

Table Talk

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

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THE WATERGLASS AFFAIR

My fellow seminarians,

It has been brought to the attention of the community that there is a alleged scandal in the government of the Refectory. It seems as though some few bearded long-hairs have charged the steward with blatant favoritism toward the seniors. I am the steward, and make no mistake about that. This alleged favoritism charge from the minority is shocking. I will not let this cause sission in my Refectory!! Let me make one thing perfectly clear. We have pride in our Refectory, and it is here that we must draw the line. Do we listen to the scattered few on the left or do we follow the tradition of all great single seminarians. However, I have taken some decisive action in this regard. The Board of Directors will be investigating this incident; however, they have informed me that to make a thorough investigation of this matter, they will not be finished until after the next election, after which time everything will be cleared up. I know that the great mass of seminarians is behind me, because I am the steward. Thank you.

"Tricky" Frank Terhune

ON THE ROCKS

Word that our seminaries are thinking about offering the D. Min. degree is getting around. The other day a secular friend grabbed me by the lapels and yelled, "Hey! How come you fellows are moving into mineralogy? Arent you having enough trouble with theology?" I patiently explained to him that the "Min." behind the "D." was short for neither "mini" nor "mineralogy;" yet, the more I thought about his mistake, the more natural it began to seem. Mineralogy and ministry aren't really that (cont. page 2, col. 2)

RESULTS

Table Talk does get results. As a result of John Gropp's article in the last issue, six bibles have been placed in the Chapel. Two are in the side chapel and four in the main chapel.

What about you? Wouldn't you like to change something? Write it up now. Who knows---they might build a statue to honor you someday!

- Uncle Marty

ART

The Adams County Public Library and the Lutheran Theological Seminary will jointly sponsor the showing of Pioneers of Modern Painting, a series of six films covering the lives and works of six leading artists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The films will be shown three Wednesday evenings--November 29, December 6 and December 13--at the seminary. They will be presented in Room 206 (Aberly Room) in Valentine Hall. Beginning at 8 o'clock, two films will be shown at each session. Henri Rousseau and Edvard Munch on November 29; Claude Monet and Georges Seurat on December 6; and Edouard Manet and Paul Cezanne on Dec 13. Each film is 45 minutes in length. The series will be shown free of charge to the public. No tickets or advance reservations are required for any of the scheduled showings.

Pioneers of Modern Painting is written and narrated by Kenneth Clark and follows the pattern of Lord Clark's Civilization series shown last year.

Most of the Pioneers series was filmed in France, with the exception of Edvard Munch, which was photographed in Norway, the artist's native country. Lord Clark has not relied, however, solely on the paintings in these localities. Thirteen of the works discussed (cont. page 2, col. 1)

.. from page 1, col. 2) ART
the series are hanging in the Nation-
al Gallery of Art in Washington. Others
are in museums and private collections
all over the world.

Lord Clark's son, Colin Clark, pro-
ducer of Pioneers of Modern Painting,
has been a television producer since
1956. This is his first joint venture
with his father.

Lord Clark has had a long and dis-
tinguished career in art, serving as di-
rector of the National Gallery, London
(1934-45), Slade Professor of Fine Arts,
Oxford University (1946-50 and 1961-62),
chairman of the Arts Council of Great
Britain (1953-60). He is the author of
numerous books on art. Among his many
honors is the National Gallery of Art's
medal for Distinguished Service in Art
for the Civilization series.

Mrs. Franklin Bigham, chairman of
public relations for the Adams County
Public Library, is co-chairman of the
Library-Seminary Committee together with
the Reverend Gerald Christianson, as-
sistant professor of church history at
the seminary. The Library-Seminary Com.
with the help of a grant from the
National Endowment for the Humanities,
is sponsoring the Pioneers of Modern
Painting series.

This issue of Table Talk features an
article by faculty member Jacob M. Myers.
It begins on page 3 and is titled, Free-
dom for Service.

We thank Mr. Myers for his efforts on
our behalf.

