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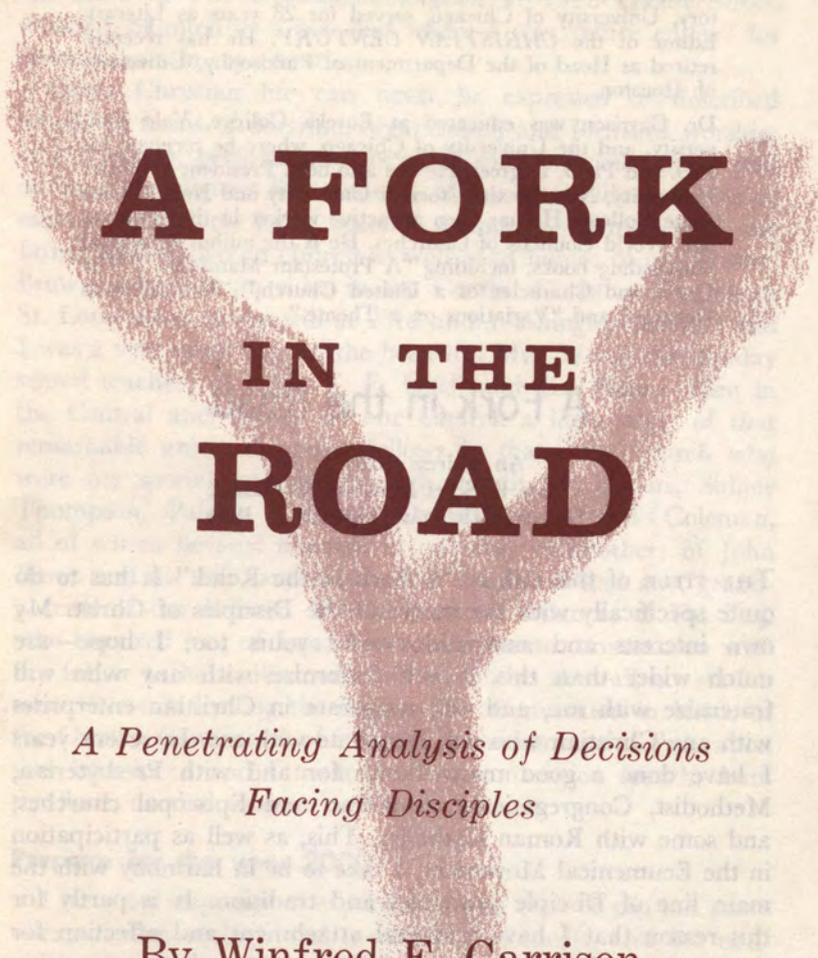
### Winfred Garrison, A Fork in the Road: A Penetrating Analysis of Decisions Facing Disciples

Winfred E. Garrison

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# A FORK IN THE ROAD

*A Penetrating Analysis of Decisions  
Facing Disciples*

By Winfred E. Garrison

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Winfred Ernest Garrison, Professor Emeritus of Church History, University of Chicago, served for 28 years as Literary Editor of the *CHRISTIAN CENTURY*. He has recently retired as Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Houston.

Dr. Garrison was educated at Eureka College, Yale University, and the University of Chicago, where he received his B.D. and Ph.D. Degrees. He has also been President of Butler University, New Mexico Normal University and New Mexico State College. He has been an active worker in the National and World Councils of Churches. He is the author of several outstanding books, including "A Protestant Manifesto," "The Quest and Character of a United Church," "Heritage and Destiny," and "Variations on a Theme."

