

TH
B561

THE CONTRIBUTION OF FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL
TO A
MORE ECUMENICAL CHRISTIANITY

By
Gene F. Black
A. B., Taylor University

A Thesis
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for
THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF SACRED THEOLOGY
in
The Biblical Seminary in New York
New York, N.Y.
April 1949

19039

BIBLICAL SCHOOL OF
THEOLOGY LIBRARY
HATFIELD, PA.

Gift of Author

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

A. The Subject. i
 1. The Subject Stated and Explained. i
 a. Definition of Terms. i
 b. The Ecumenical Movement in History. ii
 2. The Subject Justified. iv
 3. The Subject Delimited. v
 B. The Sources for the Study. v
 C. The Method of Procedure. vi

CHAPTER I

THE ECUMENICAL OUTLOOK OF FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL
 AS INFLUENCED BY HIS BACKGROUND
 AND MANIFESTED IN THE WIDER INTERESTS
 OF HIS EARLY CAREER

A. Introduction. 2
 B. The Influences of his Home and Family Life. 2
 C. The Influences of his Education and Preparation
 for the Ministry. 3
 D. The Influences of His Early Pastorates. 6
 E. The Influences During His Presidency of DePauw
 University. 9
 F. The Influences in His Election as Bishop, 11
 G. Summary and Conclusion. 13

CHAPTER II

THE ECUMENICAL OUTLOOK
 OF FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL
 ON WORLD ISSUES

A. Introduction. 15
 B. His Interest in the Missionary Enterprise. 15
 C. His Concern for World Unity and International
 Brotherhood. 19

April 26, 1949

26948

D. His Activity in Behalf of Labor and a Better Society.	25
E. His Concern for Better Race Relations.	30
F. Summary and Conclusion.	32

CHAPTER III

THE ECUMENICAL CHARACTER OF THE THEOLOGY
OF FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL

A. Introduction.	35
B. His Distinctive Loyalty to the Historic Essentials	35
C. His Deep Interest in the Doctrine of the Church. .	42
D. The Spirit and Method of his Theology.	44
1. The Spirit of his Theology.	44
2. The Method of his Theology.	45
E. Summary and Conclusion.	47

CHAPTER IV

THE ECUMENICAL PARTICIPATION
OF FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL
IN INTERDENOMINATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL
CHURCH ACTIVITIES

A. Introduction.	50
B. Church Union.	50
C. The Interdenominational Conference in Mexico. .	52
D. The Jerusalem Council and the Lausanne Confer- ence.	53
1. The Jerusalem Council.	53
2. The Lausanne Conference.	56
E. The Years of 1928-1932-- Presidency of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.	57
F. Summary and Conclusion.	60

CHAPTER V

GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A. Summary.	62
1. The Subject and Purpose of the Thesis.	62
2. The Summary of the four chapters.	62
B. Conclusion.	64

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Primary Sources.	66
1. Books.	67
2. Books containing chapters by Dr. McConnell..	67
3. Official Statements.	67
4. Magazine Articles.	67
B. Secondary Sources.	68
1. Historical Background.	68
2. Biographical Material.	68



Dr. Francis John McConnell

INTRODUCTION

the justification of the thesis subject. Whether we believe in the unity of the Church as becoming a reality with the second coming of Christ, or whether we believe in the unity of the church as involving a gradual process preceding Christ's return it does not matter. The fact still remains that an organization has already been formed which has gone a long way toward becoming the Ecumenical Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of the men in this internationally urgent movement are well known. Bishop McConnell is not one of the present leaders of the organization, but his life and work have been of such a nature as to contribute to the advancement of the ecumenical idea. This thesis becomes justifiable by the nature of the above fact. To understand completely the ecumenical movement it is necessary to study the work of men who have given of their time to bring it to pass.

3. The Subject Delimited

This thesis will be necessarily limited in two respects. First, there will be no other phase of ecumenicity involved in the discussion except that which relates to Bishop McConnell's life work and writings. Secondly, there will be no attempt to give any extended biographical account of Bishop McConnell's life.

B. The Sources for the Study

The thesis will be based almost entirely upon the primary sources which are the books, sermons, and writings of Francis John McConnell. Secondary sources will be used for purposes of background and evaluation. A selected list of these sources will be found in the bibliography.

C. The Method of Procedure

There will be first a study of Dr. McConnell's ideas of an ecumenical church. This will involve analysis of those primary sources which will lead to a presentation and evaluation of the specific contributions of Dr. McConnell to World Christianity. Chapter I, The Ecumenical Outlook of Francis John McConnell as Influenced by His Background and Manifested in the Wider Interests of His Early Career, will deal largely with the early ministerial life and election to the work of the Bishop. Chapter II, The Ecumenical Outlook of Francis J. McConnell on World Issues, will concentrate upon the views which the Bishop holds concerning world missions, world unity, world brotherhood, labor and race relationships. The theology and the theological spirit of Francis McConnell will be the subject of Chapter III which will be titled The Ecumenical Character of the Theology of Francis J. McConnell. In Chapter IV, The Participa-

tion of Francis J. McConnell in Ecumenical Activities,
the work of the Bishop as a representative of inter-
national Christianity will be considered. Chapter V
will be a General Summary and Conclusion.

CHAPTER I
THE ECUMENICAL OUTLOOK OF FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL
AS INFLUENCED BY HIS BACKGROUND
AND MANIFESTED IN THE WIDER INTERESTS
OF HIS EARLY CAREER

CHAPTER I
THE ECUMENICAL OUTLOOK OF FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL
AS INFLUENCED BY HIS BACKGROUND
AND MANIFESTED IN THE WIDER INTERESTS
OF HIS EARLY CAREER

A. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to indicate the ecumenical interests of Dr. McConnell as they relate to his ministerial background and the work of his early career. By personal interviews with Dr. McConnell and others and by the study of articles pertaining to the Methodist Church, the influences will be shown which relate to the ecumenicity of F. J. McConnell. There is nothing that so shapes the man as the office or work to which he is called. Here is a man whose ecumenicity is clearly seen in his attitudes and actions. It is through these attitudes and actions that Dr. McConnell has shared his ecumenical spirit with the church and the world at large.

B. The Influences of his Home and Family Background

Francis John McConnell was born in Trinway, Ohio, on August 18, 1871. His parents, Israel H. McCon-

nell and Nancy J. Chalfont McConnell, were hard-working people from pioneer background. Israel McConnell was looked upon as one of the best preachers of the time; he was a student of the old school of Methodism, but never seemed to impress his views upon his children. From his father and mother Francis McConnell very soon learned the essential teachings of the Scripture. This early training and his later experiences may explain the rather unique views which he holds concerning the doctrines of the Christian faith. From the very beginning the bishop-to-be seems to have yearned for a broader understanding of the Christian faith and its application.

C. The Influences of His Education and Preparation for the Ministry

Francis McConnell's father was the pastor of the Roberts Park Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Indiana, for three years. It was during this period that the youth received some of his preparatory training in Shortridge High School. He makes the claim that it was from this school he first gained his cosmopolitan outlook and his interest in scholarly pursuits. He also acquired his first impression of city life at this time. The location of the school brought him into

touch with the business and laboring classes of this growing mid-western city. The arrival of the Southern Negro must also have influenced greatly Dr. McConnell's deep sense of social justice.

Some time later, he became a student in Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts. This hall of learning which was a traditional preparatory school of the Congregational Church had a profound effect. The sermons which were preached in the chapel were not of the Methodist tradition with which McConnell was familiar, and undoubtedly broadened his thinking.

The following summer, at the age of nineteen, the young student took a job in the North Pacific Cotton Mill at Laurence, Massachusetts, in accordance with his father's instruction which never seemed to include summer vacations. He worked himself up to the job of inspecting different types of colored cloth. It was not his job, however, which interested him most, but the people with whom he worked. There really never has been a time when Dr. McConnell has not been interested in people. He entered into conversations with his fellow laborers that summer which proved a molding influence on his later development as an ecumenical personality. He became interested in all people as people, of all races and nations, even of all creeds.