HAPPINESS IS TAKING FINALS???

Ministers evaluating a Billy Graham
Crusade held last year in Oakland, Cali-
fornia, have estimated that approxi-
mately one-third of the 21,670 who re-
gistered "decisions for Christ" gave
false names and addresses.

-The Christian Century

POLL

Results of the Poll regarding elect-
ed course enrollment limit:

	<u>Senior</u>	<u>Middler</u>	<u>Junior</u>
PRO-	1	2	13
CON-	1	9	12

Thanks for your vote.

- Andy Krey

(cont. from page 1, col. 1) ROCKS
far apart. Hardly a week goes by, for
example, that some pastor staggering
back from the front doesn't report that
he's having a "rocky time" of it. Then
there are those avant-garde types who
always want to tell you about their lat-
est "rock mass." I even know one hot-
eyed liturgical renewalist who, in the
interest of "getting some movement into
the liturgy," ripped out all the pews in
his nave and installed two hundred rock-
ing chairs.

The affinity between mineralogy and
ministry runs deeper than that, however.
Think, for instance, how our preaching
would benefit from a solid grounding in
mineralogy. Sometimes we roar out of
our clergy stalls wielding the Word of
the Lord like "the hammer that breaks
the rock." How helpful it would be if
we could analyze precisely the kind of
rock on which we're hammering, and thus
guage more accurately the angle and ve-
locity of the blows necessary to crack
it. It would preserve us from taking a
ten pound sledge after poor sinners
whose hearts are already as vulnerable
as soapstone, while we tap the flinty
old heart of some church pillar with a
tack hammer.

Likewise, when we preach the good
news of grace, a course or two in miner-
alogy wouldn't hurt us. At a minimum,
we should be able to locate unerringly
that Rock which is solid enough to sup-
port the jerry-built houses we all man-
age to make of our lives. The fellow
who wrote:

"On Christ the solid rock I stand,

All other ground is sinking sand,"
obviously had behind him, at the very
least, an undergraduate major in miner-
alogy.

I became so excited about the possi-
bilities here that I wrote to several
(cont. page 5, bottomn, col. 1)

All kinds of movements have arisen lately whose avowed purpose is liberation for their proponents. But as George Santayana (Dominations and Powers. New York: Scribner's, 1951, p. 242) has reminded us there is, strictly speaking, no such thing as complete freedom. Politically, socially and even personally we are subject to certain limitations, even if determined by ourselves. Karl Marx is reported to have remarked once that "man is free only if he owes his existence to himself." That is obviously impossible in thought or fact. We may be free to choose, but the choice is between relatives and we are inevitably bound by the one we make. "Freedom means more than emancipation. It is primarily freedom of conscience, bound up with inner allegiance. The danger begins when freedom is thought to consist in the fact that 'I can act as I desire.'" (A. J. Heschel, The Insecurity of Freedom. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1959-66, p.14). "Liberty," writes E. F. Scott, "consists in obedience to Christ, the one Master, and we obey Him by serving one another" (Paul's Epistle to the Romans. London: SCM Press, 1947, p. 98).

I. Freedom from Domination.

Nowhere is the religious concept of freedom better illustrated than in Israel's historic experience of liberation from Egyptian domination. Israel's lot in Egypt under the Pharaoh who knew not Joseph was not an enviable one. The expression "house of slaves" means precisely what it says; it was neither a pious exaggeration nor a liturgical cliche. The Hebrews were social, political, economic, and perhaps religious slaves. They were an oppressed people, subject not merely to restrictions of all kinds, but to untold hardship and suffering (Ex. 3:7:ff). Something of the Egyptian attitude toward them is, perhaps inadvertently, disclosed by the midwives reference to Hebrew women as ki hayoth (being like animals). Being a minority group they were treated harshly, as minority groups still are today(cf. Ex.1:13f).