## A Fork in the Road

An address made at the  
Oreon E. Scott Ministers' Breakfast,  
Detroit, Michigan, October 7, 1964

THE TITLE of this talk is "A Fork in the Road." It has to do quite specifically with the future of the Disciples of Christ. My own interests and associations—and yours too, I hope—are much wider than this. I will fraternize with any who will fraternize with me, and will cooperate in Christian enterprises with any Christian who will cooperate with me. In recent years I have done a good many things for and with Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational, Lutheran and Episcopal churches, and some with Roman Catholics. This, as well as participation in the Ecumenical Movement, I take to be in harmony with the main line of Disciple principles and tradition. It is partly for this reason that I have a special attachment and affection for the Disciples of Christ, because I know of no other communion of Christians of which it can be said that this principle of comprehensive fellowship is so "essentially, intentionally and constitutionally" characteristic.

Moreover, the Disciples are the family of faith in which I was born and in which I have gladly lived. I have been a member of a "Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)" ever since I was baptized (and not in infancy) on March 6, 1884, and I preached my first sermon in January 1895. I have attended conventions of our churches from almost as far back as I can remember. In boyhood and youth I knew personally many of the men who are now great names in the middle (or earlier) period of our history. Most of them used my father's house as a hotel when stopping over in St. Louis and all of them visited

the office of *The Christian-Evangelist* at 1522 Locust Street, which I haunted as a boy and where I was "office editor" for several years in my twenties.

One's Christian life can never be expressed or described wholly in terms of doctrine, organization and forms of worship. It is concrete, personal and social. A solid and substantial part of my own religious life—indeed, of my whole life—consists of experiences which have become memories—memories of my father and mother in church as well as at home; of old Brother Brown, who was an elder in the Central Christian Church in St. Louis when it was still at 23rd and Washington Avenue and I was a very small boy; of the beautiful Mrs. Wood, my Sunday school teacher; of elders F. E. Udell and Jim Henry Allen in the Central and Union Avenue Church a little later; of that remarkable group of young fellows in that same church who were my special intimates though slightly my seniors, Sidney Thompson, Palmer Clarkson, Oreon Scott, Frank Coleman, all of whom became eminent in one way or another; of John Burns and his wife, authentic saints if we ever had any, grandparents of our beloved Robert Burns of Atlanta; of Dr. Foy, who baptized me; of Isaac Errett in intimate conversation with my father as he walked with our family to the railway station when we were leaving the Kansas City Convention in 1886; of the Omaha Convention of 1902 when the concept of Federation was introduced and I made my first convention speech, from the floor, on that subject; and so on and on.

### **Prepare for the year 2000**

I have my sequence of experiences, and each of you has yours—experiences of high and memorable moments, and the multitude of regular and recurrent experiences too nearly alike to be remembered individually, all woven together into a lengthening and thickening and increasingly unbreakable cable of commitment binding us to this particular fellowship of the faithful. This is not narrow sectarianism. It is not that we love other Christians less, but that we love our own family of faith more. In the words of Charlie Weaver, "These are my people."

Strong as are these ties of memory and sentiment, I could break them and find a congenial spiritual home elsewhere if I did not believe that there is something needing to be said to the Christian world and something needing to be done that can be said and done more consistently from the standpoint of the Disciples of Christ than from any other.

The first words that came to my mind as a possible title for

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Providence

this talk were, "Prepare for the Year 2000." I may not be around at that time, but most of you probably will be, and it is proper and important for the leaders of any great movement to think at least one generation ahead. Thirty-six years is a short time in history. There are decisions that must be made now in the light of anticipations and hopes for the future. However, the note of urgency does seem to be lacking, or muted, when one speaks of preparing for the year 2000, and my purpose is to say that there are some things about which Disciples of Christ must make up their minds soon—not, to be sure, with hectic haste but with deliberate speed and in the near future.

On the other hand, I am suspicious of the word "crisis." It seems to imply either a state of imminent peril or an imperative demand for an immediate decision between two clear alternatives, with an irrevocable consequence that will be either desirable or devastating according to the choice that is made—like the celebrated case of the Lady or the Tiger. Either you get the Lady or the Tiger gets you—and quick! In real life the alternatives are seldom so clearly antithetical or the consequences so irremediable.

