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Ms. Means Myself (Book Review)

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Christianity on Trial—by Colin Chapman, Tyndale House, Wheaton, Illinois. \$7.95. Reviewed by E. L. Hebden Taylor, Associate Professor of Sociology.

The author of this interesting book is a Church of England minister working in Cairo, Egypt. It is an important contribution to the field of Christian apologetics even if it is written from an Arminian point of view.

Each of the main sections of the book has an introduction outlining the general approach and defining the question being tackled in that section. Then, possible answers to the question are suggested and each answer is examined in detail. Much of the book consists of quotations from different writers, both Christian and secular humanist. It is in Chapman's use of such quotations that the chief value of his book consists. In effect, it is not only an apology for Christianity, but an exposure of the shallowness, meaninglessness, and futility of secular oriental and western thought today. Perhaps Chapman would have done better to call his book Atheism and Unbelief on Trial since he puts together the views of numerous modern unbelieving philosophers, scientists, art critics, social scientists, playwrights, and novelists. Quoting from these various sources, Chapman shows that none of them can provide any real answers to the ultimate problems of human life.

In Chapman's view, only the living and powerful Word of God can provide truly adequate and coherent answers to such questions as what is ultimate reality, who is man, and what is his nature and destiny? After letting unbelievers speak for themselves on each of the topics with which he deals, he appeals to the Holy Scriptures as his final authority.

Chapman seems to think that the unconverted can be brought to Christ by means of rational discussion and persuasion, rather than by the workings of God's sovereign grace and Holy Spirit. Such an appeal to reason goes back to Bishop Butler who tried to show in The Analogy of Religion that Biblical revelation was a necessary adjunct to natural religion, or, at least, not inconsistent with it. Butler's method of apologetic, like Chapman's assumes that non-Christians share with Christians a common reason and set of presuppositions about the nature of reality, in terms of which the claims

of Christianity can be evaluated. But as Cornelius Van Til has shown in his numerous works, such an apologetic fails to take into account the radical nature of the Fall of man, and the antithesis which exists between the regenerate and the unregenerate human heart and mind.

Ms. Means Myself—by Gladys M. Hunt. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1972. 145 pages, \$1.50 (paperback). Reviewed by Lois J. De Jong, Teaching Assistant in Education.

To see a title like Ms. Means Myself is not surprising. In the mass of writing dealing with equal rights, women's liberation, and femininity, authors claim the key to fulfillment for women. Few writers have stressed woman's relationship to God as the basis for a meaningful life. Gladys Hunt does. God can tell the woman who she is and what she is worth so that she can become self-accepting, acquire true identity, and achieve meaningful productivity.

According to the author, real self-fulfillment is the celebration of the joy of womanhood. This self-fulfillment is possible only for the woman who knows God and seeks His help in coming to terms with her own situation. Once a woman knows she is accepted by God, she is well on the way to self-acceptance and real freedom.

A Christian woman is free to live a Spirit-directed life in which He works out the godly characteristics of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control in her dealings with others. Authentic woman's liberation is evidenced when a woman can use her energy, love, gifts, and mind in a way which brings deep fulfillment not only to herself but also enhances the personhood of others.

Although no indication is given of Gladys Hunt's qualifications for writing on this popular subject, her ideas can be applied to the lives

of all Christian women—the unmarried, the mother, the childless, the grandmother, the widow.... This is effectively illustrated by examples from the author's life and the lives of women acquaintances and relatives. Gladys Hunt's emphasis on Scripture and her personal style of writing should help women who read this book to re-examine their commitment to God, their relationships with others, and their acceptance of themselves.

A Theology of Christian Education—by

Lawrence O. Richards. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1975. 324 pages. Reviewed by J. B. Hulst, Dean of Students.

This book could better be described as a "Theology of Church Education," since it deals with the educational ministry of the organized church. It was written as a text to be used, I assume, on the college and seminary levels. It is divided into two parts. Part One deals with "theological considerations." Convinced that "ecclesiology must be the source of our educational understanding and that Christian education is truly a theological discipline" (Introduction), the author sets forth what he understands the church to be. He then goes on to point out the implications of his ecclesiology for church education.

In defining the church, Dr. Richards states that "the Church of Christ is a living organism, not merely an organization. And principles for its growth and nurture must be sought in its nature as an organism, not in its organizational expression" (p. 16). While one can agree with this understanding of the Church, one wishes that Richards had kept the distinction between the church organism and organization clearly in mind in the rest of the book. Because he fails to observe this distinction he tends to identify the Church with its institutional expression and to view Christian education as that activity performed exclusively by the instituted church.

The home is seen as a "nurture center," but there is almost no recognition of the significance of the day school and the importance of Christian education in that sphere.

Part Two is entitled: "Implementing Christian Education in the Local Church." Under this heading Richards deals with "Building the Body," "Childhood Education," and "Adult Education."

In "Building the Body" the author emphasizes that each member of the congregation is a "believer priest" (p. 131). Anyone acquainted with the spirit of the New Testament must applaud this emphasis. However, when the author says that this means that the pastor must "step aside in his pulpit" and involve the members of the congregation in his ministry, we are led to question his understanding of the pastoral office and his concept of the universal office of all believers.

"Childhood Education" is the second sub-heading. Here is where Richards points out the importance of the home and the importance of the instituted church in assisting the home in the performance of its task. Even though, as we have indicated, we are disappointed with his failure to recognize the necessity of the Christian day school, we appreciate the author's repeated statement: "Scripture must be communicated as a lived and liveable reality" (p. 193).

In this same section Richards points out that "revealed truth has an intrinsic correspondence with reality" (p. 180). As one involved in Christian liberal arts education I appreciated this statement, and wish the author had expanded upon his understanding of the concept.

"Adult Education," the third sub-heading, reiterates a theme found throughout the book: "...the critical concept underlying 'ministry' is one of service and support of others of any kind" (p. 231). The most significant chapter in this section is Chapter 25, "Educational Strategies: the Preached Word," in which the author acknowledges: "The central role given to biblical preaching in the conservative churches is educationally as well as theologically appropriate" (p. 293).

The last three chapters are a summary of the total contents of this interesting volume.

Dr. Richards is an excellent writer. He is also a good teacher, which is evident from the diagrams throughout the book and the "probes" at the end of each chapter. As I have already