Deliverance from the frightful conditions of Egyptian slavery meant release from demeaning servitude so devastating to body, mind and soul. Had that condition remained unaltered, the Hebrews in Egypt might well have lost their identity and been unable to fulfill their destiny as the descendants of the patriarchs. Slavery can be endured for a time without irreparable damage to the social structure of a people; but protracted slavery kills its body and soul. From that awful prospect Yahweh saved the people that were to become his own nation.

II. From Domination to Service.

Complete freedom is an illusion, even in Eden. The cry of Patrick Henry "Give me liberty or death" may hav echoed the feelings of some thoughtful Hebrews in Moses' time. What both meant was liberation from domination to a more or less self-imposed service. Santayana observed that "...to flourish without feeling any domination crossing your path is to obey, and thereby develop, your inmost freest, most disinterested powers; it is to live in the spirit. Your compulsions have become your choices and your limitations your virtues" (op. cit., p. 151). Cf. Jacques Elul, The Politics of God and the Politics of Man. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972, p. 16).

For the Hebrews to be in "the house of slaves" meant deprivation, affliction, and erosion of spirit. To be liberated from domination did not, however, imply a purposeless or willy-nilly existence. Moses was instructed to say to the Pharaoh, "Let my son go that he may serve me" (Ex.4:23). What he actually said was, "Let my people go, that they mya hold a feast to me in the wilderness" (Ex.5:1). The salient feature of both expressions marked a shift of base of control from domination by the Pharaoh to service to Yahweh. Yahweh delivered the sons of Israel from the house of slaves to another form of service into which he was about to initiate them. Henceforth they would not be under the control of Egypt with its corvee, but obedient servants of Yahweh in response to a freely accepted covenant proffered by him. Thus the base had shifted from domination to obedience, from compulsion without to submission from within. Israel was delivered from something to something.

The ultimate import of what that entailed for Israel was spelled out in another act of divine grace known as the torah, for it too is God's gift to his people informing them how to conduct themselves as his people. Therein are revealed the fundamental principles by which the people could abide in responsiveness to him and so realize fully their covenant blessings, to be free to Yahweh.

Israel was Yahweh's son, Yahweh's people and, as such, must reflect that relationship in all of life's activity. They must be holy as he is holy (Lev. 11:44-45; 20:7,26; 21:8). They were to be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" to Yahweh (Ex.19:6). "All the congregation are holy, every one of them, and Yahweh is among them" (Num.16:3). Henceforth they will not be submissive to other gods or fall victim to the folly of graven images; they will not apply the name of Yahweh to anything he has not commanded. They will keep the sabbath in commemoration of their deliverance from the house of slaves (cf. Dt. 5:15). Out of respect of what Yahweh did for the fathers and for them, they will worship him alone in joy and gladness of heart, and observe his festivals with thanksgiving.

But the covenant had further implications. It involved internal relationships. The Israelites were a family of Yahweh, hence brothers in the covenant. This meant having due respect for fathers and mothers, preservation of the lives of brothers and sisters, maintenance of family existence by the avoidance of adultery, the protection of chattel property, true witness bearing in court, and assistance of one's covenant brothers in the possession and development of their property and goods.

Specific applications of these basic criteria for covenant fellowship, community, are spelled out in detail in the several law codes of the Old Testament and in the prophets. They were kept up to date and/or expanded as time went on and cases of violation arose--a telling indication of the living character of Yahwism. Some of the items dealt with are slavery(Ex.21:2), money-lending (Ex. 22:5), justice for the poor(Ex.23:6), bribery(Ex.23:8). Ecological and health problems are likewise subjects of concern. So is the treatment of ger (stranger) as may be seen from Lev. 19:33f.