The terms "crisis" and "emergency" have become trite and devalued by over-use. It is true that, in a sense, everyone lives in the presence or imminent threat of a continuous series of crises. Skip a meal and your stomach proclaims a state of emergency; skip three and you are confronted by a crisis. Stay under water for a minute and your lungs declare an acute emergency. We are never more than two or three deep breaths away from asphyxiation. Yet we survive without much anxiety on this score, but only because we do make the right decisions at the right time, generally without being conscious of them and without realizing how closely we are skirting the brink of disaster.

Social and institutional "crises" are generally more prolonged. They may become chronic conditions instead of coming quickly to the crux which the word seems to promise or threaten. The history of the Disciples of Christ has abounded in such crises and their literature is rich in references to them. At a session of the Congress of the Disciples of Christ, held at Lexington, Kentucky, in 1901, after a prolonged discussion of the "crisis" through which all the speakers agreed the Disciples were passing, the venerable Dr. W. T. Moore arose and, stroking his long white beard with a gesture which had become imperative with him, said: "Brethren, I have been working with the

Disciples for more than half a century and I can't remember a time when they were not passing through a crisis." It may be added that in that same year, 1901, Professor Herbert L. Willett had a book published under the title, "Our Plea for Union and the Present Crisis."

Well, the Disciples have survived crises and emerged from emergencies. None of these has been sudden and cataclysmic, like a cyclone which either hits you with death or ruin, or narrowly misses you and leaves everything as it was before. The crises a religious communion may encounter are not so spectacular and dramatic, but they may be quite real, and they never leave things just they were. The decisions involved are slower in the making, and the results may be slower in coming, but they come.

The crisis that Professor Willett was talking about in 1901 was produced chiefly by two factors. The first, growing out of the critical methods of Biblical study which were new at that time, was a wide divergence of opinion in regard to the nature of the Bible and the possible limitations upon its use as the ultimate authority on all matters of which any part of the Bible speaks. This difference was, and is, basic to almost all the other differences. The second, not unrelated to the first, was the beginning of a new era of interdenominational cooperation, federation, and the implicit possibility that the effective implementation of our historic "plea for unity" might involve something else than urging all the rest of the Christian world to accept "our position" in its entirety.

These issues soon became acute. Federation became a hotly controversial topic in 1902 and continued to be a ground for internal alienation long after the Disciples of Christ became a charter member of the Federal Council of Churches. The group now known as Churches of Christ in 1906 gained statistical recognition of a separation which had long been actual. The specific grounds of this secession—missionary societies and the organ—were merely specifications under the larger head of differences in interpreting the nature of Biblical authority and, consequently, of the scope and details of "restoration." In 1909 there was a bitter and prolonged fight to keep Professor Willett off of the program of the Centennial Convention at Pittsburgh on the ground that he was a "destructive critic" of the Bible. A little earlier he had been writing the weekly articles on the Sunday school lesson for *The Christian-Evangelist*—in my judgment the best such articles that paper ever had, not forgetting the rather long period when I wrote them myself.

Throughout the nineteen-teens there was a continuous running fight between a very mild liberalism (or a tolerance for liberalism) on one side and a polemical conservatism on the other. "Liberal" and "conservative" are not wholly satisfactory terms in this connection, but anyone who read both *The Christian-Evangelist* and the *Christian Standard* during that period, or has studied the history, will know what I mean. Early in the 1920's the extremists on the far right began a violent attack on the missionary societies, not in this case for being societies, but for the alleged ultraliberalism of their alleged practices, especially for their alleged sponsorship of fellowshiping unimmersed Christians in foreign fields, particularly China. Several times in that decade our conventions faced a "crisis" and met it by passing an ambiguous resolution which was supposed to settle the whole matter at a stroke. But it never did, because it did not touch the core of the difficulty, which was the lack of fraternal attitudes growing out of a lack of mutual tolerance for diverse opinions about the nature of the Bible and of Biblical authority and, consequently, different attitudes toward Christians who did not accept in toto "our historic position."