From 1890 to 1894 Dr. McConnell received further training at Ohio Wesleyan University, graduating with the Bachelor of Arts degree. He makes the assertion that it was natural for him to volunteer in class debates on subjects concerning labor, society and international questions. He never claims to have received any formal training in these fields, but desired to work in them because of his sympathy and love for people.

The highest point of his formal education came during the years at Boston School of Theology. During the most formative period the famous Methodist philosopher and teacher, Borden Parker Bowne, "pried open" the intellect of the budding scholar. He was the one who influenced this scholarly trait of McConnell in a way which was unforgettable. Dr. James R. Joy, former editor of the Christian Advocate, feels sure that it was this influence of Bowne's which gave McConnell his philosophical concepts of man and God.¹

Still another factor which played an important part in the process which helped form the ecumenical views of McConnell were Phillips Brooks and George A. Gordon, men who lived and preached in Boston when he was a

.
1. Dr. James R. Joy, former Editor of the Christian Advocate, Interview, March 22, 1949

ministerial student in that city. This, at least, is the contention of those who understand his ecumenical character best.¹

D. The Influence of His Early Pastorates

Dr. McConnell began his ministry in 1894 in a northeastern conference of the Methodist Church. While he was pastor of the Harvard Street Church at Cambridge, Massachusetts, he was able to address many of the Harvard students. The contact with these young intellectuals prepared him for his later administrative work at DePauw University. Following his work at Cambridge, Dr. McConnell was called to the New York Avenue Methodist Church in Brooklyn. His work in northeastern Methodism made his departure a distinct loss to that section of the Methodist Church. The magnitude and brilliancy of thought expressed by this young leader's voice and pen made its impression for six years on the life of this Brooklyn community. Under the leadership of the future bishop the large Brooklyn church grew "in

.

1. Dr. James R. Joy and Dr. Ralph Stoody, Director of Methodist Information, Interviews, March 22, 1949
2. "Youngest of the Bishops Added to Board", Christian Advocate, May 23, 1912, p. 26

unity, steady effort, and assimilation".¹

The laymen of the church gave him a free hand and cooperated with his ideas in a very enlightened manner. Bishop E.G. Andrews, though of the old school of Methodist bishops, was entirely sympathetic with and interested in his young preacher and pushed him in his work in Brooklyn.

Through the years Dr. McConnell has held churches in sixteen different communities. He states quite positively the the peoples of these various types of residential, mill and manufacturing towns profoundly influenced his ecumenical views. In conjunction with this he feels that one of the determining factors in his life has been his whole-hearted associations with ministers of all faiths, Jewish, Catholic and Protestant.² He has a friendly and winning way which endears him to all his colleagues and associates. Dr. Ralph Key has made the assertion that you would never know that he was a Bishop of the Methodist Church. He is like one of the group, and has the trait of talking as though he were at a family gathering.

.

1. "The New President of DePauw University", Christian Advocate, December 10, 1908, p. 6
2. Bishop Francis John McConnell, Interview, March 22, 1949

Two outstanding concepts have guided his ministerial and administrative work from the beginning of his ministry until the present time. The first is his profound appreciation of humanity and human nature with its nearness to the Divine. Human nature, to the Bishop, is capable of genuineness and wholesomeness. One must walk with men and learn to know them intimately. One must concern oneself with man's person and problems. Secondly, Dr. McConnell knew that it was impossible to work with man without a deep conception of God. It is necessary to learn to relate man, his nature and his problems, to the Church and the power of the Eternal God which the Church represents. These two basic ideas have been the controlling influence in the great man's life and practice.

His deep sincerity, his intelligent grasp of city life and city problems and his profound educational background all played their parts in making him a much beloved pastor and ministerial colleague with an ever-increasing comprehension of the world-wide church. The breathing moving city placed its deep sighing heart upon McConnell's life and work. Indianapolis, the city of his early boyhood, Cambridge, where he preached to Harvard

.

1. Christian Advocate, loc.cit.

students, Boston, the city of the elite, Brooklyn, the city of churches, Pittsburgh, the city of hardy steel workers, and at last New York, that grea city of complexities, motivated the thinking and equipped the administrator and shepherd with the ecumenical heart.

E. The Influences During His Presidency
of DePauw University

On March 10, 1909, Francis McConnell took another step in the direction of becoming a leader in the ecumenical church by his acceptance of the Presidency of DePauw University. He had previously declined the deanship of Boston University School of Theology, but now became the successor to Edwin Hughes who had been elected a bishop in the Methodist Church. Dr. McConnell very well knew the high aspirations and the tremendous dangers of students. In this connection his wisdom, sincerity, and reserve became apparent. The views which he held on every subject could be presented with clearness and a studied vocabulary. It would be impossible for the students to miss the whole-heartedness and world centeredness of all he said and of what he did.

.

1. Christian Advocate, "New President of DePauw University", December 10, 1908, p.6

In his inaugural address, "The Christian Ideal and the Pursuit of Knowledge", there were very excellent indications of what the new president thought concerning world-centered subjects. Dr. McConnell maintained that a true conception of the Christian ideal involves the largest views of God and man, and not simply that which is related to doctrine and creed.¹ The Christian ideal in every part of the world is "a driving force in intellectual and spiritual discovery."² These views, it is further stated, are held everywhere by men with no particular sympathy for the organized church. In those days Dr. McConnell looked upon society and social problems pretty much as he did later in the bishopric. He was greatly concerned about guiding the minds of his students to consider adequately the environmental factors involved in improving the conditions of the masses. He firmly believed that such a view was perfectly consistent with the Christian spirit and the Christian ideal. He thoroughly disagreed with that type of scientific research that studied things which came within only the immediate range of the microscope or the telescope and excluded "the great catholic convictions of

.

1. Christian Advocate, March 18, 1909, p.20,21
2. loc.cit."we insist that the Christian thought of the meaning of life has had driving and determining power in the world's intellectual advance."

the race as to human worth and human destiny".¹ Speaking specifically of the Christian scholar, the new president of DePauw University sounded a further note when he stated: the student's "life itself becomes the highway through which the world travels out to the land of intellectual and spiritual sunrise".² Thus it becomes clear to us that the ecumenicity of Francis John McConnell is closely related to the concepts which he holds concerning the Christian ideal and what might be called the practice of those ideals among the world masses. The sincere student and the Christian scholar must be the ones to whom these ideals come and through whom, by these ideals, the world will be touched and changed. The association with great intellects, sincere students, and large Christian organizations could not help but make its impression upon the thinking of Dr. McConnell.

F. The Influences in His Election as Bishop

When a man is elected to be a bishop of the Methodist Church, he is elected because he has qualities which will adequately fit him for the work of organizing, raising funds, preaching, and teaching. Few men have the

.

1. Ibid., p. 21
2. Ibid., p. 23

ability to do all four things equally well, but Bishop McConnell was one of these men. For this reason he was chosen to be a Missionary Bishop. On May 23, 1912 Francis McConnell became the youngest bishop in the Methodist Church. The following year on February 27, Bishop McConnell went to Pachuca, Mexico to hold his first conference on foreign soil. He and Mrs. McConnell might well have fled in the opposite direction, for Mexico was in the throes of a revolution at the time and the Bishop was unable to hold his conference. This was not to be the last time. As the Bishop went about working with the Mexicans and their problems, he became known far and near as a fearless preacher and a tireless shepherd.

"Through all the wildest days in Mexico--when Madero was unseated and Pancho Villa was running amok--this Methodist Bishop got around from church to church somehow, bracing up his Mexican Methodist clergymen and hoping with them, for happier days in their upset land... The Methodist Episcopal Church did not go topsy-turvy in Mexico, in those days. Bishop McConnell....does not believe in the Church ever going topsy-turvy, in spite of how the rest of the world may go." 1

With this brief word showing how this young man was launched on the work of wider scope which became his career we conclude this chapter. The discussion will be resumed under various aspects of that career.

