

# ISSUES...

IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Spring, 1977

Volume 11, Number 2

*The witch  
of Endor*  
**CRYSTAL BALLS**  
AND  
NOW

**FUTURISM!**



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# ISSUES...

IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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### EDITOR'S NOTES

Christians have a myriad of models of future oriented people among the saints. Their decisions for daily living were influenced by their focus on eternity.

Jacob's answer to Pharaoh's question concerning his age, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are . . .," is a good example. Another is the Lord's parabolic response concerning the planning of the prosperous farmer: "This night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"

The Scripture urges us to make our decisions on the basis of the "givens of the future." The materials on the following pages provide additional background for the reader on this often neglected topic.

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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## editorials

### LUTHERAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS FACE THE FUTURE

Most, if not all of us, readily agree with William A. Kramer when he states that the future of Lutheran schools is in God's hands. They have been in God's hands since their inception and God has taken good care of them in spite of many difficulties along the way. There is reason to believe that God will continue to bless our Lutheran elementary schools, especially if we continue to make them instruments for doing His will and do not let them become victims of indifference or mediocrity.

Several years ago the cry went out that the future of Lutheran elementary schools was in jeopardy. The birthrate was dropping and the cost of education was rising. When the federal government began pouring millions of dollars into public education without like benefits to non-public schools, many thought that non-public schools, including Lutheran schools, would be forced out of existence. This hasn't happened. In fact, during the past several years Lutheran school enrollments have stabilized and some congregations without schools are studying the possibility of opening their own schools. Some congregations are hoping that newly acquired Directors of Christian Education will be instrumental in starting a Lutheran school in their midst. Statistics also indicate that we are experiencing growth. In 1974, 20.17% of the baptized children of the LC-MS from kindergarten through grade eight were enrolled in a Lutheran school. In 1975 the percentage had risen to 20.65. While the growth was small, it was an increase. We also find that there is a growing percentage of non-Lutheran children in our schools. Yes, God has been good.

While we know that the future of the Lutheran elementary school is in God's hands, we also know that there are things we can be doing to help assure that future. Every congregation operating an elementary school ought to be assessing the strengths and weaknesses of that school. All of us should make certain that the main purpose of our schools is to teach the story of Jesus Christ as the crucified Redeemer of the world, and from that make of our schools and classrooms living examples of what it means to live under the shadow of the cross of Christ.

Lutheran schools face an interesting challenge today. Education has been rocked with many types of ideologies in

recent years. Some of them have fallen by the wayside because they were impractical or because they failed to fully consider the sinful nature of man. Lutheran schools which have continually stressed the basics in education, which have not been satisfied with a watered-down version of education and which have continued to stress the Biblical view of the nature of man have prospered and should do so in the future.

Achieving future success will take more than passive interest and activity. We will need full commitment from all involved. Congregations, including individual parents, will need to promote and support sound basic education based on Jesus Christ as Savior. Teachers will need to be dedicated, not only to teaching, but to Christian ministry as well. Synodical teachers colleges will need to be alert to the needs of the local congregation as they prepare teachers for work in ministry. All of us need to look again at what the Bible says of parent and teacher responsibilities and the nature of man. We may find that we have not been fulfilling our God-given responsibilities. While it is true that finances will continue to take a prominent role, it must also be said that if the Lutheran day school is valued highly enough, funds will be found to properly finance such schools. With God's help there is a bright future for Lutheran elementary schools, but it won't just happen. It will take sincere dedication and commitment on the part of many people.

Roy C. Krause

### THE FUTURE OF LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOLS

The 1977-78 school year will mark the 75th anniversary of Lutheran secondary education. Since the first Lutheran high school opened its doors three quarters of a century ago, some forty additional schools have opened. According to synodical reports, a number of other communities are contemplating opening a Lutheran high school in the near future. Feasibility studies are being conducted or have already been conducted in a number of these areas. Based on available information, it appears that Lutheran secondary education is growing rapidly.

In order for Lutheran secondary educa-

tion to continue to grow and for the existing schools to remain strong there are a number of things that need to be done.

1. The schools need to continue to keep in mind their prime objective: To lead young people closer to Christ. Opportunities need to be provided for young people to grow in their Christian faith and to share that faith with others. Such things as volunteer programs give students an opportunity to live their Christian faith. Schools need to be fully aware of their responsibility to reinforce the teachings of the Christian home. Schools need to evaluate their programs regularly in order to meet these objectives.

2. Many non-Christian parents are selecting Lutheran high schools as an alternative to public education. The mission opportunities that are present are excellent. Schools need to determine how they will meet this challenge in their communities.

3. Long range financial planning becomes a necessity. Inflation continues to affect school budgets. All avenues of possible financial support need to be considered. A concern that all Lutheran high schools must face is the possibility of becoming so expensive that only the wealthy can afford to send their children. Within the past year 25 private schools in Minnesota have formed the Minnesota Independent School Fund. This organization contacts various corporations and individuals for grants and financial support. Any funds that are raised are equally distributed among the 25 member schools. This is one method that is used to stimulate greater financial support.

4. Constant analysis of academic programs is a necessity. On-going changes occur in society and students need to be prepared to deal with these changes. Accrediting agencies, whether they are synodical, national or state, serve as excellent tools for the evaluation of school programs.

5. Career education needs more emphasis in the future. A recent Gallup poll showed that 80% of the adults responding said that high schools should place more emphasis on career education activities. The same poll indicated that only 13% of the 11th grade students said that they had received "a lot" of help in career planning. The area of career planning presents a valuable opportunity for Lutheran high schools to give the students a look at careers from a Christian perspective.



CIRCULATION POLICY — *ISSUES . . . in Christian Education* is published three times a year by the faculty of Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Nebraska 68434. A copy of *ISSUES* is sent free to each church, school, district and synodical office in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Copies are also sent to high schools, colleges, and universities affiliated with the Synod. Individuals wishing personal copies may obtain them as follows: Single copy @ 75¢ each; Subscription @ \$2.00 per year; 10 or more copies mailed to the same address @ 35¢ per copy.



6. In order for a school to offer a well-rounded educational program it needs to have a well-planned co-curricular program. Athletics, music, drama, and other special interest clubs all can reinforce basic school objectives. The entire co-curricular program needs frequent appraisal so that it is kept in proper perspective. Care must be taken so that these co-curricular activities do not become the most important part of the entire school program.

Lutheran high schools will continue to play a very significant role in their communities if they continue to emphasize the Christian philosophy of education. Evaluation of existing programs and effective planning for the future should be an integral part of all schools, and are even more important if Lutheran high schools are to prepare young people for service to their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Dennis Verseman

#### THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE

There will be a church in the future. We can say with a certainty that God has promised that He will be with His faithful unto the end of the age. There are those who have been predicting the eminent demise of the congregational structure of the church for many years. When one considers the congregation in the context of a voluntary association, it can be said that the church along with all voluntary associations is experiencing difficulties. People are not as loyal to institutions as they once were. They want to receive the maximum service possible from the organizations with which they affiliate. They are seeking individual identity rather than simply affiliation.

In their quest for identity, men and women are pursuing the personal in a society which seems to be highly impersonal. The computer is a useful tool in a multitude of areas of life, but it is seen as the arch-enemy of the individual, as the great depersonalizer of the masses. While computers and other technologies should be utilized in carrying out the work of the church, those who are involved in the planning process should realize what the computer represents.

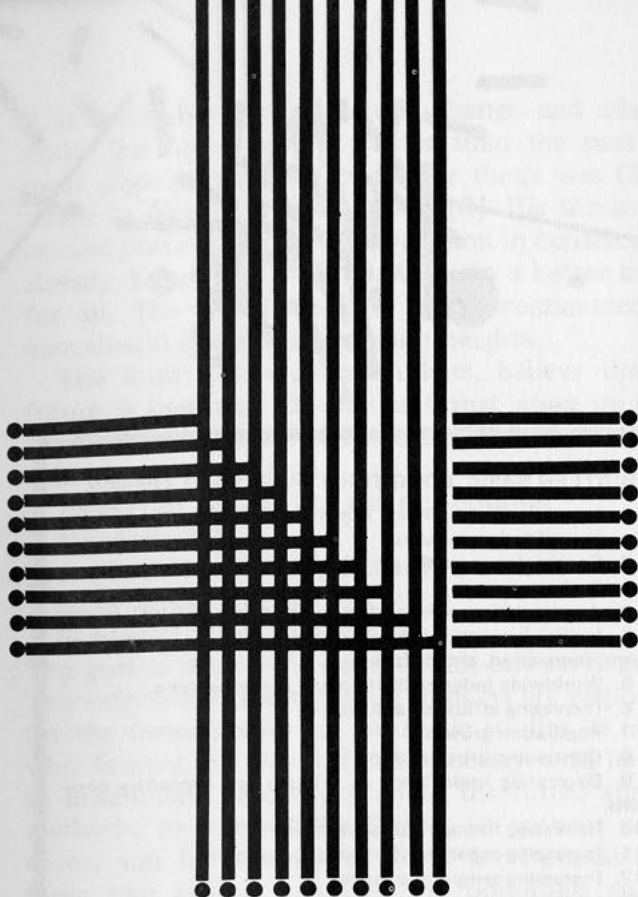
The society of the future will probably be as complex or even more complex than the present society. The church is and will be a reflection of that complexity. The present popularity of management seminars for professional workers is a recognition of the complex nature of the structure. At the same time that the operation is becoming more complex the cost of supporting the services will continue to increase at a rate which is not proportionate to the services which can be offered. A more complicated structure would seem to warrant larger full-time staffs; however, congregations will find that they are not able to afford the additional workers. What it will have to mean is that there will be a greater utilization of part-time and shared staffing arrangements along with volunteers in an age when volunteers will be even more difficult to obtain. Hopefully, a positive effect may be the breaking down of congregational walls in those areas of the country where they have inhibited a more efficient use of staff as well as buildings, equipment, and supplies. High cost would seem to dictate a more functional approach.

Because something is functional though does not mean that it is acceptable. People of the future will be willing to sacrifice that which is functional for that which is relational. For example, many of our food products have to be artificially colored because they are more easily acceptable that way than if they were in their natural state. Margarine is still colored to remind us of butter. Church buildings will have to remind us of church. In addition, buildings of the future will have to be designed to give people a chance to relate to one another in meaningful one-to-one encounters rather than in the often highly impersonal methods of the past.

The same may be said for liturgies, educational experiences, and worship opportunities. Unless they take into account the desire for and the validity of horizontal relationships among people, they will find themselves cast aside. The congregation of the future will have to make allowances for actual participation of the individual worshipers and learners in the processes rather than being satisfied with simply talking at masses of people. The church of the future, too, will have to take into account the importance of the units in which people live and make genuine attempts to work with those units instead of fragmenting those units in the classroom and sanctuary.

A vibrant alive congregation will have to convey the personalness of the Gospel message which says to each of us that we are important in God's plan because He has made us important. We live in an age when the tools are available to us to look into the future and predict with a reasonable degree of accuracy the profile of the person in the pew and the classroom. God has blessed us with the equipment and with His Spirit so that we may continue to be equippers/affirmers/enablers.

