

3. Synchretistic ideals

Of these I am writing very little...probably indicative of how much I know and also of what the state of my research has been in this area in recent days. But the concept of blending the religions of the world into one package is strong and it is based on the idea that the intuitive God is the same no matter how he is perceived. He is sometimes called the "god of the conscience" and perceived by some as a spirit, some as a demon, some as a force. Some can capture him in a totem, some will worship him in an animistic sense...some will speak of him with love and affection. The idea builds very heavily on a semen religionis and claims that this is the movement of the true god in the heart of all men who think or feel the presence of a deity. To make the syncretism real we must put away our exclusivistic idea of the deity and try to learn to appreciate him in all the modes of his communication of existence.

Under this sort of philosophy there is no need for missions or conversions save to help the individual learn to associate his god with the movements and requirements of life. To implement it one minimizes his own concepts for the sympathetic rapport he achieves with others.

And I hope all of the students in this course are sufficiently alert to understand that this is not what we teach at Biblical.

E. Summary: We have been studying (since page 11) a broad survey of the ecumenical movement and we have surveyed:

- the historical background
- the factors of world interest
- the organizational and developmental steps
- the theological foundations.

This is all done in broad and sweeping scope but it is important that we understand a bit of what transpires in our world. We now press to the way in which the church has reacted to this move.

III. REACTIONS TO MODERN ECUMENISM IN ITS THEOLOGICAL MOLD

We speak of ecclesiastical reactions, of course, not those of a perplexed or sometimes antagonistic society. And we work with the concept of the theological mold...not the literacy efforts or the food distribution, etc., although some of these will be mentioned in due course. The reactions are varied, as one might suppose, and came by differing degrees in differing stages. So in our painstaking and painful procedure we will proceed to examine them in such detail as time and notes will allow.

A. Background Materials (Historical)

A few items of history are important in enabling us to understand the connotations of the reactions to modern ecumenism in its