1. William G. Shepherd, Great Preachers as Seen by a Journalist, p. 136

G. Summary and Conclusion

It is the firm conviction of the author of this thesis that the foregoing material of this chapter gives ample support to the fact that Dr. Francis McConnell was influenced early in his life, throughout the years of his education and in his pastorates, toward a world-wide view of Christianity and man's relation to it. Five periods of his life contained influences which led to his ecumenical concepts and practices:

1. The influences of his home and family background
2. The influences of his education and preparation for the ministry
3. The influences of his early pastoral work
4. The influence during his Presidency of DePauw University
5. The influences in his election as Bishop

Francis John McConnell was from the first a man of wide outlook and ecumenical spirit and we have seen some of the influences that helped to make him so.

CHAPTER II
THE ECUMENICAL OUTLOOK OF FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL
ON WORLD ISSUES

CHAPTER II
THE ECUMENICAL OUTLOOK OF FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL
ON WORLD ISSUES

A. Introduction

It would be entirely impossible to describe adequately the ecumenical concepts of Dr. McConnell on World Issues using only the materials of the preceding chapter. The task that confronts us in this present chapter is to discover what views Dr. McConnell holds on global issues. To be specific: What does Dr. McConnell say of the Missionary Enterprise? What concern does he show for world unity and international brotherhood? Has he been active in behalf of labor and a better society? What are his ideas concerning better race relations? All these questions we will attempt to answer in the present chapter, because we believe they will help us to evaluate the ecumenical spirit of the man.

B. His Interest in the Missionary Enterprise

In 1929 the Bishop spoke at a meeting of the Methodist Commission on World Service. His topic was the "Present World Outlook for World Service Activity". The significance of this message cannot be over-estimated. It contains what properly may be called the spirit be-

hind the Bishop's world outreach. That spirit is service. Indeed, the clearest conception relating to the Bishop's person and work is service. He clearly states that the best understanding of service is two-fold. First, the world is a unit to be won to Christ. Second, the world must be won through Christian service. There are many handicapped people in the church without this world vision. They simply cannot understand how men and women can spend their lives in foreign service with little or no pay. Some years ago a woman came to Dr. McConnell to tell him that a certain rather famous Congressman had said that the Bishop was a Soviet in the pay of the Soviets. To which the Bishop replied, "What made the Congressman think that?" The woman answered that the Congressman thought the Bishop could hardly do all the service he was doing for church, labor and society without getting paid for it. Therefore, the Soviets were paying him. The Bishop replied, "For a man to hold such views reveals the paganness of his own concepts of service." The story told as only Dr. McConnell could tell it serves to illustrate the true spirit of the great Christian leader. Speaking on this point he reveals his personal conception by the following statement:

"I do not pretend to myself to be especially Christian in my service, in the amount of it anyway. I'm not saying I'm not a Christian, you understand. But I do not claim to have gotten to the place where the service idea rules as much of my life as I would like to have it rule, because I imagine that the best definition of entire sanctification would be that all parts of the life were brought under the Spirit of service of the Kingdom of God." 1

By service the Bishop means entire and whole-hearted consecration to God, manifesting itself in the whole life working and striving for the good of others.

More than twenty years ago Bishop McConnell was the head of the Interdenominational China Educational Commission. It was his task to encourage and work for better understanding between mission boards in relation to educational enterprises in China. The work involved gaining the sympathy and cooperation of the Chinese government. The commission finally completed their report but many on the mission board said it wouldn't work. Seven years later, due to the efforts of the commission and its leader, the report had been adopted by the Chinese, with the exception of one point. When at last it was set in operation it proved effective in broadening the educational work of missions in China. 2

.

1. F.J. McConnell, "Present World Outlook for World Service Activity", Message delivered to meeting of Commission on World Service, 1929, p.2
2. Ibid., p. 6ff.

It is clear then that the Commission with Bishop McConnell worked for a better plan which would aid the mission boards in developing a Christian educational system whose chief aim was Christian service.

In connection with this same commission Bishop McConnell was assigned to check all the village schools and hospitals within a range of two hundred and fifty miles of Shanghai. Just exactly two hundred and fifty miles from that city he found a very small hospital with one heavily burdened nurse and twelve patients. Despite the prejudices and suspicious superstitions of the natives, the nurse and the itinerant doctor through the service of hard work had changed the community. It was not money which sent them there. They might well have gone elsewhere for a more lucrative practice. The world need drove them to world service. It was this world service at work in rural China that pleased the heart of the world-minded Bishop, for it reflected his own views in respect to the world missionary enterprises.

Bishop McConnell further shows his interest and spirit in missionary work on a world-wide inter-denominational scale when he writes a chapter on World Wide Views in a symposium on Effective Preaching.

.

1. G. Bromley Oxnam, Editor, Effective Preaching, chapter V

He draws a sharp contrast between the **great** missionary efforts in China and the lands and the people from whence the missionaries have come.

"In a word, the deadliest enemies of missionaries working in foreign lands are back in those home lands from which the missionaries fare forth. The contrast is between the personal devotion of those who seek to live the Christ life and that secular, pagan civilization which the world around, contradicts and defies Christianity." 1

It is clear, as the Bishop points out, that we dare not become indifferent to such a contrast. To do so is to invite real disaster to the missionary cause. The most significant aspect in relation to this contrast is that it becomes "most painful" on precisely a world-wide scale. In turn this world-wide scale aids in magnifying the moral and spiritual actions which occur at home and reflect those actions abroad either for good or evil to the great missionary cause.

C. His Concern for World Unity and International Brotherhood

It is doubtful that any other person in the Methodist Bishopric has shown any more concern for world unity and international brotherhood, apart from Bishop Oxnam, than Bishop McConnell. This concern for

.

1. Ibid., p. 96

world unity and international brotherhood rests securely on the concept which the Bishop holds of God and man. Fraternity is an outgrowth from the proper conception of the "Fatherhood of the God of Jesus"¹. It is impossible to conceive of brotherhood as the result of the merely blind forces of nature. The leaders and followers of great revolutions take fraternity as the sign or password of their great revolutions. If this realization of fraternity comes only from blind forces, then it leads only to blind conceptions of fraternity. On the other hand, if this consciousness of fraternity rests back on the sense of God's Fatherhood, then there is no question that world unity and international brotherhood can become a reality through cooperation. The Bishop writes concerning this fraternity that "these assumed or half-assumed or unconsciously groped for ends, in the last examination, rest down upon the conceptions of God and the world."²

The foundation which is laid above for unity and brotherhood is only the beginning of Bishop McConnell's conception. If world unity and international brotherhood rest upon a proper view of God and his Fatherhood,

.

1. Francis John McConnell, Democratic Christianity, p.13
2. Ibid., p. 14

then the missionary becomes the best representative of this view, and the missionary endeavor of the church the best possible method of carrying it out. Almost without exception, the missionaries now work completely on the side of the natives of a non-Christian country. The pastor of English-speaking churches in foreign lands reflects his native conceptions, but the "real missionaries are doing as increasingly important work in interpreting the mind of non-Christian peoples"¹. The key to the whole problem of unity and brotherhood on a world scale is dependent upon this attitude of understanding between the Christian missionaries and the natives of foreign lands. The missionary has learned to encourage the native Christians to genuine self-expression in their worship. The encouragement and respect of the missionary for the native Christian, Dr. McConnell believes, "will lead more and more to a policy of local self-government by native Christians in their own churches."² This in turn leads these people to a deeper understanding of the democratic spirit in a world-wide sense.

The Bishop was in every respect a non-interventionist. Every Methodist minister in Mexico was sent

.

1. Ibid., p. 70

2. Ibid., p. 71

home who made mention of the fact that he was in agree-¹ment with those Americans who desired intervention. He respected the personalities and rights of these Mexican people. William Shepherd records one significant statement which the Bishop made: "We ought to Christianize our² international relations; put the paganism out of them."

The United States' policy of intervention in relation to Santo Domingo made Bishop McConnell even more zealous in the interests of non-intervention and for better understanding among the Americas. To send our Marines into a country which did not belong to us, and to slay innocent farmers at work in their fields, was bad treatment. Such treatment would go a long way toward completely alienating the Latin peoples from the citizens of North America. In the light of the consequent happenings in Central and South America within the last few years, Bishop McConnell's warning to the United States and to commercial interests within the United States is significant. He was aware of the wide chasm which would separate the "Anglo-Saxon and Latin minds", making the Protestant advance

.