Ronald W. Brusius



# THE FUTURE, FUTURISTICS, AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

by Gilbert Daenzer

We live in a unique, new age. The future rather than the past is shaping our present. This shift needs to be recognized by the Church and Christian educators if we are to serve our constituencies responsibly. Consider these statements from a current collection of original materials:

"Until recently it was reasonable and proper to think of the past fading into the present and of the present flowing into the future. Now we find, in a unprecedented reverse of the tide, that the future has become so jammed with potential and variables that there is an overflow from the future that is pouring into the present." — June & Harold Shane [12 p. 219]

"All education springs from some image of the future. If the image of the future held by a society is grossly inaccurate, its education system will betray its youth." — Alvin Toffler [12 p. 3]

"Mankind is passing from the primacy of the past to the primacy of expectations of vast future changes." — Harold D. Laswell [12 p.75]

"The world of tomorrow rushes toward us at an ever accelerating rate." — Wendell Bell [12 p.75]

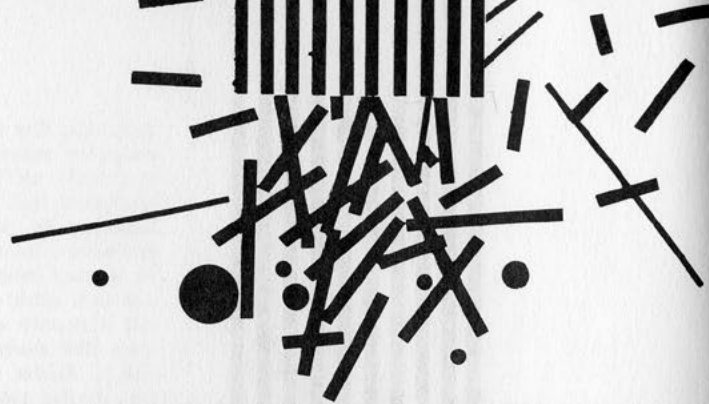
"As the future has begun to creep into the curricula of hundreds of schools and universities across the nation, a controversy has arisen about its nature and boundaries. Is futurism, or futuristics, or futurology an academic discipline or is it a perspective . . . ?" — Billy Rojas [12 p.217]

"Unless one believes that the future is inevitable — that we have absolutely no control over our private and public destinies — the study of the future must include not merely possible and probable futures, but *preferable* futures. This is why the broad movement aimed at shifting education into the future tense also brings with it a heightened concern with values." — Howard Kirschenbaum & Sidney Simon [12 p. 255]

How does one get a grasp on the future? What is this future spoken of as a thing? Consider this sub-title, "The Role of the Future in Education." [12] Notice, not education in the future, but the future in education. Futuristics, a new phenomena, was introduced into everyday conversation by Marshall McLuhan, popularized by Alvin Toffler, romanticized by Charles Reich, visualized by Buckminster Fuller, radicalized by Mark Rudd, and prophesied by George Orwell (1984).

The purpose of this article is to provide an introduction to the people, the topics and the resources of modern futuristics — what it is, who the futurists are, what the futurist futurizes about, the goals of futuristic studies, implications for the Church and Christian education, and why it is an issue for Christian education.





### A Brief History

For as long as records are available man has been practicing forecasting the future — fortune tellers, soothsayers, prophets, I Chang, Tarot cards, astrology, etc. Following World War II prediction became a more formalized discipline through scientific extrapolation and modern “think-tanks” like the RAND corporation. Futuristics now has moved in three directions — technological forecasting, e.g., the Environmental Protection Agency; future studies, e.g., courses in colleges increasing from 3 in 1967 to over 200 in 1971 and more since including 571 known secondary teachers of futuristics; and professional organizations, the best known being the World Future Society formed in 1966, listing over 15,000 members by 1974 and publishing the bimonthly journal, *The Futurist*, since 1967. It is from all three categories plus independent individuals that the literally hundreds of books on different facets of the future have been thrust upon us. The benchmark year for education was '73-'74 with the first education conference (November, '73), Toffler's *Learning for Tomorrow* [12], (Feb. '74), summer institutes for teachers (July, '74), professional yearbooks (AACTE, June, '74) [4 p.229ff], etc.

### The Futurists

The world may be viewed as ordered and determined, random and chaotic, or neutral and open to direction. Futurists tend to view the world either as determined or determinable. Hence Robert Theobald can argue persuasively for three groups: extrapolators, romantics, and the system thinkers, and illustrates each with an interesting science fiction selection.<sup>1</sup> [9]

The first group including some of the best known (Alvin Toffler, Herman Kahn, Paul Ehrlich, Robert Heilbroner) see the future as essentially an extension of the present and the past, more of everything and greater complexity. They come in two flavors: positive and negative, the optimists and the pessimists, those seeing the future as an opportunity with of course some hurdles to surmount and those seeing the future as inevitably intolerable — the gloom and doom group. Among the former Kahn and Wiener [5] list thirteen interrelated components of change (see box) and suggest that the goal of future studies is to learn to manage and modify these components to produce a better environment and quality of life. The thirteen components identify what everything is that connects to everything. Planning design should include blending these together according to Kahn and Wiener [5].

#### THIRTEEN BASIC, LONG-TERM MULTIFOLD TRENDS

1. Increasingly empirical, this-worldly, secular, humanistic, pragmatic, utilitarian cultures.
2. Continuing growth of bourgeois, bureaucratic, “meritocratic” elites.
3. Accumulation of scientific and technological knowledge.
4. Institutionalization of change, especially research, development, innovation, and diffusion.
5. Worldwide industrialization and modernization.
6. Increasing affluence and leisure.
7. Population growth.
8. Continuing urbanization.
9. Decreasing importance of primary and secondary occupations.
10. Increasing literacy and education.
11. Increasing capability for mass destruction.
12. Increasing tempo of change.
13. Increasing universality of the multifold trend.

On the other hand Heilbroner [3] suggests that man may not be able to surmount the present world crises without great repressions and totalitarian governments. He lists the four greatest threats as: war, overpopulation, pollution, and knowledge. This pessimistic philosophy appears in several versions. The Pogo version: “We have met the enemy, and they is us.” Another view is illustrated by the story told of Franz Liszt who, when opening a note submitted as a theme for improvisation found instead the question, “Mr. Liszt, should I get married or take a career at the piano?” He responded, “Whichever you do you will live to regret it.” Fault finding and futility are also common pessimistic themes. Prophets of dire predictions see inertia as a prime force directing the destinies of most people. Four principles they firmly believe operative and controlling society could be stated thus:

1. No problem is too big to be ignored forever.
2. Ignorance is bliss.
3. Governments never really change.
4. Change changes faster than we do.

Platt, more middle-of-the-road, highlights important world crises (nuclear war, severe food shortages, deterioration of the biosphere, imbalances in wealth distribution, material and energy shortages) but with the hope that “policy science might mitigate them by understanding them in nature and degree and implementing appropriate policies of change.” [25]

The second group and much smaller are termed by Theobald the romantics. They too believe the future is determined by past and present but, to a much greater degree. The nature of this determinism is that

it is inevitable that man will change and adapt to make the future always better than the past. The most popular spokesman of this thesis was Charles Reich in *Greening of America*. [8] His thesis: Man cannot prevent the natural evolution in consciousness already begun that will culminate in a better society for all. The world machine is preprogrammed and man should ride along to greater heights.

The third, the system thinkers, believe that the future is here and urgency is thrust upon us to act now to stem disaster and insure a better future. They believe that we should:

- Assess our capabilities and our options,
- Make choices,
- Implement pre-planned changes,
- Be proactive and not reactive,
- Guide the future at every hand.

The goal is a more humane world, but survival first. The extrapolators and system thinkers are responsible for the formalization of futuristic studies. It is they who formed the World Future Society with its goals to disseminate predictions about the future and new methods, to forecast the future, to sponsor conferences, and to be an ideal bank for Futurists. It is these two groups who see the potentials and the possibilities and believe that there are preferred options for present actions to redeem the future or to use a theological concept: “to retain dominion over the creation.” They would define futuristics thus: “Futuristics is the systematic study by basically rational or empirical means of the possible alternative futures of human societies and the special problems and opportunities relating to those futures. [4 p. 232] They would concur in the *Whole Earth Catalog* motto: “We are as Gods and we'd better get good at it.”

### Methods & Breadth

Futurists methods of long range forecasting include the extrapolation of current trends, intuitive forecasting, computer simulations (Club of Rome data), conferences seeking group consensus, scenario writing, alternative futures, and more.<sup>2</sup> Let me illustrate a few briefly.

Trend extrapolation, for example, gives rise to the dire predictions of 1700 people per square yard (meter) by the year 2100, and death of the oceans by 1979, world famine by 1975, etc. For each prediction there is an appropriate book. Each is a scientific statement that if there is no change in the present trend, this will be the consequence.

Computer simulations are an updated version of trend extrapolation which allows one to enter suggested changes and to see what effect this might have. This might be used to see how the energy crisis is proceeding, as ERDA (Energy Research & Development Administration, formerly Atomic Energy Commission) has done, or to assess the world situation on resources and survival in the now famous Club of

Rome simulation of 1971 (sometimes termed Flub of Rome prediction) which correlated global population, pollution, natural resources, capital investment, and food production. The dire predictions of world disaster in 50-200 years (using only these variables as known) has been the basis for serious shifts in policy, but to date these are too insignificant to change the projections. [7] This simulation had the interesting feature of feedback loops that caused the simulation to self correct for change. It, and subsequently revised computer programs, are still the models for all others.

Scenerio writing is among the most interesting to practice and read. One imagines himself ahead in time, takes into account one or more known situations of the present and then extrapolates them to the future in an imaginative setting. The first well known scenerio was written by Steinmetz, who in 1912 ushered in the age of electricity and envisioned electric refrigeration, autos, lighting, hearing, etc. He did not see television since that required more than just electricity. Much science fiction, e.g., Orwell's *1984*, is in reality futuristic scenerio writing and the recently popular television program, *Star Trek*, provides a classical illustration. Here is a brief scenerio written in 1969 by Paul Ehrlich:

“The end of the oceans came late in the summer of 1979, and it came even more rapidly than the biologists had expected. There had been signs for more than a decade, commencing with the discovery in 1968 that DDT slows down photosynthesis in marine plant life. It was announced in a short paper in the technical journal, *Science*, but to ecologists it smacked of doomsday. They knew that all life in the sea depends on photosynthesis, but . . .” [11 p. 195].

Another article in this journal by Dr. Bergman uses this method to illustrate how the church can plan for the future.

Two of the most popular themes of futurists are the projection of the quality of life and of the life style of the future. Sometimes the alternative future is of a whole society — war is obsolete as is money, private ownership, etc. Man is finally near Adam in Paradise. Or the vision may be of man reduced to primitive beginnings having used up the world's resources and reduced himself to subsistence or even sub-human living. In other cases only a small segment of the future is amplified — the medical practices of the future, the family structure (or lack of it) in the future, space travel and habitats. The topics are as varied as the imagination of man.

The hope of futurists is that their input will stimulate dialogue and discussion leading to a consensus that can be translated into specific recommendations to an agency of government, a law making or enforcing group, a position of power. All visions of the future include new views, values and norms. It is these perspective and value components (recall the quotes by Rojas and Simon in the opening paragraphs) that are most important for the Church and Christian education.