### **Tolerance of divergent opinions**

This recital of controversies need not be prolonged. I have cited them partly as a reminder that we have always been a free people among whom differences of opinion were to be expected. There has been some regrettable acrimony, but controversy in itself is not discreditable. However, I would not go along with the exegesis of that (perhaps legendary) preacher who interpreted 1 Timothy 3:16, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness," as implying that *with* controversy all the mysteries could be cleared up. Within our own religious body, as among the separated communions which we long to see united in the One Church, the sin is not in having differences but in permitting the differences to become divisive.

From the start we have proclaimed that loyalty to Christ is our only test of fellowship, and that no matter of "human opinion" should be permitted to separate Christians. Our Founding Fathers, however, great men as they were, at once set up a pattern of thought and practice for the church as being divinely authorized or, in Thomas Campbell's words, "the express letter of the law." This was, in fact, a complex of their own opinions as to what the Bible taught and its divine sanction. Months of debating and thousands of pages of print were de-

voted to proving the correctness of positions that were claimed to be so obviously God-given no honest Christian could doubt them. This initial mis-labeling of opinions as indisputable revelations naturally operated within the group to turn discussion into controversy, that into recrimination, and that into separation.

Tolerance of divergent opinions is essential in a united church or a united brotherhood, but it is impossible unless opinions are recognized as opinions. Some have made progress in that direction. Those who continue to forge the name of God to their own inferences, opinions and programs, will go on being intolerant separatists and sectarians.

Last Saturday's newspaper in my home town carried display advertisements of the churches of various denominations. Our churches had two separate ads: one headed "Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ)"; the other, "Christian Churches, New Testament." This reminds one of the First World War story of the Catholic chaplain who said to his Protestant colleague: "Yes, we have both been doing God's work, you in your way and I in His."

Our "crises," if we want to call them that, are situations of internal stress and tension generally involving concrete programs of action. (Disciples quarrel more about what they *do*, than about what they *think*.) The tension may linger a while with diminishing intensity and then be forgotten, as with our "close communion" controversy more than a hundred years ago. Or it may build up to the breaking point, as with the Churches of Christ. Or it may remain for a time in an implicit but not formalized separation which one can still hope will not become explicit, as with a present so-called non-cooperatives.

Because our "crises" are of the gradual and undramatic kind, rather than such explosive events as the word seems to imply, I prefer to say that the Disciples of Christ are approaching *a fork in the road*, rather than facing a crisis. The phrase is not so good for purposes of oratory, but I am no orator anyway, and I think it is more accurate and realistic.

### **The choice of the road**

An unmarked fork in an unknown road does, to be sure, require a decision. Some of you will at once think of Robert Frost's lovely poem, "The Road not Taken," and its conclusion that the choice "made all the difference." So indeed it may. But sometimes roads that divide run parallel. Sometimes they are two ways of getting to the same destination. Sometimes they

converge. Years ago, as a young fellow on a bicycle trip, I encountered at the foot of a hill a fork in the wagon track that then served as a road in a densely scrub-timbered region about a hundred miles south of St. Louis. I didn't want to ride that road twice, so I waited for some native to come along and tell me which road to take. In half an hour a native came by. To my inquiry he replied: "It don't make no difference. They come together at the top of the hill. That 'un's shorter but steeper." And then, when a man finds that he has taken the wrong road he can generally turn around and go back. History of course is irreversible, and one can never get back exactly to the status quo ante, but it is possible to correct some kinds of errors.

With this analogy, and recognizing that this analogy, like all other analogies, becomes fallacy if pressed too far, I come at long last—when I am about half through—to my thesis that we Disciples of Christ are now approaching a point of decision which is something like a fork in the road. We will have to decide pretty soon which of the alternative ways we will choose, or whether indeed they are alternatives. There may be other options besides those I have in mind, but there seem to be at least two clearly distinguishable objectives toward either of which the Disciples may choose to direct the next stage of their development.