1. Shepherd, op. cit. p. 137

2. Ibid., p. 139

3. Christian Advocate, "Our Government in Santo Domingo, April 3, 1924

more difficult, and placing the United States in suspi-
cious circumstances from Mexico to Cape Horn.¹ By such
attitudes there was revealed the ecumenicity of the Bish-
op toward other nations and Christian missions.

The great leader was in China in April, 1922.
In this country the Washington Conference was in session
for the purpose of determining the relations of this
country with China. The Bishop reported on the disap-
pointment of the Chinese people whose hopes had been al-
most destroyed by America's indifference toward China's
problems and China's needs. He wrote of China's future
in terms revealing the rising of this great people as a
strong nation of the future. His revelation of the work
of the indigenous churches showed how much he believed
in missions and world Christianity.²

The Bishop and Mrs. McConnell went to India
in 1931 for six months. The Bishop had been chosen to
deliver the Barrow Lectures to the students and Christians
at Cawpore. One of the express purposes of this lecture-
ship was to promote better understanding between the
peoples of the world.³

.

1. Christian Advocate, March 27, 1920, p. 733
2. Christian Advocate, April 27, 1922, p. 511
3. Christian Advocate, December 2 and February 12

If the Bishop was so influential in mission work around the world, it was because he was easily touched by the helplessness and need of those in the world who were less fortunate, from the standpoint of food, health, education, and spiritual resources, than were the people of America. We believe that the conditions and inner desires of these people were an influence in the life of Bishop McConnell, which helped produce in him the ecumenical spirit.

During the Great War of 1914-1918 the Bishop and a Dr. B.M. Tipple were strongly moved by the words of some British generals and Italian statesmen. They brought these words home with them and these words came home to the hearts of America, but not until many years later. What were these words? Some militant plan for the brotherhood of man must be set in operation in order to give reality to Wilson's ideal of a democratic world. The Bishop spoke of this matter in particular as he revealed the attitude of the soldiers:

"Soldiers abroad were taking very seriously the possibility of a better world after the war and the almost invariable question was, "What are the religious forces going to do to make such a war as this impossible?..." All other means of keeping the world peace had failed. This plan is an attempt to give Christianity the chance to establish brotherhood among nations." 2

.

1. Christian Advocate, June 27, 1918, p. 796
2. Ibid., p. 810

Dr. McConnell had much more to say on this subject when he wrote his chapter in the symposium, A¹
Basis for the Peace to Come. Nations and peoples must learn to give up part of their political rights in the best interests of the whole world. Diplomatic proceedings may be filled with attitudes which lead to conflict, because men are influenced by evil, but we must not blame all the evil on the multitudes who pay for the conflict with the sacrifice of money and life. The church must take her proper place in making clear the truth of this international sharing.

"I leave to the political scientists the problems of how best to serve the cause of world peace by changes in our governmental organization. Surely it comes within the province of the church to insist upon society's right and duty to seek and maintain the material conditions which make the achievement of the higher human ideals possible..."²

D. His Activity in Behalf of
Labor and a Better Society

The Bishop always looks upon every social problem in relation to the highest standard; Christianity in the world is a leavening influence on all phases

.

1. A Basis for the Peace to Come, The Merrich-McDowell Lectures for 1942, p. 16,17

2. Ibid., p. 20,21

of life.

The Bishop was moved to act on behalf of the service men in World War I. He worked under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A. It was his pleasure to be in intimate contact with many of the men and his messages spoken to large groups came from a heart full of universal love for man. Contrary to popular belief, he discovered only one alcoholic delinquent and few pessimistic men.

Bishop McConnell has never been blinded by the condition into which men may fall, by reason of natural phenomena or war. He believes firmly in the Universal Love of God as a divine instrumentality to change the social conditions of the world.

Four years after the Great War Bishop McConnell wrote in the Christian Advocate concerning the less fortunate brothers and sisters in God's kingdom. The strange and glowering monster called Hunger was stalking the world, devouring in its path innocent children, half-innocent men and guilty souls. "Hunger is the parent of the wild types of revolution." More and more men must realize that only Christian power over man's tools could

.

1. Christian Advocate, "Money and Christian Contacts," February 8, 1922 p. 162

result in advancing the Kingdom of Peace, the Kingdom of God. Food, clothes, medicine must counteract hunger, cold, disease-- and atheism. Printing presses to awaken properly the intellect must be sent to people unable to buy them. Mission work over and above every other endeavor must go forward with renewed energy and enlightened hope. It is no wonder that the Bishop might be called an ecumenical bishop. His whole life seems to galvanize into action whenever he sees men in trouble, facing burdens which they cannot bear without help from the Universal Church.

Another interesting activity in the life of the Bishop for a better society was the question of old age security. For a number of years he was the President of the American Association for Old Age Security. His sole purpose, as its president, was to aid in bettering the economic conditions of those who had reached the age of retirement or were physically unable to provide for themselves. Through the efforts of its president the political leaders of the United States were strongly induced to set into motion a plan which was to be known as the Social Security Plan or the Federal Old Age Pension Fund. It mattered not what the race, tongue, or

.

1. Ibid., p. 162

color of the recipients; this plan was to be for all. It was a universal plan in the mind of Dr. McConnell, probably gleaned from plans which Sweden and England were already using but in this case of deeper Christian significance.

Bishop McConnell's work with the Social Service Federation was both enlightening and difficult. There was then and there is today a certain suspicious type of mind among some conservative groups against any organization or movement which sincerely tries to understand¹ Russia. The Bishop made it perfectly clear that he did not favour the communistic way of life, nor for that matter the capitalistic system. The Bishop, motivated by the concept of Christ's church in Ephesians, looked upon the church as a body which might well leaven both systems with the ethically high standards of Christianity and by that power resident within that same Christianity destroy the evils in the two systems.

Labor and capital were closely related to the above problem and had much to do with broadening Francis McConnell's ecumenical understanding of men in relation to their fellowmen. Labor and capital both need the leveling power of Christianity. Christianity cannot fulfill the highest task today without the help of labor

.

1. Christian Advocate, March 20, 1919, p. 450

and capital. The company union and the trade union are both a part of this problem between capital and labor. The company union may work to the best advantage of the worker or become only a tool in the owner-capitalist's hands through which he may control the worker. On the other hand, the trade union may seem to the capitalist one step nearer to socialism, or what for him is worse--communism. The Bishop points out that there is wide-spread resentment on the part of the men against the fear of the ~~reactionary~~ capitalistic groups toward social progress legislation. The capital groups run away from the facts and are hard to convince but it is just at this point that the ethical implications of Christianity bring truth to both groups. It is not the capitalist but the "divisive and disruptive capitalistic spirit" that is to be feared. A committee under Dr. McConnell's leadership investigated a steel mill strike. They discovered the long working hours of the men--seven days a week for twelve hours a day. The men were given no time and no opportunity to worship God and thus they were robbed of faith in God and man. The Bishop desired

.

1. Christian Advocate, "Building the Christian City", August 2, 1923, p. 949
2. William G. Shepherd, op.cit. p. 139-140

the full support of the Church Universal to come to the aid of the workers. " 'Industry ought to be Christianized.'

--- That's the key to the man; he wants everything Christianized."¹

One of the most difficult unsolved problems of all ages and particularly today is that of men living together. Here again the Bishop points out that science has been able to do much good, but it has not given us an ordered society. This is more exactly relevant to the city and city life. There are two extremes in the city--poverty and wealth. Both misunderstand each other and the latter can aid the former only as it comes into contact with the spirit of universal love and sacrifice² manifested in Universal Christianity.

"The supreme victory of men must be over greed. More people fall at this point than at any other. The physical forces of this world must be one day conquered in the name of human service. That victory will take place in factories, and stores and banks and city streets. Such a victory will require a veritable Pentecost which will sweep men by the city--but such a Pentecost is entirely conceivable and entirely possible."³

E. His Concern for Better Race Relations

.