## Possible Learnings

What are futurists saying and what can be learned from futuristic studies? Let me just scratch the surface with a few items chosen to give a small sampling of the content of futuristic activity. Then I will hazard a few statements of possible implications for Christian education today. Futuristic statements range across most disciplines — sociology, psychology, history, science, literature, economics, politics — and they represent a cross section of perspectives. Most of the statements will be from *The Futurist*, but first a general caution, "There is no way to state what the future will be. Regardless of the sophistication of the methods, all rely on judgment, not fact." (Gordon 11 p. 164)

1. "In the future, the wasteful use of resources, will face strong social disapproval, and businesses will engage in 'de-marketing' — persuading customers not to buy products." [20]
2. "The future can be divided into five basic periods. The immediate future and the distant future are largely uncontrollable... the portion over which man has most control is in the period five to twenty years from now." [21]
3. "There is a strong probability that the western nations will witness a marked decline in a standard of living in the next three or four decades... a population dieback in 50 years, ... and suffer more than developing countries." [23]
4. "The world will experience continual gradual social progress and economic progress. There is no reason for dire predictions [14] Note: Burnham Beckwith in criticizing Meadows article, item 3 above. In general social scientists (Beckwith) are more optimistic than natural scientists (Meadows)."
5. "The suicide rate of Americans under age 35 has been rising sharply... suicide is not viewed as a tragic human choice, and perhaps soon it will be seen as a rational... human choice." [15]
6. "... Most people have been confined to lower levels of existence where they were motivated by needs shared with other animals. Now, Western man appears ready to move up to a higher level of existence, a distinctly human level." [19]
7. "As automation takes over production, people... will spend more time in improving their appearance, gratifying the senses, and developing new religions." [13]
8. "Two decades from now (1990)... romantic love will have largely disappeared; there will be several kinds of marriage to choose from and prospective parents will have to obtain licenses and undergo intensive training." [18]
9. "Electrical stimulation of the brain (ESB) and new drugs are enabling man to manipulate his own mood and mind... To some observers this foreshadows a monstrous world in which man has become an inhuman robot... But others believe it will create a world in which man is freer, healthier, and happier." [17]
10. "The problem is no longer how to generate new knowledge. Rather, the crucial question is where and how to use it to improve the quality of human life." [24]
11. "Corporations will become increasingly effective, multinational, and socially responsible... They may take over many tasks of government and measure their 'profits' in social benefits." [22]
12. "There will be a 'steady-state' world in which resources are recycled and used with maximum efficiency... and man will be highly disciplined in a highly disciplined society." [26]

A few quotes related to education directly that supplement those that opened this article are:

1. "If we want to prepare our children to meet the unknown challenges of the future, to be able to guide their lives through all the difficult value choices ahead, then we must consciously and deliberately go about teaching at least the following seven processes of value." (Then listed) (Kirschenbaum & Simon) [12 p. 263]
2. "The introduction of future consciousness into education is the next wave of educational change." [Philip Werdell. 12 p. 272].
3. "These then... the fundamental things we owe to our students if we seriously intend to prepare them for adult life are: the available *information* about important future possibilities; the *habit* of looking ahead; and the *skill* to anticipate effectively." [4 p. 6]
4. And one from the man who made the future a household word. "Culture shock is relatively mild in comparison with... future shock. Future shock is the dizzying disorientation brought on by the premature arrival of the future. It may well be the most important disease of tomorrow." [10 p. 11]
5. And relative to education: "All education, whether so intended or not, is a preparation for the future." [12 Book jacket Vintage edition]

In total one notices that a growing body of people are recognizing that it is the future and not the past that is shaping the present and that must guide our choices. There are predictions about the fate of the family and home both good and bad, about control of man and genetic control, about the scourges of man, (poverty, pollution, prejudice, perversion, crime, alienation, war, pestilence, etc.)

In most futures there is a notable lack of the religious element, but not of new values and morals. In the short run it is generally conceded that the three great trends of the present, secularization, modernization and democratization will continue. The Church is tacitly considered irrelevant to "the future" — to what is here perceived as the greatest issue facing not only education, but mankind, and this just at a time when there are powerful discoveries on the horizon that could give man new control over himself.<sup>3</sup> How will we in Christian education respond to these realities? Will power, knowledge and information alone help man choose more wisely? Will a Christian education? The challenge to theology of the future and of choice is a major theme of another article in this journal by Dr. Harvey Lange.

Each one of us from our own readings, from our contact with the world today, from our activities within the Church and from thoughts similar to those here presented have no doubt already reflected on some implications for our own settings. Let me be bold to make just a few general implications explicit:

1. We cannot by default or lethargy let the future come without conscious preparation of our people for the change in the quality of life and of change itself.
2. We must join the growing number that include futuristic studies explicitly in educational programs.
3. The Church should be the forefront of the chorus that continues to affirm man as the crown of God's creation, the God surrogate in dominion of and stewardship of the world.
4. Never before have men so realized the finiteness of

man and the world. An excellent time for the Gospel of God's gift to man, Christ Jesus.

5. The world of Christian responsibility is a world of compassionate choices. We need to assist in values clarification and choice-training. Toffler [10] would claim we have "overchoice."
6. We *have* moved from the "open" earth of the cowboy to the "closed" earth of the spaceship. (Boulding 10 p. 236) Finiteness is fragileness. Our fragile world requires tender loving care, Christian Stewardship.
7. There is a uniqueness to a "now" shaped by the future that compels us to plan explicitly for the future remembering the first principle of ecology, "Everything connects to everything."<sup>4</sup> [2] No planning can ignore side effects.
8. We, like Esther, are here "for just such a time as this" — to be a light unto the world and salt unto the earth. Let us be what we are in Christ.
9. We do not have to be ashamed of re-use, recycling and being saving of the world's resources personally, nationally or internationally. There are no worn out atoms.

Now is the time for all of us to make more implications explicit and then plan for implementation of our ideas.

In this process we must guard against the stance of Hamlet, "thus conscience (or fear or lethargy or...) doth make cowards of us all and make us rather bear those ills we have than fly to others that we know not of," as well as that of Satchel Paige who confided that he did not look behind him for fear someone was gaining. Perhaps we tend not to look to the future for fear it is gaining.<sup>5</sup>

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Kauffman prefers four categories: "complete determinism; broad social determinism, but with freedom to adopt; individual and societal self-determination, within the limits of reality; and complete randomness." [4 p. 73]

<sup>2</sup>Gordon treats methods extensively in an article titled, "The Current Methods of Future Research," included in Toffler's anthology [11 p. 164ff].

<sup>3</sup>The whole area of biofeedback — making the inside and often termed autonomic functions of the body available to conscious observation and control — can be accessed by reading *NEW MIND, NEW BODY*. (1)

<sup>4</sup>Here is a slightly modified version of these principles:

1. Everything comes from somewhere. (Resources)
2. Everything has to go somewhere. (Waste)
3. Everything connects to everything. (Interrelatedness)
4. Nature knows best. (Recycle)
5. There is no such thing as a *free* lunch. [2]

<sup>5</sup>For the reader looking for a way to begin his study of futuristics, I would suggest the following:

1. Write the World Future Society for its catalog of resources. 4916 St. Elmo Ave. (Bethesda), Washington, D.C. 20014.
2. Peruse the last decade of the journal "The Futurist."
3. Read an anthology like Toffler's, *THE FUTURISTS* (11).
4. Look in the extended references found in the books with an asterisk in the bibliography to this article.

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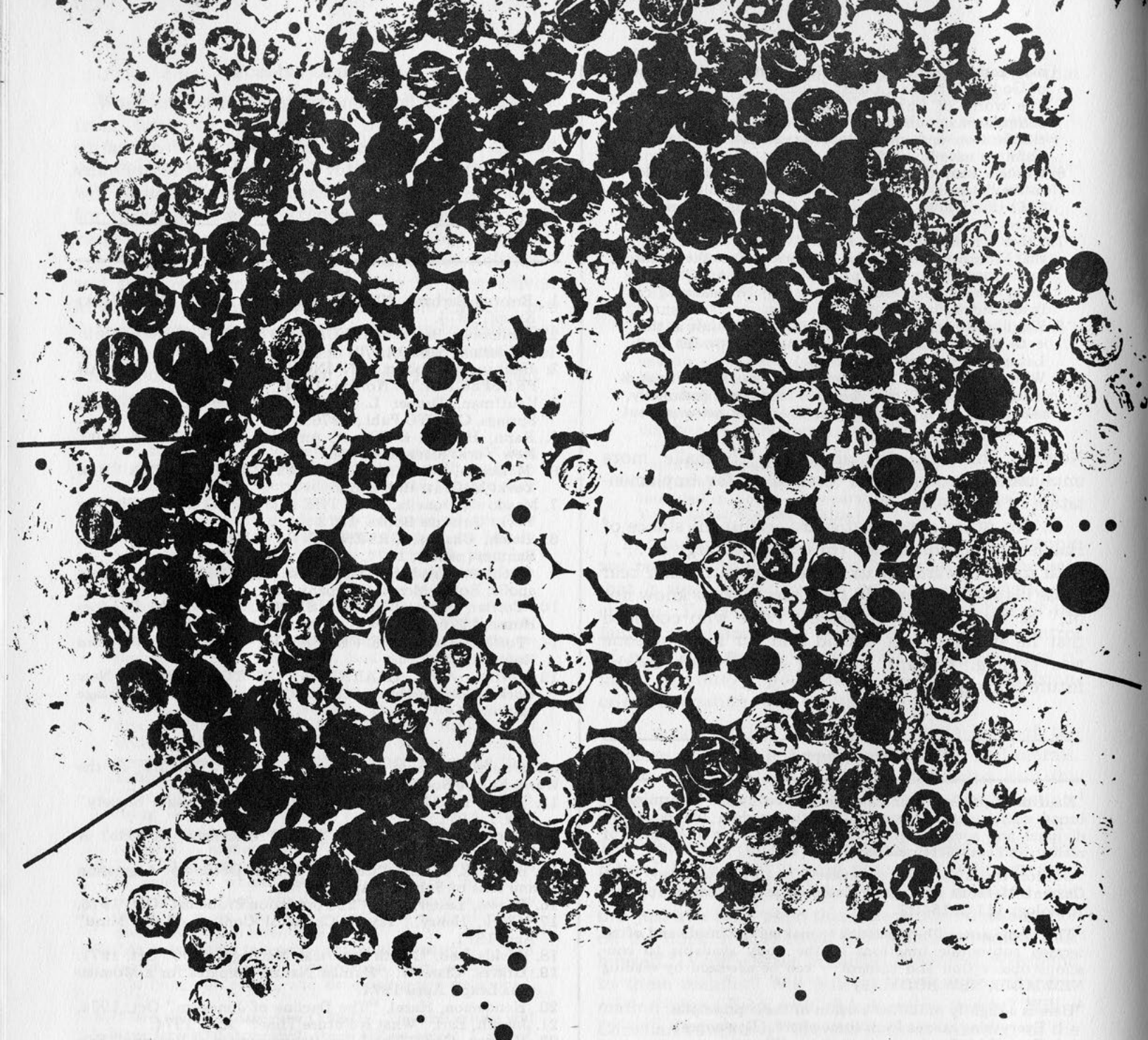
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# THE CHALLENGE OF FUTURISM

## A Theological Appraisal

by Harvey D. Lange

The task of theology is to ask the "God-question" with respect to life. So this article asks: what, if any, is God's involvement in futurism? Is there a theological issue confronting the church as she listens to various professionals within the natural and social sciences probe the future and describe potential fall-out from current technological and cultural developments? How does the Christian respond to change which seems ambiguous at best and evil and destructive at worst? What are the criteria for evaluating change? And presuming that one has some insight into the future with its potential promise as well as threat, where does one find the strength and courage for the necessary decision-making which may involve considerable personal sacrifice and even suffering? These are some of the concerns of this theological appraisal of futurism. Its goal is to draw upon basic Biblical and creedal affirmations and to apply them to futurism, thereby speaking the Word of Christ by which faith and hope can be nurtured and the individual Christian helped to sense anew the sources available for his life in Jesus Christ. The structure of the Creed provides the basic outline for the study.

### God also Works through Change

The Biblical witness to God as the Lord of history makes the theological dimension of futurism come alive. The Old Testament portrays the faith of Israel as rooted in history. Those crucial acts of divine judgment and deliverance happened within the experience of real people in a real world. God spoke through events which took place in marketplace, palace, vineyard, and battle-field where individual and nations are born, struggled, died. God's history-rooted Word confronted mankind even more drastically when in the fullness of time "the Word became flesh." "In these last days God has spoken to us by a Son," wrote the author of Hebrews. (Hebrews 1:2) This Son "partook of human flesh and blood that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage." (Hebrews 2: 14, 15) In no sense has God the Creator withdrawn from our world. He remains its Maker and Lord Who works a divine purpose in and through events which take place both in the natural world and in human history.