*First*, we may choose to become a more closely organized denomination, oriented toward efficiency, institutionally unified, structurally integrated, with our numerical boundaries and our doctrinal position clearly defined, and speaking with a united voice, so that both we and the general public can know exactly who we are and where we stand. With such definition and organizational equipment we could do our cooperative work more effectively. We would be able to speak with a united voice representing the whole body. We could deal on terms of parity with other denominations on all matters of common concern, whether in and through the World and National Councils of Churches or in more intimate conference and consultation with one or more denominations.

Or, *Second*, we may press toward the ideal of becoming a microcosm of a total united church, speaking with a united voice only on those topics on which a united church could be expected so to speak, making no collective definition of doctrine beyond our basic affirmation of the Lordship of Christ, and having a variety of voluntary organizations and agencies through which congregations can efficiently practice that cooperation which itself is not optional but is essential to authentic church-

liness. *In this case we would have no other criteria of our own unity than those which can be the bond and test of unity for the whole united church.* We would not consider ourselves fatally divided if some of "our" churches did not support the agencies which others, or most, of "us" support and did not own allegiance to our improved ecclesiastical structure; and we would not be terribly depressed if there were widely different doctrinal views and church practices among us. But we would consider ourselves sadly divided if any element should cherish feelings of distrust and suspicion, or even of alienation and indifference, toward any other.

These are both what William James called "live options." To ask which we should choose is not to ask a rhetorical question which implies its own answer. While these seem to be strictly alternative courses of action, I will attempt to present an affirmative case for each of them in turn, as though I were its attorney.

### **For a carefully structured denomination**

*First, then, in favor of a carefully structured and institutionally integrated denomination.* This would not prejudice our claim that we have a unique message, but it would put us on a parity with other religious bodies for the purpose of interdenominational conferences and consultations and for such cooperative action as requires responsible representation. It must be admitted that the Disciples of Christ have always been regarded as something of an oddity in the interdenominational scene. Our "official" delegates have questionable credentials as representatives of the whole body of Disciples, but because our brothers in other communions are generous and really want us to be in, they are willing to accept credentials from the International Convention, as though it represented all the Disciples, though everybody knows it does not. In the list of member bodies in the World Council we do not appear as "Christian Churches" or as "Disciples of Christ," but as "International Convention of . . . etc.," alphabetized not under "C" for Christian or "D" for Disciples but under "I" for International. We have, in fact, for this purpose permitted our membership to be contracted to the participants in and supporters of the International Convention. How else could we get any representation at all? People who won't go to the polls and vote in a political election are disfranchised only by themselves. The International Convention does represent, in our somewhat informal way, a vast number,

probably a majority, of those who would want to be regarded as members of this brotherhood, and its associated agencies do almost all of their cooperative work, missionary, educational and benevolent. Why not tighten up the whole organization and produce an integrated structure which can be recognized by the world as well as by ourselves as representing all who are entitled to recognition as Disciples of Christ?

Call it brotherhood, fellowship, denomination, or what you will, a religious movement needs leadership, cohesion, machinery, internal lines of communication, structure. It is not enough for it to be an ideology, a point of view, a state of mind, surrounded by a vaguely defined and unorganized aggregation of persons who agree with it in a general way and are more or less committed to its advocacy. On the contrary, it must be a recognizable entity with definite boundaries and an articulate and responsible voice. It must have functioning organs, agencies and instrumentalities capable of effective and responsible action, and it must be able to know the extent and the limits of the group in whose name these agencies and organs function.

There is an old axiom of international law to the effect that "a blockade to be respected must be effective." This means that a nation at war cannot simply declare that an enemy port is blockaded and then expect neutral nations to respect that merely verbal blockade. If a blockade is to be respected by neutrals it must be real, with a sufficient naval force deployed around the port to constitute a formidable obstacle to entry. In like manner, for a religious movement to be respected it must be effective. Only a *good* denomination, well organized and efficient, can make any adequate impact on a world that needs the gospel or on other denominations in a war against denominationalism, or can on equal terms confer and consult with them for a common approach to that unity which, it seems, they now desire as much as we do.

