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The purpose of the Quaker Theological Discussion Group is to explore the meaning and implications of our Quaker faith and religious experience through discussion and publication. This search for unity in the claim of truth upon us concerns both the content and the application of our faith.

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CHRIST AS PROPHET:
STUDIES IN THE BASIS FOR CHRISTIAN OBEDIENCE

I begin my term as editor with a second major irregularity in publishing. For only the second time in its history, QRT is appearing as a "double issue," with two numbers between a single set of covers. The reasons for this fact have to do with the peculiar history of this issue and with the unity of its theme. There seemed no good way to split the papers up into two
issues, without sacrificing the ways in which they complement one another. I offer an apology for this irregularity and an assurance that I do not expect to make a habit of it.

This issue of QRT has evolved directly from the 1973 summer conference of the Quaker Theological Discussion Group, which was held at Powell House in New York state. The evolutina is manifest in the fact that only one of the papers, that by Howard Macy, appears here in substantially the same form as it was read at Powell House.

The Powell House conference was planned around the theme, "Christ as Prophet." The QTDG executive committee had been aware of Lewis Benson's growing conviction that George Fox's prophet Christology was a distinctive theme, of central importance to his message. We therefore conceived of a conference with a paper by Lewis Benson on this topic as the "piece de resistance," with a background paper on the Old Testament prophets to lead up to it, and with two papers afterwards on the implications of a prophet Christology for Christian obedience and Christian unity.

But abstract conference-Blueprints have a way of being blown about by the gales of reality. As Howard Macy developed his paper on the prophets, he found himself questioning whether Jesus Christ could be adequately characterized as a prophet. Keith Esch, during the preparation of his paper and even more during and after its delivery, questioned the adequacy of the prophet-theme to his own conception of Christian obedience. Thus instead of forming an architectonic unity around which discussion might flow, the papers became themselves the focus of debate and controversy in the forum of the Powell House conference. In this situation, an obvious gap opened up between the arguments of Howard Macy and of Lewis Benson, since the one paper was based on biblical interpretation and the other took the thought of George Fox as its basic premise. To bridge this gap, John Curtis was persuaded to prepare a brief bibliography of contemporary expositions of prophet Christology by leading New Testament scholars, and Lewis Benson determined to complete his argument by demonstrating the biblical basis for George Fox's position.

Thus this issue of QRT emerges with an article by Lewis Benson almost twice as long as his original Powell House paper, since it now includes his originally undeveloped exposition of the biblical sources of Fox's Christology. On the other hand, Keith Esch's paper has been drastically shortened, to an epitome of the interpretation of Christian obedience which he finds viable. To complete the transformation, part of Candy Jones' Powell House paper on "the Light which unites" has appeared already in revised form in QRT, Vol. 15, No. 2; his paper in this issue is an expansion and development of one rather brief portion of his original Powell House paper.

I believe that the issues which emerged at the 1973 Powell House conference are more squarely drawn in the papers as they now appear. For my own estimate of the importance of the issues which these papers raise and of the further questions to which they point, I refer the reader to the closing paragraphs of the review which concludes this issue of QRT.

A CALL FOR BROADER AUTHORSHIP

At a recent meeting, the QTDG executive committee in its review of the history of QRT noted that nearly all of the lead articles have come from the United States of America. One article by Dutch Friend Otto Boeles was written while he was in the United States; Maurice Creasy has contributed several articles from England; otherwise, our authors have all been Americans. This degree of provincialism in the authorship of QRT articles is clearly undesirable. I therefore join the executive committee in especially encouraging Friends (and persons interested in Quaker thought) in other parts of the world to submit papers for editorial consideration.

OTHER MATTERS

The Quaker Theological Discussion Group plans to hold a conference this summer at Quaker Hill. Dates for the conference are August 28-31, 1975. The conference theme will be "Discerning the Holy Spirit: The Quaker Viewpoint." For further information or to register, write to Quaker Hill Conference Center, 10 Quaker Hill Drive, Richmond, Ind. 47374... Stocks of QRT, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Paul A. Lacy. The Death of "the Man Upstairs") are nearly depleted. Any reader who can spare a copy of that issue is urged to contact QRT, Route 1, Alburtis, Pa. 18011.... Our special thanks to the 51 persons who enabled us to continue publication by contributing a total of over $600 during 1974.

V. P.

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