God's majestic rule over life embraces change. Such an affirmation is crucial in a theological appraisal of futurism because, as Professor Daenzer points out in his description of futurism,<sup>1</sup> the futurist sees revolutionary change as the dynamic new variable in American society. Never before has a society been so influenced by the intrusion of hypotheses with respect to a potential future. Some paint that future in bright optimistic color. Others sketch a picture in strong, stormy, black strokes. Be the portrait optimistic or pessimistic, the power to influence the present attitudes and actions of people is very real.

Because of this influence it becomes important that the Christian face the future, conscious that God is Lord also of change.

Change has always been a part of the human experience. The new reality is both the extent and rate of change. Alvin Toffler's *Future Shock* is one of numerous studies which describe the awesome impact of runaway change.<sup>2</sup> The people in the pew face the challenge of change in virtually every area of life: job, family, community, church, world at large. Everywhere they turn, they confront cultural movement, and the movement seems to be accelerating. So they ask, "What does the future hold when traditional values and customs no longer shape personal decision? What do I do when I no longer seem able to cope with the increasing rush and hurry?" Such questions underscore the relevance of the First Article of the Apostles' Creed to the challenge of futurism, for God's lordship includes His rule over change.

### *Change in the Beginning*

Change has been a part of God's plan for this world from the beginning. Think of those majestic words which open the Genesis account, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Those words announce a fantastic change. There was a before and an after at the dawn of creation. Genesis 1 describes the earth as without form and void with darkness upon the face of the deep. Then God spoke, and in six creation days God called His world into being complete with earth and firmament, with vegetation sprouting from the dry land and with celestial lights marking the times and seasons. God made a world with swarms of living creatures in the waters, with birds soaring through the air, with cattle, creeping things, and beasts roaming the ground. One can hardly imagine a more vivid portrait of drastic change as God created a pulsating, harmonious, good world to replace a formless dark void.

Genesis 2 portrays the Creator at work as sculptor and farmer. An earth with no plant received a garden with every kind of tree which was pleasant to sight and good for food. A world with no caretaker received a master, molded from the same ground for which he was to care. A lonely man awoke from sleep to find a helpmate at his side, a woman who was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Here again was change in capital letters.

### *Change at the Fall*

Genesis 3 has its own particular announcement of change, grim, tragic change which signals man's rebellion against God and God's resultant judgement. What fateful words sounded forth when God announced to the serpent, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed." As Luther commented in the Apology, "There human nature is subject not only to death and other physical ills, but also to the rule of the devil."<sup>3</sup> Words to the woman followed, "I will greatly multiply your pain in child bearing." Then came the devastating



judgment upon man, "Cursed is the ground . . . thorns and thistles . . . in the sweat of your face . . . Dust you are. To dust you shall return." Fateful words indeed, as God pronounced His three-fold judgment. They signaled change for God's good world, change by which God would confront man with a continued witness to man's tragic disobedience and spiritual bondage. Change then is inherent in the drama of creation from the beginning.

#### *Change among the Patriarchs*

Change moved in and out of every page of the patriarchal story as well. God confronted a nomadic herdsman with a call, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you." (Genesis 12:1) Several generations later jealous brothers plotted mischief against a dreamer-brother who dared to suggest that one day they would bow to him. So Joseph found himself in a pit, then in the hands of slave traders. Some weeks later he was sold as a servant to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh. The false witness of Potiphar's scorned wife ended Joseph's success, and Joseph landed in a prison cell. Pharaoh's strange dreams in the night set the stage for unexpected release. Again the interpretation of dreams played into Joseph's life, but this time God's revelation to Joseph concerning Pharaoh's dreams unexpectedly opened the door to a position of national power. Subsequent famine years eventually brought Joseph's brothers to Egypt in search of food, and the stage was set for reconciliation between Joseph and his brothers. That reconciliation brought about a new way of life as the whole family of Jacob moved to the land of Goshen. Changes stand out as one traces the patriarchal story from Abraham to Jacob, and it all happened under God's gracious purpose for His people.

Such change moves through the whole sweep of God's salvation history in the Old Testament. One can trace social change from nomadic wanderer in northern Mesopotamia to small farmer in Egypt, from enslaved people to tribal confederation, from citizenship under a monarch to exile in Babylon. This eventful story of Israel can be told through economic ups and downs — slave rations and brick making, wilderness fare with God's manna, small orchards and vineyards in the hills of Samaria and Judaea, village crafts and international trade in bustling towns. Then there was the political transformation evident in the transition from patriarchal father to tribal chief, from dynastic king to the man without a country. And there was the persistent spiritual rise and fall of God's people as Israel swore loyalty to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob only to fall time and again before the golden calves and molten bulls of competing Canaanite cults. Change runs through the entire history of God's people, and God's almighty hand exercises dominion through it all.

Change involves an interplay between God and man. While God is Creator and exercises lordship over His world, His rule is not deterministic. God places man in his role as responsible steward, endowing man with potential power to rule God's world, subdue the earth, produce offspring, establish community. The

Biblical witness stands against any view of man and his role in society which reduces man to a robot, picturing him as fatalistically slotted by some mysterious external force or power. The Scriptures affirm time and again that God created man in His own image as the crown of creation so that man might now fulfill his role in a responsible manner, exercising the talent and utilizing the skill with which his Creator endowed him. The psalmist's affirmation, "What is man that thou art mindful of him . . . yet thou has made him little less than God and hast crowned him with glory and honor." (Ps. 8:4-5) is one example of the Scripture's testimony to man's God-given dignity and power. The entire book of Proverbs consists of practical guidelines for daily living, a reminder that God expects man to be responsible in everyday affairs as he heeds the counsel of wisdom. Song of Solomon with its sensuous love poems witnesses to the good of human sexuality when appreciated as God's gift and expressed according to His design. God molds each person with his own unique personality and talent and sends him forth into life with the charge, "be fruitful and multiply . . . fill the earth and subdue it . . . have dominion . . . love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength . . . love your neighbor as your self . . . be servants."

#### **Futurism and the Righteousness of Reason**

Futurism attests to a deep human awareness that man and his decisions do count, that one does play a role in shaping one's personal circumstance and surrounding society. The futurist affirms, "If the signal is flashing red at the railroad crossing, we had better stop, look, listen. To do less is to invite disaster and death through our own folly."

A phrase used in the Lutheran Confessions to describe this human capability is "the righteousness of reason." In the controversy with the scholastic theologians, the evangelicals, while protesting the righteousness of reason as meritorious in God's sight, affirmed man's capacity for moral decision in everyday affairs:

We, for our part, maintain that God requires the righteousness of reason. Because of God's command, honorable works commanded in the Decalogue should be performed, according to Gal. 3:24, "The law is a custodian," and I Tim. 1:9, "The law is laid down for the lawless." For God wants this civil discipline to restrain the unspiritual, and to preserve it he has given laws, learning, teaching, governments, and penalties. To some extent, reason can produce this righteousness by its own strength, though it is often overwhelmed by its natural weakness and by the devil, who drives it to open crimes. We freely give this righteousness of reason its due credit.<sup>4</sup>

Futurism can legitimately be viewed as an expression of the righteousness of reason. People, endowed with creative insight, professional skills, and intellectual capability are earnestly evaluating contemporary developments in all areas of society and, on the basis of the evidence, are making projections into the future. Man has the capacity for moral decision-making as the future sets alternative courses of action before him.

#### **Futurism and Man's Sinfulness**

But are these futuristic studies and subsequent decisions always made in the best interest of all? Dr. Joseph E. Coates of the Office of Technology Assessment, United States Congress, has lamented the fact that no governmental agency is probing sufficiently the ominous potential of numerous technological developments within our society. In criticizing the ineptness of much of the current bureaucracy he proposed the formation of a blueribbon research committee whose sole responsibility would be futuristic studies. But what assurance is there that such a commission will pursue its futuristic research with any more or less moral integrity than the current officialdom?

The Apostle Paul stated the moral dilemma succinctly, "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate . . . For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do." (Rom 7:15, 19) In this confession of his own spiritual failure in the face of temptation St. Paul sets before us the realistic appraisal of man's inherent weakness in the face of moral testing. Though man possesses the righteousness of reason and is able to some extent to order the external affairs of his life, he lacks the inner strength of will to speak and act consistently in accord with justice and righteousness. The pressures of pride, fear, self-interest, and the desire for acceptance shape his attitudes and influence his action so that he does not even act according to his own sense of moral good. When Dr. Coates alluded to what he termed "therapeutic fear" as one of the ways to arouse a lethargic government, he recognized what theologians term the first use of the Law. This is the curb function in which the law checks the gross outbursts of sin and makes it possible for a society to be formed. It counteracts the reality of original sin, the tragic fact that every man by himself lives without true fear and trust in God and is filled with concupiscence. Even the Christian in whose life the power of sin is broken confronts that daily battle with the old man and stands in constant need of spiritual strength and renewal.

As one appraises futurism theologically in terms of original sin, certain conclusions emerge. For one thing the futurists can offer no guarantee for any Utopian society. The on-going conflict which God announced in Gen. 3 has characterized the entire history of man since the Fall. If one listens to the pessimistic futurists, we can even anticipate new waves of brutality and oppression. Secondly, the presence of moral weakness in no way weakens man's responsibility. When a recent editorial indicated that what government and business needed in our day was a little old-fashioned honesty, one sees this sense of responsibility in operation. Thirdly, the Christian ought be in the forefront of any moral renewal both by example and witness. Aware both of his creation

in the image of God and of the reality of sin's power, he confronts a particular responsibility to "let his light so shine before men."

#### **God's Response to Man's Plans and Acts**

God works change in His world via man's own decision and action, be that responsible or irresponsible. God pushes no buttons on some massive control panel. He feeds no programmed material into some gigantic computer which controls the universe. Man himself makes decisions, acts, and God holds him accountable. "What a man sows, that shall he also reap." (Gal 6:7)

This leads to a consideration of the role of God Himself in this drama of the future. While man has the capacity for moral decision and action, God does not remain passive. He responds to that human activity with His own action. Two broad theological categories embrace this holy response, namely Law and Gospel. In the Sinai covenant God used the terms of blessing and curse:

If you obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you this day, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the Lord your God . . . But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command you this day, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you." (Deut. 28:1,2,15)

God responds to man's decision within His own rhythm of blessing and goodness on the one hand and His wrath and punishment on the other hand.

Testimony to God's goodness runs throughout the Scriptures. The Old Testament psalms articulate such blessing in the many praise and thanksgiving psalms. The psalmists point in particular to God's role as Creator and Sustainer of all life.

The eyes of all look to Thee, and Thou givest them their food in due season. Thou openest Thy hand, Thou satisfiest the desire of every living thing (Ps. 145:15)

God's goodness is also evident in His great redemptive works within the history of Israel.

In Thee our fathers trusted;  
they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them.  
To Thee they cried, and were saved;  
in thee they trusted, and were not disappointed. (Ps. 22:4-5)

God's goodness and mercy undergirded His salvation word and action in the New Testament when in the fulness of time God sent forth His Son. In a unique way the goodness of God as Creator and Redeemer find cohesion in Jesus Christ as expressed in the majestic Christ-hymn of Colossians.

He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities — all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be



pre-eminent. For in him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. (Col. 1:15-20)

In Jesus Christ the blessing of God is manifest in full grace and truth.

But God's action is not always blessing. The ancient psalmists also spoke of God's wrath and judgment. Words, such as these from Ps. 90, express the fierce reality of God's anger.

For we are consumed by thy anger;  
by thy wrath we are overwhelmed.  
Thou hast set our iniquities before thee,  
our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.  
For all our days pass away under thy wrath,  
our years come to an end like a sigh. (Ps. 90:7-9)

At times the pious cannot at all understand God's dealings with them, but can only cry out in anguish.