The call for a definite and comprehensive structure such as other denominations have is not to be brushed off by a reference to 1 Samuel 8:5, where it appears that the clamor of the Hebrews for "a king to judge us like all the nations" was displeasing to Jehovah, though he did yield when they demonstrated in favor of monarchy. We, as Disciples, are in a concrete situation—you can call it our "existential situation" if you like—which requires specific and visible criteria of our own unity, so that we and others may know just who are included when we say "we." We must define our faith, practice and polity in such

clear terms that we and others may know where we stand, and who stands there.

It has often been remarked that we have been preaching unity for 150 years but have never united with anybody since the Campbell-Stone merger of 1832. Perhaps one reason for this is that no denomination knows exactly what it would be uniting with if it should unite with the Disciples of Christ.

Therefore, as attorney for the first of the two positions I have defined and contrasted, I say that we should proceed to form a more perfect union, and that this will not only promote the general welfare and insure domestic tranquillity but also strengthen our foreign policy in negotiations with other communions.

### **For a microcosm of the united church**

But before the jury retires to deliberate on this case, I must shift my role and say a word in support of the alternative program, namely, that the Disciples of Christ should be, as nearly as possible, a pilot project for a completely united church, and that they should not seek to ground their own unity either on an integrated ecclesiastical structure or on a formulation of theological doctrine, *since the whole church cannot conceivably be united in these ways*, but should rely upon a basis of unity which can be universal. This would be a kind of "restoration," and I am claiming on behalf of my present client that it is the true and authentic restoration. This position rests upon certain convictions: *first*, that unity was an essential characteristic of the church in the minds of Jesus and the Apostles; *second*, that *this was not a unity of polity, procedure or doctrinal definitions*, and that no such pattern is clearly disclosed in the New Testament, much less made mandatory for succeeding ages to the exclusion of all who do not accept it; *third*, that no patterns of doctrinal statement and organization produced by conferences of even the wisest theologians and ecclesiastics will ever be accepted by all Christians as essentials of a united church; and *fourth*, that the bond and test of the church's unity originally was, and can never be anything other than, the professed acceptance of the Lordship of Jesus by its members and their attitudes of mutual love and concern as brothers in one faith and partners in a common cause.

Our Founding Fathers had such an ideal in mind when they set the precedent we still follow in receiving new members into the church. They asked, and we now ask, only one question: "Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and do you take him as your Lord and Master?" In the absence of

any definition of the terms employed in this question the affirmative answer is not the acceptance of a theology but the simple expression of an attitude of loyalty and devotion, like the primitive church's still shorter formula, "Jesus is Lord." It is for this reason that we feel justified in putting this question to children twelve years old. I am sure this is what it meant to me when, without any prompting, I "made the confession" before my tenth birthday. This confession, which would exclude no one who seriously wants to be a follower of Christ and a member of His church, is a unitive and sufficient confession of faith for the universal church. In this respect the Disciples of Christ are already on ecumenical ground. On this point they are now a microcosm of the united church.

This leaves still to be considered the nature and structure of the church—both the church as a whole and the Disciples of Christ as a microcosm of it if they choose to be. Broad terms of admission to the church will not achieve the unity of all Christians unless the church itself is such that those so freely admitted to its membership can live in it conscientiously and congenially. Sects have been divided quite as much by their organizations as by their doctrines. At present the major denominations are distinguished much more clearly by their structures than by their theologies.

Our Founding Fathers thought they had found in the New Testament unmistakable authority for a specific form of polity and also for a fairly complete pattern of procedure in worship and everything else that the church might do. Unfortunately, so far as concerned the unity objective, the great majority of Christians could not find these mandates in the New Testament. Some found quite different ones. Others found none at all but thought that the church had authority to determine its own structure and to exclude all who did not accept it. Our Fathers all agreed that there was authority for Congregational autonomy, but they soon came to differ as to whether the authority's silences were permissive or prohibitory with reference to such devices as conventions, missionary societies and instrumental music.