1. Ibid., p. 141
2. Christian Advocate, "Building the Christian City", August 2, 1923, p.949
3. Ibid., p. 951

Dr. McConnell's deep feeling about the worth of man and his relation to God certainly comes to the fore in respect to better race relations, as well as in those divisions of man's life which were mentioned above. Dr. McConnell's concepts of the human nature and the divine demands that he show proper concern for other races and that he seek a better relationship between them. It is the Bishop's contention that the white man of today probably would not have treated the African Negro any better than have his selfish forebears. The Spaniards were cruel to the Mexicans and the white men were cruel to the Negro. There is only one way of correcting that situation in this day if the white man, particularly the American, is really honest. He must endeavor to raise a protest of public consequence against race segregation and unfair race relations, based upon a proper understanding of the historic background of race relations.¹

"Man's inhumanity to man" is answered by the Bishop's words "treat human beings as human beings".² In relation to this idea he tells the story of Bishop Walter Lambuth. The Bishop ran out of food in the maze of the African jungle, but kept on the path rather feeling

.

1. Francis J. McConnell, "Human Needs and World Christianity, p. 67-72
2. Ibid., p. 73

that all hope was gone. At the successive crossings of the paths, however, natives would meet him with food. The Bishop was puzzled until the natives asked him if he had heard the beating drums. These drums, explained the natives, were signals to tell the other natives that a friend was in need in the jungle. Thus they used their known skill to treat other human beings fairly, and put the white man to shame.¹

The present shame of America is her treatment of the American Negro. The American principle of freedom and equality for all has not proved true in the Negro's case. Americans can correct the economic difference, but the ethical and moral difference can be corrected only by a clear understanding of Negro and white humanity in vital relation with the Divine.²

G. Summary and Conclusion

The Bishop shows great leadership and courage in what he says and does about world issues. His spirit and interest in the missionary enterprise have been significant. He has shown real concern for unity and international brotherhood and may well rank high with that

.

1. Ibid., p. 73, 74

2. Francis McConnell, "A Basis for the Peace to Come" p. 24, 25

type of broad leadership which began to assert itself at the close of the First World War. The Bishop has especially shown himself capable in respect to labor and better society. Finally, his respect for the Negro, and his constant return to the common humanity of man and his relation to the Divine are quite significant.

The following conclusions may be drawn from what has been written:

1. Dr. McConnell shows real interest in world missions
2. Dr. McConnell is definitely concerned with international brotherhood and "one world".
3. Dr. McConnell has shown his greatest interest in labor and better social conditions.
4. Dr. McConnell stands for the Negro's right to honest consideration and equal rights and has worked consistently to this end.

CHAPTER III
THE ECUMENICAL CHARACTER
OF THE THEOLOGY
OF FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL

CHAPTER III
THE ECUMENICAL CHARACTER
OF THE THEOLOGY
OF FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL

A. Introduction

A man's theology quite often reflects the struggle which he has with the great issues of the church and the world. No Christian leader can ever live in the world of today and not be challenged by it. The challenge will strike at the very heart of his theology. In this chapter the loyalty of McConnell to the historic essentials will be examined. His interest in the doctrine of the church will be touched upon. His spirit and method in theology will be dealt with.

B. His Distinctive Loyalty to the
Historic Essentials

The Bishop shows a definite loyalty to the essential historic doctrines of the church in a unique way. The essential doctrine of God in the mind of McConnell is contained within his recurring idea of the Christlike God. "Why should we... keep raising the question about God?", he asks in his book, The Christlike God. He answers the question by stating that "every

age is sooner or later concerned...." ¹ There never ceases to be a time when some men and some women ask the all important question. In a chapel sermon entitled "Simplicity that is in Christ", he states that it is better if we can strip the statement that "God was in Christ" of its theological formalism. Putting it in its simplest form we may say that God is Christlike. We do not need to say any more than that. It is of course impossible to answer all the questions, but to know that God is Christlike strengthens us while we attempt to find the answer to the questions. If the statement is true we learn to have confidence in him, in men and in the world. This may not settle all our questions concerning him. However, it certainly gives light on the truth, though with a great price, that the God who is like ² Christ directs our thoughts straight to the Cross.

It is clear, therefore, that any conception of McConnell's view of God will be found in an understanding of his views of Christ. Christlikeness is the clue to God and his character. All moral conceptions of God find their interpretation in Christ. It is difficult,

.

1. Francis John McConnell, "The Christlike God", p. 21
2. Francis J. McConnell, The Just Weight, Sermon VI, "The Simplicity that is in Christ", p. 44, 45

if not impossible, to prove God's existence. It is not impossible to clarify our thinking concerning God if we think of his moral attributes.¹ "The rational course would seem to be to believe in something worth believing", particularly in our world view of God.² Christ is not just the product of material forces. He is much more than that; he is the incarnate moral and spiritual revelation of God.³ "He [the Christian] simply declares that to one who thinks of God as Jesus thought of God, and set forth in life, the explanation of such thought and life in merely physical terms falls short."⁴

On the other hand, it is impossible for us to think of God as a mere ideal, or as merely Divine Mind. McConnell writes that "we must think of God as adequate⁵ to the revelation in Christ." This adequate revelation was real and personal, manifesting itself in the Divine Wisdom and Love of Christ. It is utterly impossible to know this Divine Wisdom and Love of God unless we become familiar with the mind and temper of Christ.

.

1. McConnell, The Christlike God, p. 43,44

2. Ibid., p. 46

3. Ibid., p. 47,48

4. Ibid., p. 48

5. Ibid., p. 49

To know this mind and temper and thus to know God, demands that we be neither materialistically, impersonally, nor neutrally minded. Surely it can be recognized that the Christlike God which McConnell portrays reveals his ecumenical outlook.

It hardly seems necessary to dwell further on this chief tenet of McConnell's doctrinal faithfulness. In one of the most famous of his books, The Christlike God, he deals with the unity, unchangeableness, power, knowledge, omnipresence, immanence, transcendence, creatorship, kingship, Fatherhood, co-workmanship and friendship of God. It is impossible for the present writer to deal at length with any of the above topics in the short scope of this thesis. McConnell thinks of the unity of God as one of purpose. God does not forgive men their sins for Christ's sake, but because being one with Christ he is a Christlike God and can do nothing else! While God is unchangeable"so far as his own moral development is concerned", he "yet knows what change means for men." God's changelessness in Christ means an unchanging faithfulness to his revelation. The power of God is revealed in Christ as only his rational and moral nature can make it clear.

-
1. Ibid., p. 83
 2. Ibid., p. 101,102

God's knowledge is clearly seen working in the sym-
pathetically understanding personality of Christ. The¹
Omnipresence of the Divine in relation to Christ is
very clearly brought out on page 127 of the book, The
Christlike God, when the Bishop states: "...the every-
whereness of God, to which modern science lends some aid,
is of scant comfort,..unless we can think of God in
terms of Christ."² For man the everywhere-ness of God is
good only if that God be like Christ. The immanence of
God, closely related to his omnⁱpresence, is seen in its
clearest form in God's redemptive activity, and it is
this activity which, in a very real sense, brings us
closest to the mind of Christ.³ The God of McConnell's
theology is an ecumenical God made clear to the world
in Jesus Christ. At the same time God is immanent, he
is also transcendent. However, this need not trouble
us for if "God's ways are not our ways.. but they are
Christ's ways, we can be content."⁴ God's dealings with
us will be Christlike. If God is like Christ then in
the creation of man there will be provision made for

.

1. Ibid., p. 116
2. Ibid., p. 127
3. Ibid., p. 139
4. Ibid., p. 149

life to be lived in its deepest and fullest sense. Man has freedom to choose, but God who created man has also his responsibility for man's redemption and this responsibility is seen in the Cross.¹ The kingdom of God presupposes the idea of God as King. It is impossible for man to conceive of this Kingdom or of this King in the highest sense, apart from Christ. The Divine King has endowed man with free will, but behind this free will is a God who is like Christ and will therefore deal with man in the spirit of Christlikeness.²

The three remaining concepts of God are closely related to the general idea of God as Christlike.