How long, O Lord? Wilt thou forget me for ever?  
How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? (Ps. 13:1)

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?  
Why are thou so far from helping me, from the  
words of my groaning? (Ps. 22:1)

What psalmists express in lament psalms, the Old Testament prophets announced in their oracles of judgment. When God's patience runs out and He presses to the lips of men and nations the cup of His wrath, there is no escape.

One of Isaiah's statements describes such wrath.

Rouse yourself, rouse yourself, stand up, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of His wrath, who have drunk to the dregs the bowl of staggering. There is none to guide her among all the sons she has borne; there is none to take her by the hand among all the sons she has brought up. These two things have befallen you — who will condole with you? — devastation and destruction, famine and sword; who will comfort you? Your sons have fainted, they lie at the head of every street like an antelope in a net; they are full of the wrath of God, the rebuke of your God. (Is. 51:17-20)

What a sobering dimension of change lies in such portraits of God's crushing wrath.

#### *God and Absalom*

To acknowledge the reality of this rhythm of judgment and mercy does not yet answer the question of God's moment of decision. The day of God's decisive action in which He turns the course of events is unknown to us, but it is none the less real. The story of Absalom and his abortive revolt is a telling illustration. The implications for futurism are all too obvious.

Absalom had had eyes on his father David's throne. Covetous thoughts gave way to deceptive words as he played upon his aspiration and the desires of the Israelite people. Like a modern-day political hopeful, he set a dream before his fellow citizens. Just give him the opportunity and a new day would dawn for God's chosen nation was the theme.

Within four years the stage was set for revolt.

Under the subterfuge of fulfilling a religious vow, Absalom requested the opportunity to worship in Hebron. Simultaneously secret messengers carried the word throughout all the tribes of Israel. "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then say, 'Absalom is king at Hebron!'" (II Sam. 15:10) So the conspiracy grew until Absalom stood triumphant in the royal court of Jerusalem with David in flight. Victory stood within his grasp.

God however had a different destiny in mind for the ambitious Absalom which began to unfold as Absalom made decisions about his military campaign. As Absalom gathered with his staff, Ahithophel, David's former counsellor and now Absalom's master strategist, laid out the final strategy: immediate swift pursuit of David with the King alone as the target. Desiring to avoid any major battle which would pit Israelite against Israelite and so increase lingering hatred and bitterness after final victory, Ahithophel knew that only the figure of David stood between Absalom and the throne. At this critical moment when a crucial decision had to be made, Absalom turned to the old family friend, Hushai, who had remained behind in Jerusalem to serve as a "CIA agent" on behalf of David. When Absalom requested Hushai's thought on Ahithophel's proposal, David's faithful servant counselled that Absalom wait, gather a mighty army and lead the attack in person. In reporting Absalom's fateful decision to accept Hushai's counsel, the holy writer goes on, "For the Lord had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom." (II Sam. 17:14)

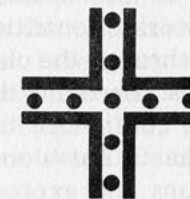
God's divine decision to bring down Absalom's revolutionary plot happened within the normal decision-making processes of human deliberation and action. As Absalom signaled revolt, God spoke His Word of judgment, and when God sends forth His command, that mighty word effects what God announces. God's involvement therefore will always be another dimension of any futurist's model and of our response to that model. James speaks directly to this point:

Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and get gain"; whereas you do not know about tomorrow. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and we shall do this or that." As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. Whoever knows what is right to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin. (James 4:13-17)

#### **God's Word and Futurism**

The crucial issue for the Christian then becomes that of perceptive listening. He wants to hear God properly and to respond obediently. But what is God saying? The difficulty is that God's purpose is veiled in a particular ambiguity. If one faces life only under law and operates exclusively with the righteousness of

reason, he inevitably faces the question of Job, why does the innocent man suffer? This is the inner perplexity of the psalmist who cried out, "All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocense. For all the day long I have been stricken and chastened every morning." (Ps. 73:13-17) This Israelite felt that it did not pay to be honest. His experience revealed that the arrogant and wicked often occupied positions of power and enjoyed luxury and wealth while the pious remained poor and oppressed. So he asked, "Where is God's justice?" The twentieth century Christian feels the same tension. He experiences the same reality that the strong and powerful are not necessarily the most God-fearing and devout.



At this point our theological appraisal of futurism moves from the First Article of the Creed with its accent on God's creative and providential rule to the Second Article and its theology of the cross. The Second Article centers on God's Gospel, that good news of forgiveness and redemption for all through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. "God so loved the world that He gave" sounds the keynote. Though moments come in which God hides His face, His heart yearns to embrace all again in love and forgiveness, as the prophet Hosea has testified:

How can I give you up, Ephraim! How can I hand you over, O Israel!... My heart recoils within me, my compassion grows warm and tender. (Hosea 11:8)

God's basic design for man and His world is blessing and new life.

Such steadfast love and undeserved mercy moved God to act decisively in Jesus Christ. "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the expiation for our sins" (I John 4, 10) wrote the Apostle John. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," (Romans 5, 8) proclaimed St. Paul. God Himself has intervened in redemptive love through His Son. Faith grasps the promise of grace and life in Jesus Christ.

This foolish Gospel influences the Christian appraisal of futurism, particularly as the Christian strives to assess his own role in God's future. The Christian views life and its purpose differently than the man of the world. Life in Jesus Christ brings a new perspective. This perspective centers in the meaning of the cross and suffering. While the unspiritual man sees the cross as the mark of a curse and shuns suffering, the Christian meets potential suffering for Christ's sake as opportunity for witness. The cross turns one's system of values topsy-turvy. When the disciples quarreled among themselves about the question of greatness, Jesus rebuked such self-seeking.

"Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave: even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:26-28). Such a perspective clashes with the status symbols and power strategies which may motivate some futuristic studies and their use. Furthermore, this perspective finds its strength and direction, not in tangible reward, but in a living relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Through faith in the promise the Christian participates in Christ's triumph over sin and death. Since the believer has been buried with Christ by baptism into Christ's death, he shares the conviction of Paul:

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Gal. 2, 20)

The admonition in Ephesians becomes a dynamic summons in his own personal life: "Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. (Eph. 6:10) That Lord who has already broken the power of death and freed His people from the bondage of sin calls His followers to respond in trust and obedience.

This summons from Christ takes the Christian more deeply into life with its multiple responsibilities. The cross does not ask that one leave his particular position, but that one see in his situation the opportunity to do all things to the glory and praise of God. John the Baptist counselled tax collectors not to leave their toll stations, but to return to their post and to be honest in their dealing. He told soldiers to remain in the Roman legion, but no longer to use their position to rob by violence or false accusation and to be content with their wages. (Luke 3:12-14) The summons to responsible living is expressed for the Christian in the Ten Commandments which are illumined by the cross of Christ.

The implication for a theological appraisal of futurism is clear. The Gospel challenges the Christian to pursue his studies fully aware of his responsibility and opportunity to act as Christ's man. The Word of God instructs him to use God-given talents in the service of that Lord who both made and redeemed him. Futurism provides another situation in which one can live out his life in service, not seeking one's own glory, but the glory of God and the good of the neighbor. The apostolic description, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," (II Cor. 5, 17) becomes manifest in the Christian's commitment and concern, particularly with respect to suffering. When one lives in Christ and loves God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength and loves his neighbor as himself, he must be prepared for trial.

#### **Special Problems for Christian Futurists**

Futuristic studies offer their own unique opportunity and temptation, namely, opportunity for responsible service in the face of complex technological



questions and potentialities, but also temptations for false pride and oppressive power. Special interest groups have found futuristic studies to be a helpful tool for gaining their own personal ends. As a result, individuals involved with futuristic studies may feel pressure, may even be exposed to suffering. Public officials who find themselves caught in the middle of complex issues can testify to the price which one may be called upon to pay as he stands for principle and moral integrity.

But how does one know what he ought to do, particularly when faced with the ambiguities involved in so much contemporary technological development? The Ten Commandments act as a guide, especially when interpreted by Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and Paul's table of duties. While the Scriptures do not speak directly to such questions as the use of drugs, redistribution of wealth and priority in governmental spending, the Christian finds that the Commandments do provide general guidelines within which he makes his decisions as responsibly as possible. When making such decisions, the Christian rejoices and praises God that his acceptance before God is not dependent upon his own perfection, but because of the redemptive suffering and death of His Savior, Jesus Christ.

Sensitivity to the very real ambiguity within the Christian life is particularly important in the appraisal of futurism. Individual Christians are finding themselves in areas of experimentation which have never been explored before. The potential benefit or harm of certain developments is so all-embracing that the weight of moral decision can be overwhelming. For example, the researcher in the laboratory confronts unexpected data in the course of his research. This data raises questions about the potential harmful effects of the continued use of a particular medication which is a major product of his company. This researcher reports his findings to his supervisor. Days pass without any response or evidence of a follow-through. He suspects a cover-up. How can he be certain? To consult with the supervisor might lead to embarrassing questions. He might give the impression that he is a trouble-maker, in which case all opportunity for advancement would be gone. Potential dismissal might even be a possibility. Should he consult some governmental agency which is concerned about consumer protection? How would such consultation relate to his responsibility to his employer from whom he receives his wages and to whom he owes loyalty? But then does he even need to give any further thought to the whole matter? After all, he did his job, performed the necessary tests, wrote up the results, and gave his opinion about possible side effects. He has satisfied his responsibility, or has he? The ethical question lingers in mind and heart. What is one's personal responsibility? What do I do now? This personal dilemma leads one into the Third Article of the Creed.

The Third Article expresses how God the Holy Spirit effects God's on-going redemptive purpose in the hearts and lives of people and enables them to be faithful within their respective callings. The Third Article makes clear that the individual Christian lives under the pervading power and guidance of the Spirit. The Spirit of God remains "the Lord and Giver of life." Through the Gospel the Spirit continues to call into a living relationship with Jesus Christ, to enlighten with those spiritual gifts of faith, hope, love, joy, and to sustain those gifts. Through the Word of Christ the Spirit sets one apart as God's own, working within one's heart and life the will to be God's own. Therefore each day the individual Christian returns to his baptismal covenant within which the Spirit works contrition through the Law and renews him through the cleansing word of forgiveness in Jesus Christ. Each day the Christian approaches his work in the confidence that Christ lives in him by faith, that he is not alone as he faces the need to make decisions and express judgments which admittedly are far from clear. Each evening he returns to his Lord in gratitude and praise, open to his failure and sin, but assured of God's pardoning grace and love in Jesus Christ. He lives under the power of the Gospel by which the Spirit calls to his remembrance what Christ has taught and continues to lead and guide into truth.

Obedience to God now becomes natural to the new man in Christ. Just as Christ came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father, so also the Christian learns obedience. His delight is in the Law of the Lord. Made alive in Jesus Christ, the Christian sees the Commandments of God not merely as threat but as promise. The Commandments express the will of God for his life, teaching him that he need not leave his daily vocation in order to serve God, but that as he lives in faith, all of life becomes opportunity to praise and give thanks. The Commandments encourage him to grow in grace, to lay aside the sin which so easily hinders love and trust in God, and to press forward toward full maturity in Jesus Christ. Through faith in Christ the Christian wants to be that good tree producing good fruit to the glory of God.

At the same time the Spirit uses the Word of God to make him conscious of the enemy, that triumvirate of evil, namely, the devil, world, flesh. The Spirit alerts to a spiritual conflict which is not visible in an x-ray or measurable on a scale, but is nonetheless real. This struggle one encounters in every situation of life, for its battleground is within the heart, the very center of one's being. There Satan makes his appeal.