Israel as a redeemed people was invested with a new sense of the freedom of obligation. They were delivered to serve in a community of brothers. In a television program presented by the Baltimore Rabbinical College last spring, three Rabbis discussed the meaning of this freedom. The word that dominated the discussion was responsibility. They opined that Israel had been freed to responsibility. The Hebrews were not delivered to be freeloaders. The Scriptures attest that they never fully realized Yahweh's expectations. Again and again they chose reenslavement--to their whims and fancies, to Baalism with all its material thrills, and thus surrendered to the domination latent therein. Repeatedly they tried to escape Yahweh's freedom only to become slaves to their own passions and irresponsible inclinations. To be free under Yahweh meant to accept his terms which made for peace, joy, inner satisfaction, and freedom of spirit. The significance of the Yahweh-Israel relationship is epitomized by Ezekiel: "They shall no longer defile themselves with their idols, with their detestable things, or with their transgressions; but I will save them from all the back slidings in which they have sinned, and I will cleanse them, so that they shall be my people and I will be their God"(37:23). Here deliverance and covenant are no longer confined to the Exodus experience but are extended to salvation from the self-enslavement of sin and moral turpitude.

III. Conclusion

Liberation by Yahweh, therefore signifies freedom in covenant service to live and act in ways incomprehensible to oppressed and oppressor. It is the freedom to do good, to love, to exercise justice, fairness and equity. It is the liberty to heal rather than to hurt, to accept rather than to reject discipline, to honor rather than to disgrace, to help rather than to hinder, to save life rather than to destroy it, to be humble rather than proud, to be

neighborly rather than malevolent.

The credo of Joshua 24 was ever a challenge to the Israel of Yahweh. "Choose ye this day whom you will serve"--the material servitude of Egypt with its fleshpots and affliction or the service of Yahweh with the blessing of covenant community of truth, righteousness, honesty, humanitarianism, and inner resolution. You cannot exist in a self-imposed vacuum! Aeschylus wrote of the Greeks: "Slaves are they to no man living, subject to no earthly name" (The Persians, p.309), but they were subject the choice of their gods and their decrees. Go to the museums or leaf through any handbook of archeology and see for yourselves what happened to proud peoples and nations who abused their freedom to make themselves into gods--enslaved by greed, lust, pleasure, selfishness, injustice, irresponsibility only to crumble into the dust of time. In the words of Yehezkel Kaufmann, "Sin is not a tragic necessity; it is always the fruit of the will...Because a man can choose to do good, he is answerable for his evil-doing...The Torah and the prophets...speak impassionedly of guilt and the consequences of wrongdoing and demand that Israel choose life" (The Religion of Israel. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960, p.329). Or as Heschel puts it: "Freedom is liberation from the tyranny of the self-centered ego...The meaning of freedom is not exhausted by deliberation, decision, and responsibility, although it must include all this. The meaning of freedom presupposes and openness to transcendence, and man has to be responsive before he can become responsible. For freedom is not an empty concept. Man is free to be free; he is not free in choosing to be a slave; he is free in doing good; he is not free in doing evil. To choose evil is to fail to be free. In choosing evil he is not free but determined by forces which are extraneous to the spirit...We are free only when living in attachment to the spirit" (op.cit., pp. 15,18). What that means for John and Paul see James D. G. Dunn, "Rediscovering the Spirit, Part I" in The Expository Times, Vol. 84 (Oct. 1972), pp. 7-12.

J. M. Myers

(cont from page 2, col. 2)

leading mineralogists in major universities, asking them if they could offer any suggestions for a seminary curriculum. The first three responses brought these intriguing course titles and descriptions: Mineralogical Foundations: The art of distinguishing between the funny stones of religion and the true gem of the Gospel. Mineralogy and Change: How to rock the boat without smashing it to pieces. Homiletical Mineralogy: How to throw rocks without getting stoned.

I think there are some equally good ideas in the other letters piling up on my desk, but I stopped opening them after I got this reply from some smart aleck at Harvard: "You must have rocks in your head."

-Brother Sisyphus

Some minds are like concrete - all mixed up and permanently set.

"Two things have helped me understand how Jesus could love against all odds: One is the way I have learned to love the hypocrites I call my congregation; the other is the way they have learned to love the egoistic idiot they call their pastor."

-The Rev. Paul Corcoran,
Lansdale, Pa.

Best wishes for
a happy ____!
See you next
year. T.T.