The united church will not be a "visible" institutional entity with a universally recognized and episcopally authorized ministry, an integrated synodical system and a "pastoral primacy." There is nothing in history or reason to support an expectation that any one form of church organization, or any one set of institutional arrangements, will ever be universally accepted as divinely authorized and so of the *esse* of the church. It is

equally inconceivable that any institutional structure *not* recognized as of the *esse* of the church could ever be accepted as an essential of the united church and a criterion of its unity. Two or more denominations can by conference and agreement set up a polity which will serve the purposes and define the limits of the larger denomination they form by merging, but this is not even an approach to a united church, which can have no such basis of institutional integration.

So, as attorney for those who would choose the second of the alternatives that have been proposed, I am saying: *First*, while the united church must have organizations and structures, these cannot be uniform throughout and cannot be its bond of unity. It must have room for any form of organization that does not, by its arrogant and exclusive claims, excommunicate all the others. Organizational unity is impossible, and calling it "organic" does not help, for in this context it means the same thing. *Second*, the Disciples of Christ, similarly, must have institutions and agencies, the more efficient the better, but these should not be their bond or test of unity. Their fellowship must be wider than any integrated organizational structure. *Third*, if the Disciples want to show the way to a united church, they must go that way themselves.

### **The choice before us**

We are approaching a fork in the road at which we will have to decide whether we want to be a more efficient denomination, perhaps part of a bigger and better denomination, with such structural integration that we and the world may know exactly who we are, how many there are of us, and "where we stand," *or* a less clearly defined movement, brotherhood or fellowship which is content to be a pilot project for the united church and therefore as loosely defined in polity and doctrine as the united church must be, yet bound together by a common loyalty, a common hope, and a common commitment to the concept of a church which considers no Christian as alien to its communion.

After all, these forks in the road may not diverge too widely. They may even run parallel and become a single broad highway. Or there may be a middle path. Certainly we must encourage organizations. Every group of Christians trying to do anything in the world needs organizations and agencies. There must be structures, mechanisms and orderly relationships available to those who can be persuaded to use them. There are continuing enterprises with specially trained workers, both at home and

abroad. The support of these must be dependable and continuous. Missions, benevolence and education are not spasmodic operations that can be quiescent one year and effective the next. So there is need of pressure to secure continuing maintenance of these activities at peak efficiency. The officers who have been chosen and charged with responsibility for their continuance are in conscience bound to use all diligence both in their administration and in securing the funds for their maintenance. The fact that organization and agencies are not the bond of the church's unity, if that is the view one takes, does not mean that they are unimportant or that the Christian can act whimsically or irresponsibly in relation to the outreach work of his church.

My own habits, convictions and connections lead me to be strongly in favor of the International Convention and its associated agencies. By and large, allowing a reasonable margin of error for human fallibility, I believe in their programs and have confidence in their personnel. I am ready to exhort all Disciples, and as many others as can be persuaded, to support these agencies with their sympathy and their substance. I will argue as opportunity offers, but I will not quarrel, with those Disciples who choose to support other agencies, for these are not the things that unite us if we want to be a working model of the united church. In a world wide church there will be many agencies. Not everybody will support the United Christian Missionary Society, and our International Convention, even enlarged and improved, will never represent all the Christians in the world.

An attitude of mutual suspicion and hostility, or even of indifference, between groups that support different sets of agencies would indeed divide the church. It may divide the Disciples of Christ, but it must not be permitted to do so. The mere fact of diversity, in structure or in doctrine, need not and ought not to divide us. The clearest and most needed word we can say in the Ecumenical Movement is that unity is consistent with diversity. But our saying this will not mean a thing unless we can illustrate it.