Satan, the father of lies, can take any blessing, twist it, and turn it into deception, into temptation. For example, the serpent did speak some truth, a half-truth, to Eve in the garden when he said that Eve would not die but that her eyes would be opened to see good and evil. When Adam and Eve ate the

forbidden fruit, they did not drop dead physically. Their eyes were opened to good and evil, but the serpent had lied and deceived because he had not talked about the fundamental dimension of a man's life, his relationship with God. The serpent said nothing about the fact that the power of death is not in the end to one's physical breathing, but in the terror of separation from God and in the judgment of His holy wrath. The devil said nothing about the shame which would sweep over their spirits as they saw their nakedness and realized their disobedience against God or about the fear and dread which drove them to hide from that gracious Lord with whom they had formally walked in intimate companionship and love. Futurism holds out its promise for a better life. Futurism does contain the potential for blessing in our world. But Satan can take every such blessing and turn it into a temptation to evil. The Spirit of God makes the Christian conscious of this constant spiritual threat. The Spirit works such awareness through the Law.

There is an old cliché, "Figures do not lie, but liars figure." One challenging aspect of futuristic studies lies in its use of statistical data. One can make statistics say what he wants them to say, to lead one to a conclusion that warrants optimism or if one arranges the figures in another manner, to a conclusion that might be the very opposite. In either case the futurist uses the data to serve his purpose, to achieve his objective. Aware of Satan's power to deceive, the Christian futurist will pursue his research and utilize his results with a deep sense of responsibility toward the neighbor. The Commandments sensitize him both to his all too frequent surrender to pride and selfishness and to God's summons to fear, love and trust in God and to love the neighbor. In Christ he will resist efforts to deceive knowing full well that the devil observes no "Keep Out" sign.

Another source of powerful pressure is a materialistic, self-seeking society. Any researcher engaged in studies which challenge the concept of a consumer society can anticipate resistance. Who likes to be told that he simply wants too much or that his enjoyment of an ever rising standard of living may be at the expense of untold thousands who still lack many of the basic necessities for life? Futurists are paid salaries. They will face the temptation which confronted the leadership of Israel as described by the prophet Micah.

Its heads give judgment for a bribe,  
Its priests teach for hire,  
Its prophets divine for money. (Micah 3, 11)

There is no escape from that ever-present pressure from people who pursue their own personal, self-centered objectives with little or no sensitivity to God's purpose.

The spiritual threat however is not always external. One of the major sources of opposition to God's

purpose resides deep within the heart of every person. This personal power is "the flesh," and this power remains active even within the Christian. Though its control has been broken by the death of Christ, the old man within strives to regain control in individual lives. The Christian futurist therefore participates in a daily struggle with the old man which is comparable to that spiritual conflict which confronts every believer. To be sure, futurism has its own particular appeal. Esoteric studies which point to a breakthrough in cancer research or technological estimations which affirm military invincibility have their own appeal to pride. The Spirit uses the Word of God to make the Christian futurist conscious of continuous struggle.

But how does the Spirit speak the word of warning in the Law and undergird with new life and power through the Gospel? The Spirit sets one within a Christian community within which the Word of God is shared. When one is born anew of water and the Spirit, he is placed within God's family, and through that family he is to be daily nourished and sustained for his calling. Within this community he is kept aware that he is God's chosen one in Christ. He receives encouragement and help as he shares with brothers and sisters in God's good news in Jesus Christ. He grows and matures spiritually as the Word of Christ dwells in him richly. Through the mutual teaching and admonishing which happens within the community of faith he grows in grace and matures in obedience. Nourished by that spiritual food provided through sharing the Word in community, he comes to know that the Spirit equips him to make that personal decision and to act responsibly in the face of ambiguity and potential threat. The crucial role of Christian education becomes dramatically relevant at just this point.

Futurism offers its own particular opportunity to search anew the mystery of godliness that makes the Word of God that unique lamp for our feet and light for our path. Futurism encourages an on-going return to that prophetic and apostolic witness by which the Spirit makes wise unto salvation and trains in the godly life. As we probe the resources of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, renewed vision and courage become ours. The Word of promise remains sure, and God's Word does accomplish its intended purpose.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Gilbert Daenzer, "The Future, Futuristics, and Christian Education," *Issues in Christian Education*, Vol. 11, No. 2, Spring, 1977.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Daenzer, article for pertinent bibliography on futurism and bibliography by Marvin Bergman.

<sup>3</sup> Apology, Article II, *Book of Concord*, ed. by Theodore Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), p. 106.

<sup>4</sup> Apology, Article IV, *Book of Concord*, p. 110.



# FUTURES PLANNING in a Parish

by Marvin Bergman

What will be the shape of parishes of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in the year 2000? A number of scenarios suggesting what the structure of this denomination will be like at that turn of the century can be sketched. One description suggests that the shape of the parish and national church structure will remain basically intact with very little change. Another kind of futures forecast is a continuing proliferation of authority in the church and an inability of the national organization to meet the needs of particular parishes, causing a large-scale abandonment of the synodical structure. A third scenario suggests that a host of factors will lead to the development of a large number of cell groups and house churches involving 5-8 families as the basic structure of the church in the year 2000.

Recognizing that a number of possibilities exist and that what we do today will in part determine what we will be like at the beginning of the 21st century, most church leaders are in favor of planning efforts. Planning is often lauded, being described as the key to growth and essential to making changes believed to be necessary. Planning is seen as the key to unlocking the new dimensions of the future. Through planning one will be able to move into a new tomorrow. Futures planning is especially appealing, for almost everyone has some kind of perspective of the future.

However, experience and a review of planning efforts will show that planning often does not facilitate desirable changes. Planning may become an escape from doing anything at all. Planning, in fact, may consume time and energy which only serve to reinforce the present situation. The suggestion of futures planning often leaves people with a lack of confidence that they can do very much to help shape the future. Many people have visions of a desired future but few believe that they have any power to actualize those visions. One factor in such feelings of futility centers in the limitations of some of the conventional planning styles. Four of these styles will be described briefly.

## Annual Planning

This kind of planning occurs on a once-a-year basis and is often bound by an annual budget. Decision-making is conducted on a one-year-at-a-time basis. Planners who use this style of decision-making may attempt to look ahead; however, such horizons are limited, for such planning usually responds to the inadequacies of last year's program and the estimated needs of the coming year. Of course, such planning does have a place in an institution. However, such an "add and cut" approach for the most part constitutes a "holding operation" and has little chance of making any kind of significant changes within a span of 10-15 years. In this approach the future is largely determined by what is happening today.

## Social Demand Planning

When planners are confronted by demands from particular groups of people to do something, such as parents calling for a church youth program that will involve their teens, the response is usually that of doing something as quickly as possible in order to put out the fire. When confronted by immediate problems, planners rarely allow themselves the opportunity to explore alternative purposes, goals and ways of meeting particular needs that go beyond the problem at hand. Though there is an interest in effecting change, most change consists of responding to each new crisis by oiling a squeaky wheel, thus insuring that tomorrow will be much the same as today.

## Panacea Planning

On occasion a new technique, program or resource will be introduced, attracting a considerable amount of attention. Such innovations may be seen as the answer or a panacea to one's current problem. Examples of educational panaceas include open classrooms and programmed learning. In this situation planners look around to see what others are doing that has received considerable attention and then adopt the tool or resource as the answer to their own problems. By employing this style one can always be sure that a new year will bring more innovations while last year's new ideas are discarded. Such an approach offers few possibilities for significant change.

## Problem-Centered Planning

In this style of planning policy-makers identify a current problem and invest considerable time and effort in exploring possible solutions, gathering data, considering possible consequences, and making a decision. Many useful programs have been introduced through this problem-solving approach. One limitation is that the approach is still largely "locked-in" by the present, with long-range goals, a vision of the future, or significant changes that involve a span of time largely being ignored.

## Futures Planning

An alternative planning style is to begin with a vision of the future, developing goals that are based, not on immediate needs, but on vision, individual and collective, that identifies possibilities. A Christian minister may ask, "What skills or competencies would I like to be able to demonstrate 10 years from today?" "What kinds of parish educational programs in 1990 can we dream about today?" and "What parish structures would most ideally meet the needs of the people of this community twenty years from today?" In this style of planning, the present and its problems are not introduced into the planning process until much later. Futures planning reverses the way we usually behave by beginning with the future instead of the needs of the present.

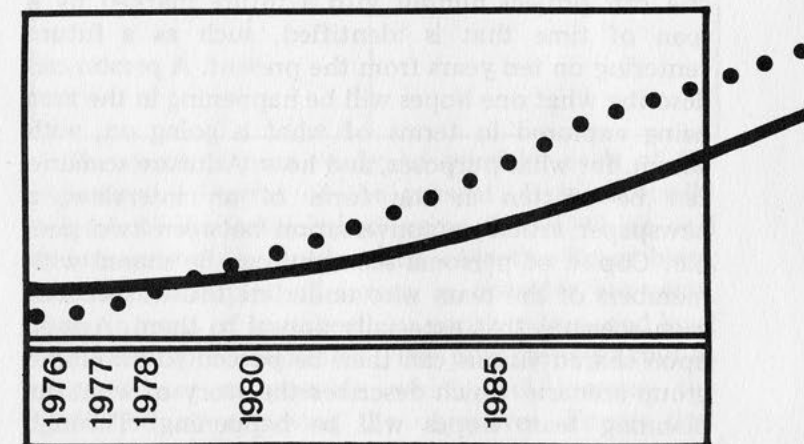
A number of assumptions underlying this approach can be identified. Among these are:

1. The future is now. What we do today will have a great impact on what we will be like as a church at the turn of the century.
2. There is no such thing as one future for a parish or the church at large. Rather, there is a variety of alternative futures for any parish or church body.
3. Futures planning offers perspectives, tools, and resources that can be tapped by the church as valuable resources (see Daenzer's "The Future, Futuristics, and Christian Education" in this issue).
4. A theological rationale grounded in the three articles of the Apostle's Creed reveals that planning for change is a vital component in the mission of the church and the ministries of God's people (see Lange's "The Challenge

of Futurism: A Theological Appraisal" in this issue).

5. The seed of death is in every institution and in every parish; one of the most important factors in the survival of the church as a servant people is adaptability to change.<sup>1</sup>
6. Most change is based on either: a. hurt; b. vision.
7. A sense of the future can help prevent a parish and the church from making awful mistakes.
8. The tempo of change is slower than the sense of urgency; desired, significant change is often gradual.
9. People need to be involved in their own planning; planned change in the individual community and parish must be done at that level.
10. A small group of planners that is legitimized by a larger group equipped with appropriate skills can make a significant contribution and effect change that will edify the Body of Christ.

The major ingredient of futures planning is the hope and faith that change is possible, that concerned persons can make a difference, and that the growth and development of the church's mission in the world can be aided by planning that values the future as much as the past and present. The following discussion describes one of many possible futures planning models and suggests specific ways in which the model can be implemented in a parish setting.





# a planning model...

This planning model can be adapted to the long-range planning needs of a parish, a school, a department within a school, a family, or an individual. A general area of concern needs to be identified, such as a total parish educational program, the ministry of evangelism, the development of a new Christian day school, or ministry among older persons in a community. Interested people who have demonstrated particular interest and competency in the area to be explored need to be selected carefully as members of a team. A team of approximately 6-10 members is desirable. Backing by policy-making groups within the structure is critical. The leader of the group should be familiar with planning and group process or have access to knowledgeable people who can aid the process. A block of time in which to work needs to be identified, either in concentrated planning sessions, such as a weekend, or weekly meetings that extend over a period of several months. A series of orderly steps for planning change in the church can be described in the following way.<sup>2</sup>

## •Step 1 — Write a Future Scenario

My Personal Scenario	Team's Scenario

One can begin by writing a description of the future that is *hoped* for. By freeing one's self from the present, its restrictions, demands, and problems, one can project himself into a future marked by a span of time that is identified, such as a future centering on ten years from the present. A person can describe what one hopes will be happening in the area being explored in terms of what is going on, with whom, for what purposes, and how. A future scenario can be written in the form of an interview, a newspaper article, a conversation between two people. Copies of personal scenarios can be shared with members of the team who underline those aspects of each scenario that especially appeal to them. Agreed upon shared visions can then be pooled to develop a group scenario which describes the story of what the planning team hopes will be happening. Through discussion and revision, ownership and agreement can emerge.

