identify, faith and hope; and perhaps that is also why Christians find it difficult to understand that until they can affirm and exemplify that "it is not I who live, but Christ who lives in me," they have not reached the point of responding to Paul's question before Herod and Festus: "Why do you think it incredible that God should raise the dead?"

Dr. John Loose  
Gettysburg College

Price Change in Coke

It has become necessary to increase the price of Coke from 5¢ to 10¢ because the Coca-Cola bottling Company has raised its price. Even under the 5¢ system there was approximately a \$10.00 service charge per month which has created a deficit in the Coke account. Therefore it really was necessary in order to stay in the "black" and out of the "red" to raise the price. We did not go to 7¢ or 8¢ because it is a great nuisance for the company and for us since in past experience using pennies in the machine caused it to get jammed at least weekly and then the company has to come and correct it.

In the machines there will be King Size bottles of Coke and Tab and small bottles of Coke and the flavors. The Coke company does not have King Size bottles in the flavors.

We are all sorry that we can no longer buy a 5¢ coke but it is hoped that all will understand that the change was necessary. Thank you.

Kirk Bish