Some of us at times may have used the phrase, "Christian unity," as a slogan or as an incantation, mouthing it meaninglessly in vain repetition like the mob in the theatre at Ephesus when "all with one accord about the space of two hours cried out, 'great is Diana of the Ephesians.'" though "the more part knew not wherefore they were come together."

If our plea for union is not a mere pious phrase, we must let our imaginations play with it and depict for us the magnitude

and the colorful variety of a united church—its litanies in tongues unintelligible to us, its revivalistic fevers in forms alien to the tastes of most of us, its priests and hierarchs whose credentials, like their haberdashery, have no authenticity for us, its scholarly theologians whose conclusions may be unconvincing to us, yet all bound together with us into one body by a common loyalty to one Lord and a mutual love and concern as his followers. If we cannot face the prospect of such diversity in the one church, we do not yet really want a united church.

But if we do want a united church—united in this way—then, along with all the diversities of doctrine and structure and varieties in practice, habits and ecclesiastical mores, it ought not to be too difficult for us to maintain a unified brotherhood which will be, in the interim, in some modest sense a microcosm of that united church. If this really is our criterion of fellowship, we may—no, we certainly will—find that we are already united with many other Christians whose organizational relations are quite different from ours.

The two ways at the fork of the road can converge. We can organize and restructure for greater efficiency so many of our churches and people as are willing to be so structured. We can refuse to allow our organization to become a boundary line or a wall of separation by which to determine who are and who are not Disciples of Christ. We can keep steadily in mind that, in our own brotherhood as in the whole church, the unifying factor is neither institutional structure nor intellectual formulations of doctrine but the attitudes of a common loyalty, mutual concern and the sense of a common cause.

## Pension Fund Ministers' Breakfast

YEAR CONVENTION CITY	SPEAKER
1930—Washington, D. C.	Daniel Poling
1931—Wichita, Kansas	Bishop Fred Fisher
1932—Indianapolis, Indiana	George A. Buttrick
1933—Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	E. Stanley Jones
1934—Des Moines, Iowa	George W. Truett
1935—San Antonio, Texas	Bishop Ivan Lee Holt
1936—Kansas City, Missouri	F. E. Smith
1937—Columbus, Ohio	Roger T. Nooe
1938—Denver, Colorado	James A. Fifield
1939—Richmond, Virginia	Willard L. Sperry
1940—No Convention	-----
*1941—St. Louis, Missouri	A. E. Cory
*1942—Grand Rapids, Michigan	Norman Vincent Peale
1943—No Convention	-----
*1944—Columbus, Ohio	Jesse M. Bader
1945—No Convention	-----
*1946—Columbus, Ohio	Arthur W. Hewitt
1947—Buffalo, N. Y.	M. E. Sadler
1948—San Francisco, California	S. E. Fisher, Jack Suggs
1949—Cincinnati, Ohio	James W. Clarke
1950—Oklahoma City, Oklahoma	Harold Cooke Phillips
1951—No Convention	Area Assemblies
1952—Chicago, Illinois	Umphrey Lee
1953—Portland, Oregon	William A. Shullenberger
1954—Miami, Florida	Halford E. Luccock
†1955—Toronto, Ontario, Canada	Robert McCracken
1956—Des Moines, Iowa	Clarence E. Lemmon
1957—Cleveland, Ohio	Franklin Clark Fry
1958—St. Louis, Missouri	Harold A. Bosley
1959—Denver, Colorado	David A. MacLennan
†1960—Edinburgh, Scotland	Murdo Ewen McDonald
1960—Louisville, Kentucky	Carlyle Marney
1961—Kansas City, Missouri	James Cleland
1962—Los Angeles, California	D. Elton Trueblood
1963—Miami Beach, Florida	Roy O. McClain
1964—Detroit, Michigan	W. E. Garrison

\*Ministers' Hours, no meal served.

†World Convention. All other gatherings were in connection with the International Convention.