

should not be viewed as one that "makes or breaks" the faith but should have less stress that more energies might be given to the fuller range of spiritual warfare.

Provincialism

The fourth class of principle observation will warn us against the fatal mentality that sees the whole world as being lived in one corner. As a rule when one tries to impress one's own cultural ideals on others, confusion is produced. A world view, rooted in exegetical theology, is called for in which the church is allowed to live out its obedience under different cultural ideas.

(2) Problematic Situations

As history "repeats itself" we become more aware of the frequency of certain sets of problems. Knowing how they have grown and affected church life in past times, we should be able to see them forming and offer corrective action before tragedy comes. When this is possible the value of history is inestimable. Among these problems some stand out as being particularly painful.

Theological innovation

Often a dangerous culprit, we must exercise caution in dealing with new ideas. Mere innovation is not the problem. The real difficulty is an unwillingness to accept what is basically accorded as true. In the hope of finding more accurate understanding, startling heresies have developed. Hindsight is easier in these matters but we discover that nearly all of the Christological errors grew from theological novelty beyond the open concept of Scripture.¹⁴ To forbid such suggestions would be a reckless abandonment of the proposition whereby every believer is to be a student of the Scripture -- for oneself. But to remember that the possibility of error and divisiveness is close to us all is one of the great practical lessons of history. The challenge is to think while keeping the thought patterns open to wider suggestions of truth but not self-contradiction.

Oversight of error

In a somewhat different vein we discover the oversight of error to be a problematic situation. We define error as what is taught or performed clearly in violation of Scripture. A broad definition on these lines will show the value of tolerance on many issues where the "clear violation" is not apparent. We will actually be less censorious of individual practice when a concentration is made on the essential truths. But if such flagrant error is