1. God the Father
2. God the Co-Worker
3. God the Friend

Certainly it is evident that these three attributes are seen in the person of Christ. It is Christ's constant relationship to the Father which makes it clear to us, It is his calling of the twelve and relating them to the Father that gives us an insight to God as Co-Worker. It is in Jesus Christ that the Friendship of God is most clearly seen.³

.

1. Ibid., p. 161-163; 165-167
2. Ibid., p. 196, 197, 202
3. Ibid., Chapters XII, XIII, XIV

One may very well ask how the Holy Spirit fits into Bishop McConnell's theological system. The answer is two-fold. First, he has very little to say on this subject. Secondly, what he does say is in relation to the traditional emphasis of the Methodist Church, and yet not particularly unique to it. Dr. McConnell has always looked with a great deal of disfavor upon ego-centric conceptions of the work of the Spirit and the Spirit-filled life. Nor is over-emotionalism necessarily an indication of the presence of the Spirit at work. The Spirit works best when Christians yield to him and serve Christ in their communities and in the world.

Man's relation to this is self-evident. If man believes that God is Christlike, if he believes that he must yield his life to the Spirit of Christ, then it follows that for man there is no other redemption than that which Christ offers, there is no greater hope than serving the God of the Christ whom he has come to know.

We believe it is perfectly clear from the foregoing review that Francis McConnell's theology of the Christlike God has made its ecumenical contribution to the thinking of the church.

.

1. Francis John McConnell, Interview, March 22, 1949

C. His Deep Interest in the Doctrine
of the Church

The Foreword to the Bishop's little book on Democratic Christianity contains a very significant statement.

"We believe more and more that the Church is a veritable organism and that the life that pulses in her is essentially divine. The divineness, however, must show itself in a power of adaptation to the changes in the times. A living organism indeed shows itself alive by its power to impress itself upon its environment, but it shows the power not by an uncompromising fight with the environment but by adaptations and reactions in which the organism may be profoundly modified. The divine life in the church is suggested quite as much by the changes in herself in the periods through which she passes, as by the stamp which she sets upon those periods." 1

This statement is the epitome of his views on the church. The church is truly a body filled with the Divine power and quite clearly manifesting that power in various ways, as new problems and new tasks are met.

The church never overlooks the individuality of those who are its members. Both those who are above average and those who are average in the church must be considered. "What is common-to-all in man is sacred, and what is peculiar to an individual is expected to be sacred."²

.

1. F.J. McConnell, Democratic Christianity, Foreword, p.viii
2. F.J. McConnell, Aids to Christian Belief, p. 31

It is the duty of the church to give the world its message. If the church believes in the Christlike God it can do nothing less. To return to the basic thesis of the Bishop's life-- If man truly seeks after God then humanity will be affected. If the church recognizes the significance and the sacredness of its relation to God then it will reveal the innate humanness of God's humanity to man and man's humanity to his fellowmen. As McConnell puts it: "The churches themselves become, or should become, communities of persons seeking to incarnate in a social organism the truth of Christ and of God."¹

The church, communities of persons, becomes incarnations which reveal the Christlike spirit or the Kingdom of God can never come upon earth.

Finally, the church must work for that "higher Coercion"². By this is meant the call to men to live on the "highest and best sides of their natures"³. Anything less than this will make it impossible for the church to leaven the world with its great message and great power, namely, the God of the Christ from heaven.

Can anything be more directly stated to indicate the Bishop's world-wide views than that which is stated above? We believe not.

1. F.J.McConnell, Aids to Christian Belief, p. 94
2. F.J.McConnell, Christianity and Coercion, Chapter 6
3. Ibid., p. 120

D. The Spirit and Method of His Theology

1. The Spirit of His Theology

The spirit of the great bishop's theology may be caught in an article which he wrote for the Homiletical Review of February 1924. He writes that the Methodist Church has always based its main effort on the religious experience of the human personality. The Methodists have no distinct Methodist teachings. "There are rather Methodist strokes of emphasis, on such phases of experience as conversion, assurance, sanctification." The test which Methodists have made on doctrines is their effect on the life.¹

He further indicates his spirit in relationship to theology when he writes that "theology may give us a worthy statement about God, but it is the outreaching exploring hand in actual deed that most surely finds him."² Theology that has no practical value is of no use to the Bishop. Our belief should send us forth to serve, and in the serving we find God.

The spirit of the Bishop's theology is further indicated by the fact that he believes it is not enough

.

1. Homiletical Review, February 1924, "The Methodist Church and Fundamentalism", p. 94-96
2. F.J. McConnell, "The Just Weight", SermonII, p.21

to think of Christ as an ideal. If Christ is only an ideal then there is no power to attain that ideal; but if Christ is the highest embodied ideal of the Eternal then there is in him the power necessary to fulfill all the demands of one's theological views, and power to live a Christlike life.

2. The Method of His Theology

Closely related to McConnell's practical spirit in relation to his theology there is the method which he uses to portray it. The Bishop's method may be defined as being a skillful combination of the scientific method and the exegetical method. He is thoroughly familiar with the findings of science, as a mere perusal of his writings will show. Combined with this the Bishop has a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures based upon many of the findings of higher criticism. In his little book, Aids to Christian Belief, there is a chapter entitled "Acceptance of Challenge". McConnell presents four challenges to the Christian faith which in one sense contain something of the man's method.

The first challenge--"the challenge of its [Christian faith] attitude toward the universe".¹ McConnell's theological method involves this attitude toward

.

1. F.J.McConnell, Aids to Christian Belief, p. 105

the universe. Men must learn to use the universe for man's good in the Christian spirit. They must not be afraid of it, but learn to overcome it.¹

The second challenge to the Christian faith "is for the transformation of the activities of the whole race so as to make the world a more human place of habitation."² This challenge likewise gives us an insight into McConnell's method. His whole theological system is based upon this challenge. He has learned to think of things in wholes when he thinks of the race of humanity.

Thirdly, there is a challenge to the Christian faith "to make life at least more tolerable for the toiling millions the world over."³ This is near the heart of Dr. McConnell's theological method. For it is part of his method in everything he says concerning God and man to relate it to the laboring, toiling millions in all the world.

Lastly, the challenge of the Christian faith to men.⁴ Though McConnell's method is closely connected

.

1. Ibid., p. 111

2. Ibid., p. 111

3. Ibid., p. 115

4. Ibid., p. 117

to large views of the universe and the world of men, he never forgets the power of a personal life. This actually reveals itself in his theology in two ways. First, his strong emphasis on the person and life of Christ as revealing God.¹ Second, the emphasis of a continued revelation of God because Christ is revealed in other human lives.²

This then, we believe, makes perfectly clear the spirit and method of the Bishop's theology. In so doing it necessarily indicates the Bishop's contributions to ecumenicity within the Universal Church.

E. Summary and Conclusion

It has been the purpose of this chapter to show the ecumenical character of Dr. McConnell's theology. His faithfulness to the historic essentials has been pointed out. What he thinks concerning the doctrine of the church has been indicated. The spirit and method of his theology have been presented. We therefore draw the following conclusions:

The ecumenical character of the Bishop's theology is quite clearly seen to arise from:

.

1. F.J.McConnell, The Christlike God
2. F.J.McConnell, Aids to Christian Belief, p. 117-121

1. The Bishop's faithfulness to the historic essentials
2. The Bishop's understanding of the doctrine of the Church
3. The Bishop's spirit and method in relation to the study of theology

CHAPTER IV
THE ECUMENICAL PARTICIPATION
OF FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL
IN INTERDENOMINATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL
CHURCH ACTIVITIES

CHAPTER IV
THE ECUMENICAL PARTICIPATION
OF FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL
IN INTERDENOMINATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL
CHURCH ACTIVITIES

A. Introduction

It would not be possible to finish the work of this thesis without mentioning Dr. McConnell's participation in church activities on an interdenominational and international scale. As a forerunner to these activities it will be helpful to look first at his participation in the movement for church union within his own denomination. Then it will be necessary to see what he did in the interdenominational conference in Mexico. His connection with two very important international councils will be touched upon. Lastly, the years during which he was the President of the Federal Council of Churches will be considered.