## •Step 2 — Establish Goals

Goals Necessary to Express Team's Scenario:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

By projecting one's self into the team's desired future, the group's scenario can be organized into a series of statements which describe key facets of an alternative future. These statements can be written as goals which become desired ends worthy of pursuit. An example of a goal is "Members of the parish will recognize their daily work as ministry." Goal statements can be arranged in order of priority, with the team working toward agreement on those goals most important to the corporate vision. The team's 3-5 top priority goals need to be identified.

## •Step 3 — Evaluate Possible Consequences

Goal One: _____	Consequences	
Positive		Negative

Such goals can then be expanded into a number of sentences which describe in detail what will be going on when each goal has been reached. Writing a short paragraph for each goal is desirable. Since achieving any goal involves paying a price, the consequences of achieving each goal, positive and negative, are to be identified. By weighing positive and negative consequences, one can retain those goals that remain desirable and are consistent with the future scenario. Commitment to at least 3 clearly stated goals ranked as high priorities by the team is seen as important.

## •Step 4 — Test Your Vision

Our Goals	We Learned	Revised Goals

Since planning is usually done by a few on behalf of many, effective planners need to listen seriously to those who will be affected by such planning. Feedback from those who will be involved can be secured through interviews, surveys, open meetings, or small group discussions. Such input can facilitate restating or altering goals that had been developed during the previous steps. One can ask such questions as, "How do you feel about this taking place?", "What are possible consequences of this happening?" and "Would you participate in making this happen?"

## •Step 5 — List Future Events

Goal One: _____
Future Events

At this point, a team is ready to begin to move back toward the present. This can be done by moving from the projected 10 year scenario to a date three years from the present, and asking, "Which events in three years could contribute to each of the goals that has been identified?" A group can brainstorm for events which may possibly contribute to teaching the goals. These can then be evaluated in terms of such criteria as: 1. Will the event be a significant contribution to the goal? 2. Is it possible for the event to occur three years from now? 3. Will the event have value to the larger community? 4. Is the event something that our group can help make happen? Those events which do not meet these criteria are to be eliminated, while those which contribute most to the goals can be ranked highest.

## •Step 6 — Write Action Objectives

Goal One: _____
Event A: _____
Objective: _____
Event B: _____
Objective: _____

The team is now ready to examine each goal and list two top-ranked future events for each of the three goals. These future events can then be reviewed. Does the team like the pictures described by these events? Does everyone agree with them and believe that they will help to realize the alternative future being planned? If there is agreement, the team is ready to write under each future event an objective which describes an activity which can be observed or measured that can help make the event to occur. For example, one may write an action objective as follows: "By 1980 the parish will budget funds for ministry among older persons that will equal funds allocated for debt reduction."

## •Step 7 — Analyze The Situation

Objective for Event A: _____	
Forces Which Will Encourage	Forces Which Will Discourage

The team is now ready to consider each of the objectives in terms of the present. It is especially helpful to brainstorm and name forces which will encourage or discourage each objective from being reached. Examples of forces to consider are costs, time, interest of membership, parish values, and level of leadership commitment. The purpose is to find as many forces as possible which will increase the likelihood of achieving the objectives. Forces that may block or thwart achievement of any objective also need to be identified.



•Step 8 — Choose Forces To Modify

Once a list of encouraging/discouraging forces has been identified, one needs to narrow the list of forces by establishing the relative importance of each force and deciding which force one may want to modify or influence. Criteria which can help to identify those forces which may best be utilized or modified in achieving the objective may include: 1. highly representative of the feelings of members of the parish; 2. low dollar cost; 3. easily available human resources; 4. evidence of a present commitment; 5. high likelihood of success.

Criteria can be written horizontally across the top of the chart, with encouraging and discouraging forces from step #7 being listed on the lefthand side.

Objective for Event A: _____	
Forces	Criteria
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____

Each force can then be graded from 1 to 5 on each criterion. For example, a 1 rating may designate a force as highly representative, low dollar cost, evidence of high commitment, while a 5 may identify a force as not representative, high cost, and little evidence of high commitment. Those forces which emerge as most accessible to a group's influence with a high likelihood of success should form the backbone of a plan for action. Generally, a plan should deal with a limited number of forces, such as five or six, which include some discouraging and encouraging forces. Forces which are to be used in the action plan are to be identified as well as those which the team may wish to modify at a later date.

•Step 9 — Develop Alternative Plans

Objective for Event A: _____
Alternative Plans

On the basis of the findings identified in step #8, a team is now able to develop plans for achieving each objective. Each plan or general course of action should contain such information as: 1. time needed to reach the objective; 2. necessary human resources; 3. dollar cost; 4. individuals and groups who can be expected to help; 5. individuals and groups who can be expected to oppose the plan; 6. possible negative or positive side effects. For each objective, a team can brainstorm alternative action plans which suggest options for ways of reaching the target. After suggesting alternatives and considering their consequences, a team is to select a plan for reaching each objective that is clearly superior. At times, a sound plan can be made by combining elements from various alternative plans.

•Step 10 — Decide Action Steps

A team is now ready to prepare detailed action steps. A possible format is:

Goal One: _____
Future Event A: _____
Objective: _____
Action Plan: _____
Action Steps: _____
What will be done?
Who will do it?
By when will it be done?

Such an action plan needs to be specific, including specific actions to be undertaken, particular individuals who may want to be involved, and agreed upon deadlines for actions to be accomplished.

•Step 11 — Plan An Evaluation

Evaluation
Goal One: _____
Action Objective: _____
Data: _____

A process for evaluating progress in achieving Action Objectives can include such questions as: 1. What data are needed to assess performance; 2. Which action plans are working? 3. How can these be changed? 4. What new objectives are needed?

Questions can also be identified which can aid in evaluating progress in achieving the long-term (1987) goals identified earlier, such as: 1. How extensive was the impact of your action plans ( step #10); 2. How far have you moved toward your goals; 3. What remains to be done? 4. Do you wish to change your goals or establish new ones? 5. How do you plan to proceed?

•Step 12 — Act For Change


This step provides a team with opportunity for reflection and review. Possible questions include: 1. review your future scenario; do you still desire it? 2. review your 1987 goals; do you still own them? 3. review your three year events; do you still believe that they will enable you to move toward your goals? 4. review your objectives and action plan; do you still think they will work to bring about your future events? are you still committed to them? 5. review plan for evaluation; is it clear how data will be gathered?

As the reader realizes by this time, thinking about the future in terms of 10-15 years is nothing new. What may be new is valuing the future so highly that parish leaders invest time and energy in pursuing goals shaped by a futures perspective. Rather than largely ignore and back into the future, or consider futures perspectives as utopian, the church can tap visions of possible tomorrows as gifts and resources. The mission of the church deserves such a perspective.

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Lyle Schaller, THE LOCAL CHURCH LOOKS TO THE FUTURE (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968) p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> The writer acknowledges his indebtedness in describing the key components of this planning model to an unpublished paper written by John Westerhoff and George Thomas, "Future Planning for Educational Change."



## ANTHOLOGIES

**BEYOND LEFT AND RIGHT: RADICAL THOUGHT FOR OUR TIMES.** Edited by Richard Kostelanetz. William Morrow. 1968. (\$2.95). Paperback.

A collection of writings on the future and society, education, technology, city planning, resources and other topics.

## FUTURES CONDITIONAL

By Robert Theobald. Bobbs-Merrill. 1972. (\$4.00). Paperback.

Rejecting the views of such futurists as Kahn and Toffler, the author offers his own view of the future as a systems thinker who believes that the future is chosen. The book includes a collection of views of how people think about the future and a blueprint for developing one's own views of the future.

## THE FUTURISTS

Edited by Alvin Toffler. Random House. 1972. (\$4.95). Paperback.

A collection of future writings which may serve as an introduction to the field.

## WORLDS IN THE MAKING

By Maryjane Dunstan and Patricia Garlan. Prentice-Hall. 1970. (\$6.50). Paperback.

Selected readings, intended for students in schools and colleges, are organized around such topics as exploring spaceship earth, coping with change, and discovering human nature.

## EDUCATION

**EDUCATION... BEYOND TOMORROW** Edited by Richard Hostrop. FTC Publications. 1975. (\$10.95).

A discussion of important facets of futurology as it relates to education. The four major sections are: the Future of Elementary and Secondary Education; the Future of Higher Education and the Scenarios; Facts or Fancies about the Future; and Advocates and Disclaimers of Futurology.

## EDUCATIONAL FUTURISM IN PURSUANCE OF SURVIVAL

By John Pulliam and Jim Bowman. University of Oklahoma Press, 1974. (\$2.95). Paperback.

This book not only offers criticism of current failures, but also provides creative responses in educational structure and planning.

## EDUCATIONAL FUTURISM 1985: CHALLENGES FOR SCHOOLS AND THEIR ADMINISTRATORS

By Walter Hack. McCutchan. 1974. (\$9.50).

A projection of the nature of education in 1985. Educational administrators are offered a plan for educational change.

# FUTURES STUDIES: a selected BIBLIOGRAPHY....

## THE EDUCATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FUTURE

By Harold Shane. Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation. 1973. (\$4.20). Paperback.

After interviewing more than 80 futurists, the author prepared a report for the U.S. Commissioner of Education. A summary of what futurists are thinking about education.

## THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION: PERSPECTIVES ON TOMORROW'S SCHOOLING

Edited by Louis Rubin. Allyn and Bacon. 1975. (\$11.95).

Three social scientists and six educators present their assessment of the implications of today's political, educational and social trends for the public classroom of tomorrow. Major issues are related to present and probable future educational problems.

## THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION: SOME SPECULATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

By Alexander Mood. McGraw-Hill. 1973. (\$6.95).

A report prepared for the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education which explores a number of innovative concepts.

## FUTURISM AND FUTURE STUDIES: DEVELOPMENTS IN CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

By Draper Kauffman. National Education Association. 1976. (\$4.20). Paperback.

A primer for incorporating futures studies in the classroom. The writer discusses the alternative futures approach; systems, stability and change; important social and political issues; and a psychology of the future.

## FUTURISM IN EDUCATION: METHODOLOGIES

By Stephen Henley and James Yates. McCutchan. 1974. (\$13.00).

This is a systematic study of educational futures presenting educators with 14 forecasting techniques previously familiar only to science, industry and the military.

## GROKING THE FUTURE: SCIENCE FICTION IN THE CLASSROOM

By Bernard Hollister and Deane Thompson. Pflaum/Standard. 1973. (\$6.00). Paperback.

A guide for teachers interested in presenting science fiction to help students face the future. A wide variety of topics are explored, such as future cities, the generation gap, and ecological concerns.

## HIGH SCHOOL 1980. THE SHAPE OF THE FUTURE IN AMERICAN SECONDARY EDUCATION

Edited by Alvin Eurich. Pittman. 1970. (\$8.50).

Twenty-three educators offer a predominantly optimistic view of the future of American high schools, directing special attention to education in the cities, the changing student, curriculum, professional staff, and managing educational resources.

## LEARNING FOR TOMORROW: THE ROLE OF THE FUTURE IN EDUCATION

Edited by Alvin Toffler. Vintage. (\$2.95). Paperback.

The author maintains that most students today are "future-starved." They are discouraged from thinking about their own future and many are unable to adapt to change. This collection of articles is intended to help shift education into the future tense.