B. Church Union

As a Bishop in the Methodist Church Dr. McConnell has not only been thoroughly interested in church unification, but has worked for it at home and abroad. As early as July 1916, Dr. A.C. Millar, Editor

of the Arkansas Methodist wrote concerning this element of McConnell's work:

"The Bishop is a modern apostle of common sense... The Bishop is heartily in favour of the unification of Methodism by such a reorganization as will enable the different sections and elements to manage their own affairs and yet have one Methodism constructed on such a generous and elastic plan that will provide for our need in all lands. He delicately and with propriety touched upon some of the difficulties in the way of union." 1

In 1920 the Bishop delivered the Earl Lectures of the Pacific School of Religion. In the course of the lectures he made this significant remark in relation to church union.

"The good, the true, and the beautiful in the kingdom of God will stand fast before the judgment of all mankind when they are incarnated anew in one Body of Christ which will do for all the world what the incarnation of the Son of God did for dwellers in Galilee and Jerusalem in the olden days. We need a massive and splendid spiritual organism-- full of grace and truth--that the common people will hear, gladly yielding to a vital authority which is above all artificial and transient and fragmentary authorities whatsoever." 2

It was the substance and spirit of the statement from this lecture which portrays the spirit of the efforts of McConnell toward church union.

It was not until 1944 when the General Conference met that union on a large scale was accomplished. As one of the Bishops of the Methodist Church it was

.

1. Christian Advocate, "Bishop McConnell Himself", July 1916, p. 23
2. McConnell, Public Opinion and Theology, p. 195f.

McConnell's privilege to vote for and help set in operation the long-awaited plan for Methodist Union.¹

C. The Interdenominational Conference in Mexico

In 1919 the Bishop presided over the conference in Mexico and was elected chairman of the interdenominational conferences held in that country at the same time. The latter series of conferences was "described by certain parties as the greatest thing in the interest of missions in this republic."² The representatives of ten American mission boards met to talk over a comprehensive program for the establishment of colleges, normal, agricultural, and medical schools, social settlements, hospitals and churches. This was in very truth a cultivation of international relations from a Christian point of view. One resident wrote to the Christian Advocate and spoke of the effect of the Bishop's leadership. The men of this caliber greatly help in foreign capitals because of their deeply spiritual viewpoints of the great movements of the day.³

.

1. See minutes of General Conference of Methodist Church, 1944
2. Christian Advocate, "The New Conquistadores", March 20, 1920, p. 355
3. Christian Advocate, "Bishop McConnell in Mexico", March 20, 1919, p. 373

"The wisdom of his administration is manifest."¹

D. The Jerusalem Council on
International Missions, 1928

and the Lausanne World Conference
August 3-21, 1927

1. The Jerusalem Conference, 1928

March 24--April 8 in the year of 1928 marks a very important date in the life of Dr. McConnell and the Universal Church. W.W.Reid notes the importance of this event in the Bishop's life when he writes that "he was the chairman of an important committee...; he took his place as one of the outstanding leaders of the Protestant forces of the world."² The committee of which Dr. McConnell was the head was concerned with the discussion of the problem of The Christian Mission in Relation to Industrial Problems.³ Dr. R.H.Tawney opened the discussion and spoke on Christianity in an Industrial Civilization.⁴ Dr. McConnell followed Dr. Tawney by speaking

.

1. Ibid., p. 409

2. From the files of W.W.Reid, Board of Foreign Missions, Methodist Church

3. Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council, March 24-April 8, 1928, Vol. V

4. Ibid., Chapter IV, p. 123

on The Christian Approach to Industrial Problems.¹ He dealt with the problem in three ways. First, he made clear what he meant by "Human Values."² In this relationship he spoke of the "profit motive",³ and "housing and working conditions."⁴ Second, he presented the "New Insight into the Moral Character of God"⁵ in which he explained Christianity's distinctive feature,⁶ the betterment of social conditions in world society⁷ and the voice of truth which the church, particularly on the mission field, ought to raise to the world.⁸ The third and last point of his address was related to the "methods of dealing with social problems."⁹ These were three in number.

1. "The inquiry as to the Christian Way of Life," constituting an attempt to work out industrial problems.¹⁰
2. "The Federal Council of Churches." The establishment of a Bureau of Information to present labor problems to the church.¹¹
3. Small groups formed within the Protestant church to raise labor questions and bring them before the church.¹²

.

1. Ibid., Chapter V, p. 132	7. Ibid., p. 136 f.
2. Ibid., p. 132-135	8. Ibid., p. 137 f.
3. Ibid., p. 133f.	9. Ibid., p. 138
4. Ibid., p. 134 f.	10. Ibid., p. 138
5. Ibid., p. 135-138	11. Ibid., p. 138
6. Ibid., p. 135 f.	12. Ibid., p. 138

The Council's Statement which was prepared by the committee of which Dr. McConnell was head presented the following conclusion.

1. "The advancement, by thought and speech and action, of social righteousness is an essential and vital part of the Christian message to mankind,"¹
2. "The fulfillment of such a mission calls for devotion and for knowledge."²
3. The conclusions reached by the council in relation to these industrial problems and Christianity.³

Speaking on this great conference before the Board of Missions, Commission on World Service, McConnell stated,

"..we were all working toward an emphasis on central things in the kingdom of God, namely, a man serving with no thought of return. That got to be the motive. The last of that was about as near to Pentecost as any one could possibly find. Nobody ...tried to steer it [the Council] ."4

In every way the service motive was responsible for this Pentecost.⁵

.

1. Ibid.; p. 150; cf. also p. 141-144
2. Ibid., p. 151, cf. also p. 144-148
3. Ibid., p. 151, cf. also p. 149-150
4. F.J.McConnell, "Present World Outlook for World Service Activity", p. 10 ff.
5. Ibid.

One year after the Jerusalem Conference Dr. McConnell wrote a book entitled Human Needs and World Christianity in which he made a statement that indicates his insight into the purpose and work of the Jerusalem Conference.

"Already the inability of any section of the church to live by itself is clear. At every meeting of East and West hereafter there is almost certain to occur again what happened at Jerusalem. Conferences called to develop traits of difference and distinctiveness will end in common discussions of difficulties and challenges much the same the world over. They will talk of the need of better health, more wealth, sounder knowledge, larger freedom, and closer fellowship. It is dealing with such problems that the best in each point of view can be brought out, for Jerusalem showed the necessity of the human approach to divine redemption, and the fundamental sameness of all human problems in such redemption."¹

The above statement illustrates why it can be said that McConnell has made some contribution to a more ecumenical Christianity. The spirit of ecumenicity, both in what he did and in what he said at the Jerusalem Council, is apparent.

2. The Lausanne Conference on Faith
and Order, August 3-25, 1927

The Bishop was a member of this body, and was appointed to serve on the business committee of the conference. His chief contribution was a message which

.

1. McConnell, "Human Needs and World Christianity", p.7f.

he delivered to the conference as a part of the second subject discussed on August fourth. This subject was

The Church's Message to the World: The Gospel. Dr. ¹

McConnell's message presented to the assembly his concept of the Christlike God and related it to the world concept

of service. ² His concluding statement is significant in the light of all which has followed in succeeding meetings of World Councils:

"..all is in the hands of a God like unto Christ, who takes intentions for deeds, who helps not by miraculous wonders but by opening up the best in human life through spiritual contacts. The struggle is stern enough at the best, but the sternness itself is joy, once the worthwhileness of the moral attempt becomes clear. If God is like Christ, the attempt is surely worthwhile."³

It is clear from the foregoing section that Dr. Francis John McConnell has definitely made a contribution to an ecumenical Christianity.

E. The Years of 1928-1932--Presidency
of the Federal Council of Churches
of Christ in America

In May 1928 the Bishop was assigned to the New York Area of the then Methodist Episcopal Church.