## A SCHOOL FOR TOMORROW. A PROJECT SPONSORED BY THE ASSOCIATION FOR SUPERVISION AND CURRICULUM

By Jack Frymier. McCutchan. 1973. (\$11.25). Paperback.

A number of educators offer guidelines for future schools, accenting the importance of individualization. Particular attention is given to goals, curriculum, instruction, evaluation, and professional development.

## TEACHING TOMORROW TODAY: A GUIDE TO FUTURISTICS

By Ronald LaConte. Bantam. 1975. (\$1.75). Paperback.

A teacher's guide which presents possible classroom activities for courses in futuristics. The purpose is to help students understand the nature of change, identify the most probable changes, and clarify their values.

## FUTURISTICS

### THE ART OF CONJECTURE

By Bertrand de Jouvenel. Basic. 1967. (\$10.50).

A classic by a well-known French futurist considered by many as "must" reading.

## THE DYMAXION WORLD OF BUCKMINSTER FULLER

By R. Buckminster Fuller and Robert Marks. Doubleday. 1973. (\$4.95). Paperback.

An easy to understand introduction to Buckminster's work illustrated with photographs and sketches.

## THE FUTURE OF THE FUTURE

By John McHale. George Braziller. 1971. (\$7.95).

A discussion of the future in terms of the past, the present, and the future which considers a number of topics, such as planet resources, problems and prospects facing our society within the next 25 years, and building a planetary society.

## IMAGES OF THE FUTURE: THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY AND BEYOND

Edited by Robert Bundy. Prometheus. 1976. (\$12.95).

A collection of articles which present positive and creative images that may influence tomorrow's world.

## THE NEXT 25 YEARS: CRISIS AND OPPORTUNITY

Edited by Andrew Spekke. World Future Society. 1975. (\$8.00). Paperback.

A collection of 47 papers which look at prospects during the final quarter of this century and explore a variety of topics, such as democracy in the twenty-first century, police power in the next three decades, and futures forecasting.

## GENERAL FORECASTS FOR THE FUTURE

### THE FUTURE

By Gerald Leinwand. Pocket Books. 1976. (\$1.95). Paperback.

A selection of readings intended as an introduction. After providing a rationale for futures studies, the book offers selected readings of both early and current visions of the future.

### MANKIND 2000

Edited by Robert Jungk and Johan Galtung. University Press, Oslo. 1969. (\$12.00).

A collection of papers presented at the First International Future Research Conference in 1967. Topics include education and the future, communication in the year 2000, and medicine and the future.

### THE NEXT 500 YEARS

By Burnham Beckwith. Exposition Press. 1967. (\$10.00).

Identifies many trends, makes hundreds of predictions and presents stimulating discussion and debate.

## PROFILES OF THE FUTURE: AN INQUIRY INTO THE LIMITS OF THE POSSIBLE

By Arthur Clarke. Harper and Row. 1973. (\$8.95).

An oft-cited work which combines a creative imagination and scientific knowledge in describing the technology of the future and the boundaries within which futures must lie.

## THINGS TO COME: THINKING ABOUT THE 70'S AND 80'S

By Herman Kahn and B. Bruce-Briggs. Macmillan. 1972. (\$6.95).

Two representatives of one of the nation's best known think-tanks offer their views of the near-term future.

## WHO'S AFRAID OF 1984? THE CASE FOR OPTIMISM IN LOOKING AHEAD TO THE 1980'S

By Jerome Tuccille. Arlington House. 1975. (\$7.95).

Rejecting the arguments of the doomsday prophets, the author maintains that the human race is on the threshold of a social, cultural and political rejuvenation.

## WORLD FACTS AND TRENDS

By John McHale. Macmillan. 1972. (\$2.95). Paperback.

A summary of the author's provocative charts of world trends, such as increase in the speed of travel, advances in life expectancy, and rising water consumption.

## THE YEAR 2000

By Herman Kahn and Anthony Wiener. Macmillan. 1967. (\$9.95).

A pioneering work which suggests a systematic study of the future and employs the use of scenarios in developing "surprise free" projections.

## RELIGIOUS LIFE AND THEOLOGY

### FUTURE SHAPES OF ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

By Marie Agnew. Paulist. 1976. (\$7.50). Paperback.

The central thesis of the study is that adult religious education should be the central emphasis in the educational ministry of the church. Using the Delphi instrument, the study identifies key developments and the amount of time required for this change to take place.

### THE FUTURE OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

Edited by Peter Huizing and William Bassett. Seabury. 1975. (\$4.75). Paperback.

A collection of essays which explore the future of Roman Catholic religious communities and possible responses to such concerns as celibacy, commitment, renewal, poverty and other issues.

## THE IMPACT OF THE FUTURE

By Lyle Schaller. Abingdon. 1971. (\$1.95). Paperback.

The approach of the author is the projection of trends into the future. He discusses the probable consequences of twenty different trends.

## RELIGION IN THE YEAR 2000...

By Andrew Greeley. Sheed and Ward. 1969. (\$4.95).

A sociologist argues against the secularization model and, on the basis of data, projects a number of trends which describe the future of theology, liturgy, the clergy, and organized religion.

## RELIGION 2101 A.D.

By Hiley Ward. Doubleday. 1975. (\$7.95).

A wide-ranging book which examines coming events and changes in society and people to which religious groups need to respond. Attention is given to the future of the church — its message, theologies, challenges, and experiments in mission and ministry.

## THE SHAPE OF THE CHURCH TO COME

By Karl Rahner. Seabury. 1974. (\$6.95).

A noted Roman Catholic theologian discusses future implications of the church's present situation and questions that need to be explored, such as the role of women in the priesthood. He looks at a future church marked by smaller numbers but with more active missionary-minded members.

## THEOLOGY OF HOPE

By Jurgen Moltmann. Harper & Row. 1967. (\$4.95). Paperback.

Named by some as the most important theological work of the decade, the author describes hope as the expectation of those things God promises and brings to fulfillment in the death and resurrection of Christ. Such an outlook deserves to become characteristic of all Christian proclamation and existence.

## UNDERSTANDING TOMORROW

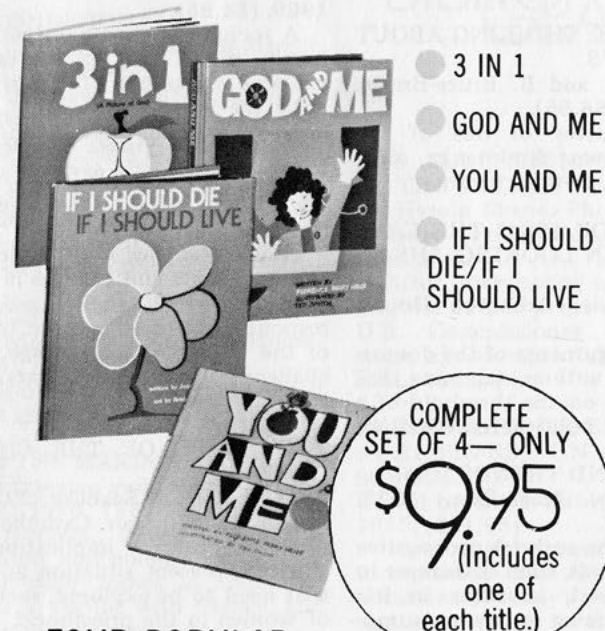
By Lyle Schaller. Abingdon. 1976. (\$3.95). Paperback.

A noted church planner and consultant offers twenty-one generalizations discussing substantial changes in American society and their implications for understanding the future.

Continued on page 28



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# LAST WORDS

W. Th. Janzow

The future is one of man's perennial problems. How to find out about it! How to prepare for it! How to live with one's ignorance concerning it!

To open the curtain ever so slightly, to receive today a glimpse of what is in store tomorrow — this theme has occupied the novels, plays, and sonnets of every literary age.

The ancients got their data from the stars or from soothsayers and magicians. Today's magic flows out of data processing equipment and is turned into extrapolations, trend-lines and scientific forecasts.

The incredible complexity and the exquisite precision of that mechanical mind called the computer generates a feeling that at last the curtain has been unlocked for good and that the glimpse will in time become a panoramic view. Given a careful listing of assumptions, some things can indeed be predicted with impressive accuracy. Yet, we are not beyond the point where the most plausible forecast will fall apart the minute an assumption fails to stand.

In some areas of our experience prediction potentials are getting worse, not better. We used to be able to predict the institutional norms of the next generation with considerable reliability. This was when the patterns of one generation were transmitted to the next pretty much in tact. But with the coming of the rapid change era, the only thing one can predict for any future generation is that many of its customs, skills and norms will be different.

A chief purpose of education has always been and still is to prepare the student for the future. But how can the teacher prepare for conditions that are unknown?

The initial prerequisite for this process is to admit one's ignorance. Futuristic know-it-alls can only create future know-nothings.

When specifics are hidden from our view, principles become all the more important. As future details become less certain, the call to develop broad procedures for coping with unknown future realities has an increasingly reasonable ring. When changeables proliferate, only the unchangeable provides predictable protection.

Humans must find strong anchors somewhere. With the stability of human institutions in disarray, what better place to find one's moorings than in the changeless God. Augustine's confession grows in relevancy with each acceleration of the pace of change: "I was restless until I found my rest in Thee."



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## book reviews

Continued from page 25

### Society

#### AN ALTERNATIVE FUTURE FOR AMERICA II

By Robert Theobald. Swallow Press. 1970. (\$2.00). Paperback.

A British socioeconomist living in the U.S. for a number of years shares his responses to 3 questions: "What type of future do the present social realities imply? What would an alternative, humanized future look alike? How do we begin to invent this kind of future?"

#### THE COMING OF POST-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY: A VENTURE IN SOCIAL FORECAST

By Daniel Bell. Basic Books. 1973. (\$12.50).

A study of the social trends that are shaping our future society, including a picture of a new "knowledge society" which is emerging out of an older corporate capitalism.

#### FUTURE SHOCK

By Alvin Toffler. Random House. 1970. (\$2.20). Paperback.

This is the book which popularized future studies by describing the dramatic changes that are occurring and their impact on individuals.

#### TOWARD THE YEAR 2000: WORK IN PROGRESS

Edited by Daniel Bell. Beacon Press. 1969. (\$3.95). Paperback.

This book consists of the proceedings of the Commission on the Year 2000 and is considered a key document in the study of the future.

### Space

#### THE NEXT TEN THOUSAND YEARS: A VISION OF MAN'S FUTURE IN THE UNIVERSE

By Adrian Berry. Saturday Review Press/E.P. Dutton. 1974. (\$8.95).

A distinguished science writer for the *London Sunday Telegraph* presents the results of his probes of the thinking of a number of scientists and sketches a prediction of man's activities in space over the next centuries and millennia.

#### THE SEARCH IS ON: A VIEW OF MAN'S FUTURE FROM THE NEW PERSPECTIVE OF SPACE

By Earl Hubbard. Pace. 1969. (\$1.95). Paperback.

The author develops his argument that mankind should seek out new worlds in the universe.

#### OUR WORLD IN SPACE

By Robert McCall and Isaac Asimov. New York Graphic Society. 1974. (\$25.00).

A text which includes both color and black-and-white illustrations of a number of speculations, such as colonization of the Moon and Mars, voyages to the outer reaches of the solar system, and exploration of distant star systems.

#### FINITE RESOURCES AND THE HUMAN FUTURE

Edited by Ian Barbour. Augsburg. 1976. (\$4.75). Paperback.

An edited version of a series of lectures given at Carleton College by Kenneth Boulding, Norman Borlaugh, Rene Dubos, Roger Shinn and others. Major attention is given to: Food, Population and Development; Resources and Growth; Visions of the Future. A study guide is included.

Marvin Bergman