.

1. H.N.Bate, "Faith and Order", p. 43-101
2. Ibid., p. 54-66
3. Ibid., p. 66

In December of that same year he was chosen to be the president of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America which office he held from 1928 until 1932. The contribution which McConnell made during these years was much more along the line of social service, labor, problems and democratic Christianity than world-wide Christianity. However, as president of an organization part of whose purpose is world Christianity, the Bishop had his share in the thinking of that great movement.

1

In his inaugural sermon McConnell spoke of the difficulties which were confronting the great organization. He spoke of the work of the council in relation to China and gave an illustration of the way in which the Chinese have been confused by the non-Christians from America. Missionaries and soldiers on the same boat made it difficult for the Chinese people to determine our country's attitude toward them. The council must stand unitedly against such practices. He spoke of the real advantage of an organization with some size. Many churches banded together can bring Christianity to

.

1. F.J.McConnell, "The Crucial Problems of the Federal Council", p. 13 ff. from Twenty Years of Church Federation, 1928

2. Ibid., p. 14

1
bear on the world and humanity. He concluded his address with great emphasis on the way in which the "social conditions affect the individual". Environment had its effect on great men and great nations. Inasimiliar way² environment has its effect on world Christianity.

"So it may also bē in saintliness--the completing of character in its highest and best. We seek to bring about a social atmosphere and a condition of things in countries and throughout the world in which great saintliness becomes possible."³

Early in Dr. McConnell's four year term as president a vital appeal was issued under his leadership. This appeal dealt with the urgent need of all Christians to give their support to the General Pact of Paris. It urged a peaceful settlementsof all international disputes. It concerned itself with the grave problem of security and disarmament. Careful study of our trlations with Latin America, the Orient and especially China was deemed urgent and needful.⁴

Because of the system of delegating different men to do specific tasks in the Federal Council it is almost impossible to discover any particular work

.

1. Ibid., p. 15 f.
2. Ibid., p. 16 f.
3. Ibid., p. 17 f.
4. Ibid., p. 127

which was accomplished by the Bishop. Enough has been said to show that the Bishop's spirit was of such a nature that it engendered an ecumenical spirit on all issues but particularly in relation to industry and labor.

F. Summary and Conclusion

The Bishop's early work in relation to the Methodist Church Union prepared him for the greater tasks of world Christianity at Lausanne and Jerusalem. His work in these two world gatherings clearly shows his interest and his participation in the world church movement. One of the most significant things which he did was to lead the Interdenominational Conference in Mexico. Finally, his spirit was seen as a pervading influence for ecumenicity in the Federal Council of Churches. Four fields of activity, we conclude, demonstrate Dr. McConnell's interest in the larger issues of world and church affairs which are a major concern of the ecumenical movement.

1. His work in church union
2. His work in the Interdenominational Conference in Mexico
3. His work in the Lausanne Conference and the Jerusalem Council
4. His work as the president of the Federal Council of Churches

CHAPTER V
GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

CHAPTER V
GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A. Summary

1. The Subject and Purpose of the Thesis

It has been the purpose of this thesis to show The Contribution of Francis John McConnell to a More Ecumenical Christianity.

2. The Summary of the Four Chapters

The first chapter dealt with The Ecumenical Outlook of Francis J. McConnell as Influenced by His Background and Manifested in the Wider Interests of His Early Career. There were five influences that were indicated which would point to his ecumenical contribution.

They were his:

1. Home and Family Background
2. Education and Preparation for the Ministry
3. Early Pastorates
4. Presidency of DePauw University
5. Election as Bishop

The Ecumenical Outlook Of Francis John McConnell on World Issues was the subject of Chapter II. Four things were presented which would give us evidence of his world-wide outlook. They were:

1. The interest and spirit which he exhibits in relation to the missionary enterprise on a world scale.
2. The concern which he shows for world unity and international brotherhood
3. The activity which he exhibits in behalf of labor
4. The concern which he shows for better race relations

These four things show his ecumenical contribution to Christianity.

Chapter III gave us very clear evidence of The Ecumenical Character of the Theology of Francis John McConnell. In this chapter it was pointed out that the Bishop has been loyal to the historic essentials and manifests in them the true ecumenical concept of the Christlike God. It was further pointed out that the Bishop thinks of the Church in a world-wide sense because of his deep interest in the ecumenical doctrine of the church. Finally, the spirit and method of McConnell's theology help to account for the ecumenical emphasis in the man's own life and service.

The final chapter indicated the participation of McConnell in activities which are related to the world-wide interests of the church. This was presented

in four ways.

1. His participation in Church Union
2. His leadership of the Mexican Interdenominational Conference
3. His work in the Lausanne and Jerusalem Conferences
4. His work as the president of the Federal Council of Churches

B. Conclusion

We believe that the foregoing chapters showing the background, theology, and participation in the world-wide activities of the church of Francis John McConnell indicate clearly the significant and worthwhile contribution of Dr. McConnell to a more ecumenical Christianity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Primary Source

1. Books

- McConnell, Francis J. : Aids to Christian Belief. The Abingdon Press, New York, 1932.
- : Borden Parker Bowne. The Abingdon Press, New York, 1929.
 - : Christian Citizenship. The Methodist Book Concern, 1922.
 - : Christianity and Coercion. Cokesbury Press, Nashville, 1933.
 - : Christian Materialism. Friendship Press, New York, 1936.
 - : Democratic Christianity, Macmillan Co., New York, 1919.
 - : Humanism and Christianity. Macmillan Co., New York, 1928.
 - : Human Needs and World Christianity. Friendship Press, New York, 1929.
 - : Public Opinion and Theology. The Abingdon Press, New York, 1920.
 - : The Christlike God. The Abingdon Press, New York, 1927.
 - : The Just Weight and Other Chapel Addresses. The Abingdon Press, New York, 1925.
 - : The Prophetic Ministry, (Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching at Yale University). The Abingdon Press, New York, 1930.

2. Books Containing Chapters by Dr. McConnell

- Bates, H.N. : Editor, Faith and Order, Lausanne, 1927. George H. Doran, New York, 1927.
- Mather, T.B. : Editor, Voices of Living Prophets. Cokesbury Press, Nashville, 1933.
- McConnell, Francis et al. : A Basis for the Peace to Come. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York, 1942.
- Oxnam, G.B. : Editor, Effective Preaching. The Abingdon Press, New York, 1929.
- Walker, Peter : Editor, Sermons for the Times. Fleming H. Revell, New York, 1924.

3. Official Statements

- International
Missionary
Council : The Christian Mission in Relation to Industrial Problems, vol. V, I.M.C. New York, 1928.
- Board of Foreign
Missions of the
Methodist Church : Present World Outlook for World Service Activity. New York, 1929.

4. Magazine Articles

- McConnell, Francis J. : Church and Society. Constructive Quarterly, March 1920.
- : Church and the Larger Freedom. Constructive Quarterly, March 1921.
- : Christianity in India, Christian Century, May 27, 1931.
- : Ecumenical Incentives in the New Society. World Tomorrow, May 1929.
- : Education and Higher Human Values. National Education Association, 1929.
- :
- : Methodist Church in Mexico Organized. Missionary Review, November, 1930.

- McConnell, Francis J.: Next Great Step for the Church.
Christian Century, June 21, 1928.
- : The Church's Manward Direction, American Scholar, January 1936.
- : What Has India to Give to the World.
Christian Century, June 3, 1931.
- : Where the East Spoke its Mind. Survey, July 1928.

B. Secondary Sources

1. Historical Background

- Latourette, K.S. : A History of the Expansion of Christianity. Harper and Brothers, New York, 1937.
- Macy, Paul G. : The Story of the World Council of Churches. American Committee World Council of Churches, New York, 1947.
- Schaff, Philip : The History of the Christian Church.

2. Biographical Material

- Shepherd, William G. : Great Preachers as Seen by a Journalist. Fleming and Revell, New York, 1924.
- The Christian Advocate: Methodist Publishing House, 1903-1944
Historical Society, New York.